

Performance and Resources Report

Security Classification: Official

Title of report: Victims Commissioning quarter one update

Date of meeting: 24 September 2020

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Countywide

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1. Purpose of the report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the PFCC Victims Commissioning programme.

2. Recommendations

2.1. Performance and resources members are asked to note the performance of PFCC commissioned services

3. Benefits / expected outcome of the proposal


- 3.1. Support services for victims of crime have continued to deliver their services through COVID-19 lockdown. Although compared to quarter one of 2019/20, overall referrals to PFCC commissioned services has reduced by 6%. Victim support services moved to remote working and adapted their services well during the lockdown. The changes organisations made have not negatively affected the ability for victims to cope and recover from the impact of crime.
- 3.2. Compass the domestic abuse helpline has anecdotally seen an increase in calls. However, this is not reflected in the data below due to technical reporting issues from moving to remote working. In response to COVID Essex County Council provided additional temporary resources for domestic abuse support.

4. Background and proposal

The PFCC has a responsibility to commission services that support victims to cope and recover from the impact of crime. The PFCC commission four main contracts for victim support services. All victim support services are accessible to all and cover all of Essex. Performance data is presented quarterly and discussed in performance meetings with the providers and commissioning partners.

4.1. Sexual Abuse Performance

Synergy Essex – Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) and community support

	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Number of victims Synergy Essex supported	691	713	703	895	936	904	881	955	711	
All sexual offences reported to police					1,288	1,269	1,229	1,247	1,013	
Percentage of victims supported against sexual offences reported					73	71	72	77	70	

Synergy Essex have had a reduction in referrals during the lockdown period. During the same period the volume of sexual abuse crimes reported to the Police have also fallen but not at the same level as victim referrals. Synergy Essex has adapted their service and victims are responding well to online support.

[Confidential]

Outcomes: Percentage of victims reporting improvements from ISVA service	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
More confident In communicating needs	93	89	98	98	98	97	99	93	99	
More confident about personal safety	91	81	94	98	98	99	99	93	98	
Is aware of options and resources available	99	97	96	100	100	100	99	97	98	
Outcomes: Percentage of victims reporting improvements from community support service										
More in control of their lives	92	96	95	95	95	95	95	95	97	
Better health and wellbeing	94	94	97	97	97	96	96	96	98	
More able to access further support	97	98	98	98	98	98	99	97	100	

Approximately 300 victims chose to defer support during the lockdown period this could be partly due to victims change in circumstances for example victims not having a safe, private space to receive support. Whilst unable to continue with planned victim support services Synergy continued to provide support by maintaining contact, ensuring these victims remained safe. There will be a resource challenge for Synergy once these victims are able to take up the offer of services again.


4.2. Mountain Healthcare – Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Number of referrals into the SARC during the reporting period	119	131	105	106	133	136	118	140	79	

The SARC have seen a significant decrease in referrals, at the same time there has also been a decrease in the number of rape cases reported to Essex Police. Anecdotal feedback from Essex Police suggests that Mountain Healthcare, the providers of SARC, have worked closely with Essex Police teams to ensure they were aware of any changes in procedures due to COVID.

4.3. Domestic Abuse


Safesteps (previously Southend On Sea Domestic Abuse Partnership) – Compass Domestic Abuse Helpline

	2019/20				2020/21	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Number of victims referred to Compass helpline	1,417	1,261	1,011	1,163	1,004	

Safesteps had some technical challenges during lockdown. This mainly affected the organisation rather than the victims, for example some data routinely collected such as call volumes was not recorded, this situation is now being rectified.




Safesteps has highlighted an emerging issue with regard to sustainability of their current operation to deliver the Compass helpline. The working hours of Safesteps’ staff and the lack of career progression has contributed to high staff turnover and there are concerns replacing staff may become increasingly difficult. This is being reviewed by the PFCC, partner commissioners and Safesteps.

4.4. Changing Pathways and Next Chapter – Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), community outreach and refuge

	2019/20				2020/21	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Number of victims referred to IDVAs, community outreach and refuge service	1,025	967	1,028	997	1,127	

Changing Pathways and Next Chapter during the lockdown period have had a 9% increase in referrals compared to quarter one of 2019/20, this increase has been managed by the organisations.

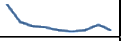


[Confidential]

	2019/20				2020/21	
Outcomes: Percentage of victims reporting improvements for IDVAs, community outreach and refuge service	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Feel better able to recognise abusive behaviour				96	99	
Feel more confident about asking for help when I need it				96	98	
Support networks have improved				79	93	




The service providers now capture data for the outcomes of victims, this was not previously reported and shows positive feedback. In next quarter's performance report the plan is to demonstrate the experience of a victim across all three domestic abuse service providers; Compass; Changing Pathways and Next Chapter, commissioners are working with providers to ascertain how to achieve this.

4.5. Non-Specialist support

Victim Support

	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Number of victims referred to Victim Support	17,541	11,258	10,027	9,525	8,556	8,107	8,604	10,279	8,659	
Number of victims supported by Victim Support	1,662	1,612	1,424	1,434	1,349	1,073	1,487	1,982	1,647	
Percentage of victims supported to victims referred	9	14	14	15	16	13	17	19	19	

Victims are referred to Victim Support predominantly by Essex Police. The significant reduction in referrals at quarter two of 2018/19 and the continuing reductions was due to the implementation of GDPR, with Essex Police changing to an opt-in consent based model. Victim Support and Essex Police have been working together to improve referral rates. However, whilst the referral numbers have been declining the number of victims supported is increasing.

	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21	
Outcomes: Percentage difference increase of victims reporting improvements for Victim Support service	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Outcome - Ability to cope	59	83	70	50	80	80	70	48	75	
Outcome - Perception of safety	47	87	80	47	82	98	59	54	86	
Outcome - Feeling Informed	125	46	43	41	58	71	38	36	32	

Victim Support monitor victims' outcomes using a distance travelled model. They ask victims to score their ability to cope when they are first referred, and this score is reviewed upon exit. Victim Support consistently demonstrate that people leaving the service have improved their ability to cope, since the initial crime of which they were a victim

5. Link to Strategic Objectives

5.1. The Police and Crime Plan commits to ensuring victims are at the heart of all we do. To deliver this commitment, we must ensure that every victim receives the services they are entitled to and the PFCC commissions the right services driven by the needs of the victim.

6. Alternative options considered and rejected

6.1. This report is produced quarterly for presentation to the Performance and Resources Board, we have not considered changing that.

7. Financial implications

7.1. All providers are delivering services within contract value and there is no risk to the budget.

7.2. During the reporting period the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) granted emergency COVID funding to commissioned services. Essex received; £310,000 for domestic abuse services; and £255,000 for sexual violence services. Originally MoJ advised the funding should be spent by 31st October 2020, this has recently been extended until the 31st March 2021.

The PFCC was also successful in obtaining funding towards recruiting additional ISVAs, to support victims who report sexual abuse. The two-year funding will be allocated to Synergy Essex, with year one being £185,130 and year two £246,840. The PFCC is required to report back to MoJ on the impact the additional funding has made up to October 2020 and then by April 2021.

8. Legal implications

8.1. There are no additional legal issues.

8.2. During the reporting period there have been contract variations to the following contracts;

- Changing Pathways and Next Chapter due to an error noted by Essex County Council legal teams regarding the start date on the original contract.
- Safesteps to recognise the change of details from Southend on Sea Domestic Abuse Partnership
- Synergy Essex to recognise the additional funding award

9. Staffing implications

None

10. Equality and Diversity implications

10.1. All victim support services must be open and accessible to all. As part of the contract monitoring, some demographic information is captured including sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, age and gender. However, this is an area where we need to improve. A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed within the quarter two report.

10.2. In 2019/20 data showed

- 66% of victims identified as White, 9% had an ethnic minority identity and 25% did not disclose. The population of Essex according to the 2011 census shows 90.8% identify as White British and 9.2% have a minority ethnic identity including White Non-British
- 69% of victims identified as female, 26% male, less than 1% were non-binary and nearly 5% did not state. Nationally there is no clear predictive data to understand the percentage of victims by gender however, the crime types predominantly reported and then supported by victim support services are gendered towards females.
- 19% identified as having a disability with the England and Wales 2011 census showing 18% of the population has some form of disability.

Therefore, at this very basic level the data shows proportionality.

11. Risks

- 11.1. All contracted services have identified new risks during lockdown. These risks are being proactively mitigated to minimise their impact. The themes of the new risks raised include the availability of staff due to COVID isolation or sickness, the increase in demand for services and the ability of victims to be able to partake in revised delivery pathways.
- 11.2. A further risk has been raised due to the back log of cases that lockdown within the criminal justice system. This puts increase pressure on ISVA and IDVA services who will have to support victims for longer whilst awaiting trial, which, is an unexpected demand on resources. This risk is being monitored within the Essex Criminal Justice Board and its subgroups

12. Background papers and appendices

None