



OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX VICTIM SERVICES COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS (DRAFT)

A CONSULTATION:

July 2014

VISION AND PURPOSE

'Supporting Victims of Crime' is one of the Police and Crime Commissioner's key areas of focus as set out in the [Essex Police and Crime Plan](#).

The PCC's overall ambition is to have fewer victims of crime in Essex, through reducing crime right across the county. When a crime does take place, victims should have the best possible help and support, both from Essex Police and from local support services.

This consultation document sets out the PCC's vision and intentions for commissioning services for victims of crime across Essex, Southend and Thurrock. It seeks to build on the good work already in place, as well as to fill gaps and develop new approaches based on good practice, in order to help victims to cope and recover after crime.

The PCC wishes to consult on his draft commissioning intentions, seeking views from victims themselves, from communities and the wider public, and from agencies and organisations that deliver services.

Needs analysis

This document is directly informed by a detailed analysis of victims' needs across Essex, as well as a review of local crime data and of good practice from across the country. The needs analysis is being undertaken in consultation with key stakeholders including victims themselves and agencies working with victims.

The needs analysis, entitled *A Profile of Victims' Needs and Services in Essex, Southend and Thurrock (Appendix A)*, is presented as a supporting document to this consultation. In addition further work to consult local victims of crime, *The Essex Victims' Perspective*, has been commissioned and will be published shortly.

We would be grateful for your feedback on the content of this Commissioning Intentions document, and on the consultation questions set out at the end of the document (page 8).

Please send responses by e-mail, headed *Victim Service Consultation*, to:
victimscommissioning@essex.pnn.police.uk

or by post to:

Victim Service Consultation
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
3 Hoffman's Way
Chelmsford
CM1 1GU

Before the 30 September 2014

BACKGROUND

Local commissioning

All Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will be responsible for commissioning local support services for victims of crime from October 2014, and will have wider responsibility for victims' referral and assessment services from April 2015. Funding is being devolved from national Government (the Ministry of Justice) to support this.¹ The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is also giving PCC's additional capacity building funds to help set up commissioning systems and prepare local organisations in readiness for this change.

PCCs will also receive some funding to commission local restorative justice services. Restorative Justice is where offenders have an opportunity to repair some of the harm they have done to victims and local communities, and where victims have a say in this process including, if they wish to, the opportunity to meet their offender and explain to them the harm they have done.

National commissioning

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will continue to nationally commission a small number of high impact specialist services. These include support to those bereaved by homicide, victims of trafficking, some services to victims of rape and domestic abuse and support for witnesses at Court.

Regional commissioning

The Office of the PCC is exploring opportunities to commission a small number of services regionally, in particular the 'referral and assessment' components of victims' support services. The PCC is working closely with PCCs from the Eastern and South Eastern Regions, alongside local providers, to explore these options.

Victims' Code

The Code for Victims of Crime sets out the standards of service that victims who are going through the Criminal Justice System can expect to receive, with a focus on being kept informed and supported throughout the criminal investigation and court processes. There are enhanced services for those affected by serious crime, those who are persistently targeted and those who are vulnerable and intimidated.

The Victims' Code sets out minimum standards of service. The PCC can choose to enhance these when commissioning services to support local victims of crime.

PRINCIPLES FOR COMMISSIONING SERVICES

In commissioning services for victims of crime in Essex, Southend and Thurrock, the PCC and his Office will adopt the following set of principles:

- Our key outcomes are to help victims of crime to cope and recover from the impact of crime

¹ The victim service commissioning budget for Essex is as follows:

- **Oct 2014 to March 2015:** £0.6m for victim of crime services and Restorative Justice
- **2015/16:** £1.8m to include victims' referral and assessment components

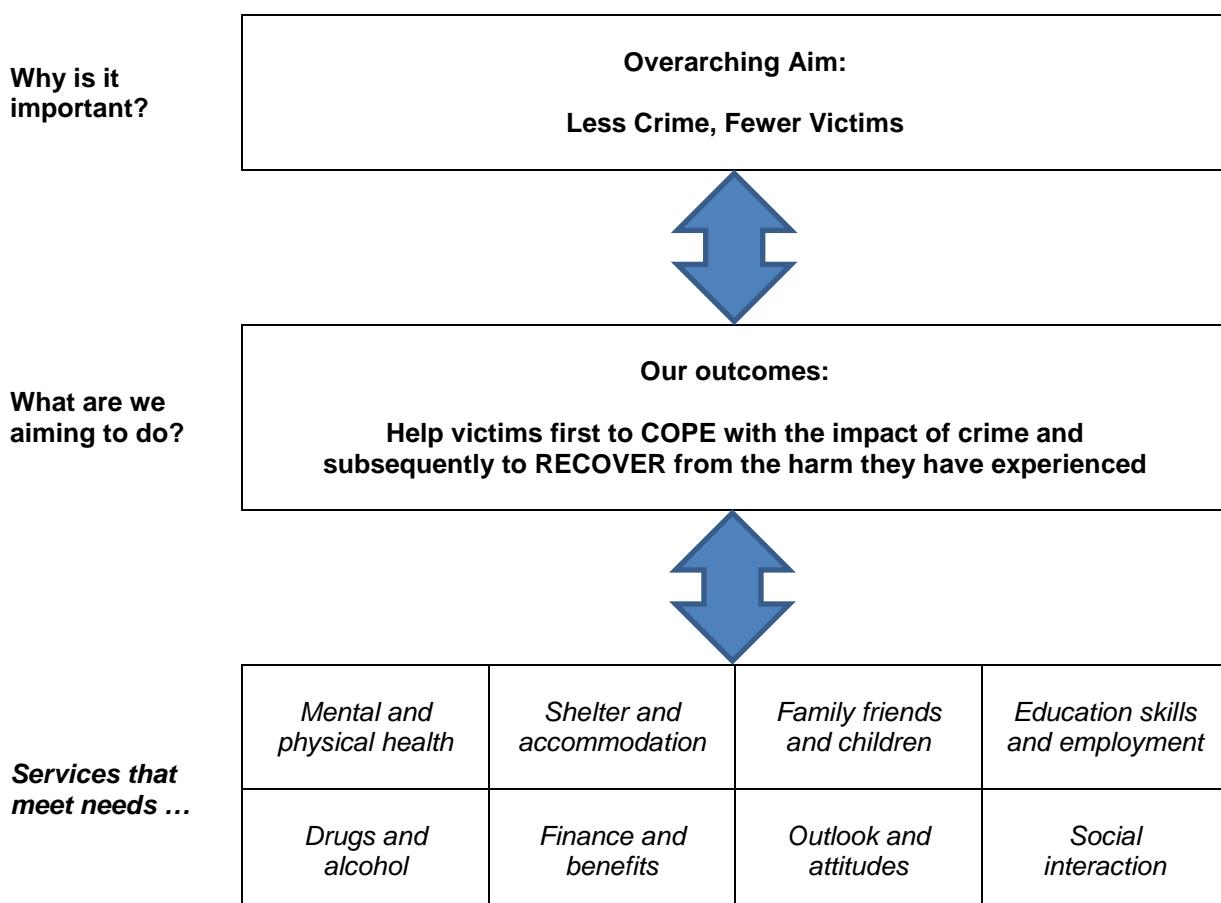
- The voice of victims will be at the heart of decisions made about what services to commission and how they are provided
- There will be clear and straightforward access to services, with an aspiration to make the same level of service available to victims regardless of where they live in the county
- There will be a standard level of emotional and practical support available for all victims of crime, with specialist services for victims of serious crime and the most vulnerable
- Direct self-referral to victim services will be promoted, alongside building confidence to report crime to the Police and others
- We will work with partners to develop effective, sustainable and joined up services for victims of crime
- We will deliver positive outcomes for victims and value for money for the public purse

OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

The overarching aim of the PCC is to have less crime and fewer victims of crime. All of the activity set out in the Police and Crime Plan seeks to deliver on this aim.

For those people who do become victims of crime, the PCC wants to ensure that they receive the best possible support so they can *COPE* with the impact of the crime and subsequently *RECOVER* from the harm they have experienced.

Our draft outcomes framework is represented below:



We are continuing to review the types of needs we need to commission services for, as well as how to present these services in a way that makes most sense to victims of crime. **We welcome feedback and ideas on how to do this.**

OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH

Above all, we want to ensure that victims are at the centre of our commissioning strategy, and that services are developed and designed with their needs at the heart.

Our victim services commissioning strategy is based on the following steps:



Step 1: Understanding

It is essential that we understand the needs of victims of crime in Essex, in order to understand what services we need to commission to meet these needs.

The *Profile of Victims' Needs and Services (Appendix A)* is a key resource to help us to understand the level and nature of victimisation in Essex, Southend and Thurrock. The headline findings from this analysis are as follows:

- There are significant levels of under-reporting by victims of crime - national surveys suggest that around 40% of crimes overall are reported; with only 21% of victims of domestic abuse reporting, and 15% of female victims of the most serious sexual offences²
- There were over 91,000 victims of 'notifiable' crime recorded by Essex Police during 2013, of these almost 70,000 were individuals and the remainder companies. This data has been analysed thoroughly throughout the profile. In addition there were almost 57,000 reported anti-social behaviour incidents.
- Under current referral and assessment arrangements, access to services to help a victim cope and recover from the impact of crime is mainly available to those who have reported to the police - almost all referrals to Victim Support go through this route
- For sexual violence and domestic abuse services:
 - there are concerns regarding low levels of provision in some geographical areas, notably for victims of sexual violence living in West Essex, and for some types of specialist services in the community
 - rising numbers of victims with additional vulnerabilities, such as older victims of domestic abuse and adults with disabilities, are adding to service pressures
 - counselling and other services need to be enhanced for young victims, and there are opportunities to strengthen prevention, such as through raising awareness about healthy relationships in schools
 - the creation of specialist ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Adviser) and IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) roles to support high risk victims going through the criminal justice system has led to some concerns, including a fear that the victim's wider and longer term support needs may not be being met
 - male victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse are not currently well supported, which is a national issue

² See Sections 2.1 (overall crime), Section 4.2.1 (domestic abuse) and Section 4.1.1 (sexual violence) for context, including national trend data and references for the quoted figures

- There are real opportunities to improve access to and build services in less well developed areas, e.g., for victims of hate crime and young victims of crime; and to understand more about the level and nature of ‘hidden harm’ crime across Essex, particularly for victims of ‘violence against women and girls’ and adults who may be vulnerable to crime. **We welcome feedback on the level and nature of crime likely to affect vulnerable people in the county, and their particular support needs.**
- Funding for specialist services tends to be fragmented and fragile, for example for services to victims of sexual violence. A significant amount of time and effort goes into making funding bids, longer term planning is difficult and the terms of some grants mean that there is less flexibility to move resources around to meet shifting demand.

The work to develop the *Profile of Victims' Needs and Services* has informed our Commissioning Intentions and principles, and helped to identify areas for further exploration and work. In addition we have funded work to better understand the views and wishes of victims in Essex.³ We are also commissioning further research to understand the perceptions, needs and experiences of young victims of crime.⁴

Alongside this, we are working to raise awareness of support services available to help victims of crime cope and recover through the commissioning of an *Essex Victim Portal*. This will be a website, dedicated to victims of crime and their families and friends across Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

The website will signpost victims to a range of local and other services relevant to their personal situations, and provide simple and straightforward information on the type of help available to them. This will help widen access to services for everyone, including those who may choose not to report the crime at the time. It is hoped that in building trust and pathways to support services, victims will be more likely to access the help they need, and at the time that they need it.

Step 2: Building

This is about:

- building capacity with current victim service providers to address urgent service gaps and stimulate and test out new ideas
- building relationships with partners who also have an interest in the health and wellbeing of victims of crime as potential co-commissioners of services
- supporting the ongoing development of skills and expertise across providers to ensure victims can access high quality, professional support services

The PCC's *Pathfinder Fund*⁵ is supporting a number of innovative projects designed to further our understanding and test out new services, such as looking at demand for domestic abuse services for older people and how best to respond to these needs, and looking at the specific access and support needs of those victims of crime who are deaf. We have also made a bid to the *Ministry of Justice's Competed Fund* to help build the capacity of sexual violence services in Essex, and expect to hear the outcome of this bid shortly.

In addition, the PCC is working with NHS England and others to re-commission SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) provision in Essex and ‘pathways’ to ongoing support, and

³ The Essex Victims' Perspectives project is being conducted by IPSOS MORI

⁴ Specification for ‘Young Victim of Crime Perspectives’ project, June 2014

⁵ Launched at the PCC's Victims' Services Commissioning Conference, held in March 2014. The closing date for applications has now passed.

with other agencies to commission a new IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) service from April 2015.

Step 3: Sustaining

One of the key findings from our *Profile of Victims' Needs and Services* was the currently fragmented and fragile funding arrangements for some specialist victim services, such as for victims of sexual violence.

Local commissioning of victims' support services gives us a new opportunity to work with our partners to develop more sustainable local funding frameworks to deliver the best possible outcomes for victims. **Through our commissioning strategy, we will seek to bring together other public sector commissioners, alongside service providers, to establish more sustainable models within the financial resources available.**

We are also looking for regional solutions where there are common needs and potential for economies of scale, such as the work we are doing with Eastern and South Eastern Region colleagues and others to prepare for the commissioning of victims' referral and assessment arrangements from April 2015.

TIMESCALES

The proposed timescales for the delivery of our approach are set out below, with details of what is being done and when.

Period	Activity
March – June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Profile of Victims' Needs and Services in Essex</i> developed• <i>Draft Commissioning Intentions</i> produced• <i>Essex Victims' Perspective</i> commissioned• <i>Pathfinder Fund</i> established and projects agreed• <i>MoJ Competed Fund</i> bid (sexual violence services)• Review of <i>SARC contract</i> (with NHS England)• Review of <i>IDVA</i> service (CAADA)• <i>Essex Victim Portal</i> commissioned• <i>Referral and assessment services</i> from April 2015 consultants commissioned by Eastern Region PCCs to review options• <i>Restorative Justice</i> (stage 1) - Jan - April 2014
July – September 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultation on <i>Commissioning Intentions</i>• <i>Young Victims of Crime Perspectives</i> commissioned• <i>Joint commissioning</i> opportunities further explored• New <i>SARC contract</i> commissioned• New <i>IDVA arrangements</i> commissioned• <i>Restorative Justice design and development</i> (stage 2)
October 2014 – March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>1st tranche PCC commissioning</i> - identified gaps/joint commissioning• <i>Essex Victim Portal</i> launched• <i>Pathfinder projects</i> delivered (Jan 2015, with reports after 4 months)• <i>Restorative Justice service pilot</i> (Jan 2015)• <i>Referral and assessment options evaluation</i>• <i>Commissioning Intentions Consultation evaluation</i>• <i>Essex Victims' Perspective evaluation</i>
April 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>2nd tranche PCC commissioning</i> - identified gaps/joint commissioning• <i>Referral and assessment arrangement</i> commissioned• New <i>SARC contract</i> commenced• New <i>IDVA arrangements</i> commenced• <i>Restorative Justice</i> commissioning

Information Note: Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is about bringing those harmed by crime and those responsible for the harm together in a safe way to help find a ‘resolution’, at any stage of the criminal justice process and with a focus on the needs of the victim.

A Strategy for delivering Restorative Justice in Essex is being developed with partners, supported by an agency, Restorative Solutions, who have been commissioned to help us. The work is in two stages:

- *Stage 1: a scoping exercise to understand the current level of restorative justice provision in Essex, potential demand, gaps in provision and examples of best practice*
- *Stage 2: developing the service model, linked to the wider Victims’ Strategy, including some early piloting of the approach*

Stage 1 found evidence of good restorative justice approaches in relation to youth offending, but very little in place around adult offending, and the need to develop shared protocols, processes and strategy for the delivery of Restorative Justice.

Consultation questions:

Part A: Questions on our Commissioning Intentions

Q1. Our commissioning principles

- a) Do the core set of principles cover everything needed to underpin the commissioning of good services to victims of crime?
- b) If not, what else needs to be added, expanded on or incorporated?

Q2. Our Outcomes Framework

- a) Does this provide a good basis for commissioning all victim services?
- b) If not, how can it be improved?

Q3. Our strategic approach

- a) Do you think our strategic approach to commissioning victims services is sound?
- b) What might we be missing and how can it be improved?
- c) Which commissioning and other organisations do you think we most need to be working with to ensure that victims of crime get the services they need?

Q4. Our use of Restorative Justice

- a) In what situations do you feel that a restorative justice response could be most effective from the victim's perspective?
- b) What sorts of restorative justice services would you like to see available for victims in Essex?

Part B: General Questions

Q5. Current provision of victim services

- a) How can current services for victims of crime in Essex be improved in terms of accessibility, victim focus, responsiveness and effectiveness?

Q6. Victim of crime experiences

If you have been a victim of crime and needed help to cope and recover, we would be very interested to hear about your experience ...

- a) What helped, what didn't and what would have helped more?
- b) At what point were you most ready for support? How long did you need support for?

Q7. Crime prevention: what works

- a) From your experience, what do you think are the key factors that prevent someone becoming a victim in the first place?
- b) What services do you think we need to help prevent crime, and stop people becoming victims?

Any other comments?