

POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX
and
ESSEX POLICE
PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD

Notes on Deep Dive – Improving Support for Victims of Crime

22 July 2022, 1230, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Kevin Baldwin (KB)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Policing), PFCC's office
Mark Johnson (MJ)	Head of Research and Analysis, Essex Police
Andrew Packer (APa)	D/Ch/Supt, Public Protection Commander, Essex Police
Andy Prophet (AP)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
Camilla Brandal	Notes, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
BJ Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police
Dr Vicki Harrington (VH)	Director of Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police
Greg Myddelton (GM)	Strategic Head of Partnerships and Delivery, PFCC's office
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of P&R and S151 Officer, PFCC's office

1 Introduction and welcome

JG welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from RH, BJH, VH, GM and JP.

2 Police and Crime Plan Priorities – Improving Support for Victims of Crime

- 2.1 KB presented the paper on the response to specific questions from the PFCC's office. The paper included items on key areas of delivery, performance data sets, Victim's Code, Support provided, Victim Satisfaction, Partnerships and Wider Support and the Forward look.
- 2.2 JG asked about the decline in trend in victims opting in for support and what more might be able to be done to encourage victims to seek support. KB commented that this is not known at the moment but APa commented that work is being done around

using the non-consent model with Synergy and rape victims, where victims will engage, and possibly the same approach could be used for victims of crime. KB commented that this relates to Right 4a and showed the live dashboard with the graph for the figures which can be filtered for offence type, ethnicity etc. JG also asked how the PFCC's office could assist with this and PBI commented that it could be raised and included as part of the retendering process for the Victims Services. A discussion took place around references to links on letters (which are provided) and JG asked if the Force could find out why the support option was removed in 2019 and report back.

- 2.3 JG asked about Crown Court delays and the actions that have been taken by the Magistrates Court with a potential peak in August, and did the Force know how the backlog relates to victims withdrawing and whether they have support for the charge? KB commented that the Force only had anecdotal evidence at the moment regarding withdrawing but there is a concern around the delays and victims withdrawing. KB commented that the Crown Courts had not been as obliging as the Magistrates Courts dealing with the backlogs and now with the Bar strike, the backlog will increase. A discussion took place around the Crown Courts and the judiciary not addressing the backlogs. JG thanked the Force for all their assistance with reducing the backlog in the Magistrates Court and she would speak to RH about the Crown Courts backlog.
- 2.4 A discussion took place around partnership working, victim confidence (with work in progress through the SMSR survey), initial contact with the victim and how the process works, public confidence around BAME and non-BAME disparity on victims, Victims Code and the Force's e-learning course completion numbers and length of time it takes for new joiners to complete (which is monitored closely by the Force), the percentage of the referrals within the two day requirement falling which relates mainly to turnover of staff in the Resolution Centre and it is hoped that this will decrease due to the new numbers of staff into the Resolution Centre.
- 2.5 JG asked how does the Force know which victims are overdue their updates under Right 6 and how do you monitor how long they are overdue? KB confirmed that VCC data is shared regularly with the Commands which shows the status of the updates by Command, and although the numbers had increased recently, this was attributable to the previously mentioned staffing challenges which are being addressed. SH asked about the dip sampling numbers and a discussion took place around the Victims and Witness Board work which deals with the dip sampling and the quality/ quantity issues.
- 2.6 JG asked about the low rate of Victim's Right to Review cases, who carries out the review and what is done when someone decides they are still unhappy with the outcome? KB confirmed that the Quality of Service Team receive the request which then goes to a DI or DCI for review. The victim will be contacted to discuss the review, and most of the time, the original decision is endorsed but these decisions can be overturned if they are deemed incorrect. JG asked about the membership of the Victims Panel (Neil Pudney) and is the PFCC's office involved? APa confirmed that he would check the membership and extend an invitation to the PFCC's office to attend.
- 2.7 A discussion took place around partners and their compliance with the Victims Code, support services, ISVAs, ISDAs, Probation, Synergy, the use of intermediaries and trained social care staff.

JG thanked the Force for their level of detail contained within the Deep Dive paper and responses to the questions that had been posed.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 1334.