

## FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

<b>Area of Assessment:</b>	<b>Essex victim referral and assessment service (2023 retender)</b>
<b>Date of Assessment:</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> August</b>
<b>Owner:</b>	<b>Greg Myddelton</b>
<b>New or existing policy/function:</b>	<b>Existing contract subject to re-tender</b>

### Stage 1 – Detail of policy, function, project or proposal

Briefly describe the aims, objectives and outcomes of the policy/function

The PFCC is undertaking a tender exercise for the provision of a victim referral and support service which will go live in April 2023. The service involves the provision of emotional and practical support to victims who have been impacted by a crime to support them to cope and recover from their experience. This contract is currently delivered by Victim Support (VS), which won the previous tender exercise for a 5-year contract (3+1+1) in 2018.

What policies/procedures/functions are relevant to this area?

No other policies are impacted

### Stage 2 – Consider the Evidence

Which individuals and organisations are likely to be affected by the policy/function and in what way?

This decision will primarily impact victims of crime in Essex, who will be recipient of support services, but also impacts on the PFCC, which has a statutory responsibility to commission support services for victims of crime, the potential bidders for the service, which will ultimately be providing the support, and Essex Police, which has requirements under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime to ensure victims have access to services that support them to cope and recover from their experience. This service will ensure compliance with that requirement.

Victims of crime reporting to Essex Police will have their details transferred to the successful bidder for the purposes of supporting their recovery from crime. Victims are required to provide their consent to have their details transferred. Victims can also self-refer to the service if they decline consent for the police to share, or if they do not report a crime to police, but still require support.

The successful bidder for the service will be required to comply with the terms of the contract and the expectations set out in the service specification, this includes a requirement to provide key performance indicators of performance, including “Demographic information for referred individuals, broken down by the 9 protected

characteristics as defined in the equality act 2010.” And to deliver “Accessible, Non-judgemental and non-discriminatory support – ensuring equality of access for all who need support and removing barriers to people engaging with support”

Victims of crime in Essex will be eligible for referral into this service, either through an automated transfer of the information they supply to Essex Police, or via self-referral. The service will offer victims help and advice, information as well as practical and emotional support, signposting, and referral onto other, more specialist services such as those for victims of sexual abuse or domestic abuse.

**What relevant quantitative data has been considered?**

Since 2015-16, Victim Support has assessed 46,712 cases to offer support to victims of crime. Of which, VS provided emotional and practical support to 20,530 cases.

	Q4 '17-18	Q4 '18-19	Q4 '19-20	Q4 '20-21
Percentage of victims who were successfully contacted against the number of victims identified as eligible for the service	9.35	17.22	21.34	20.20
Percentage of victims who required support against the number that were successfully contact	18.44	40.51	33.35	38.80

Victim Support, over the last four years of the contract, has demonstrated that it is providing a good quality service for victims, according to victim-reported measures of satisfaction;

- Consistently over 90% of victims report that they are satisfied with the service provided. Anecdotally where a victim is dissatisfied it is about services that are outside of Victim Support including mental health and housing.

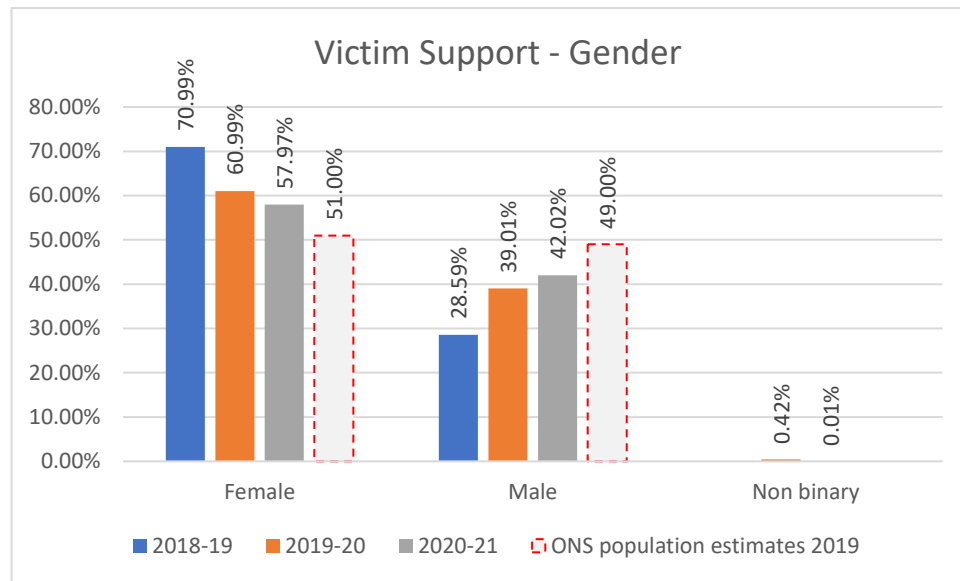
The table below shows that with support, victims demonstrate a positive outcome following service exit;

Outcomes: Percentage difference increase of victims reporting improvements for Victim Support service	'17-18	'18-19	'19-20	'20-21
Outcome - Ability to cope	not reported	66	70	71
Outcome - Perception of safety	44	65	73	84
Outcome - Feeling informed	36	64	51	52

Victim Support captures demographic data, which is monitored to ensure that the service is accessible and available to all.

In recent years, Victim Support has seen an increase in the number of males entering the service. This is a positive trend. Typically, we would expect to see a higher increase in

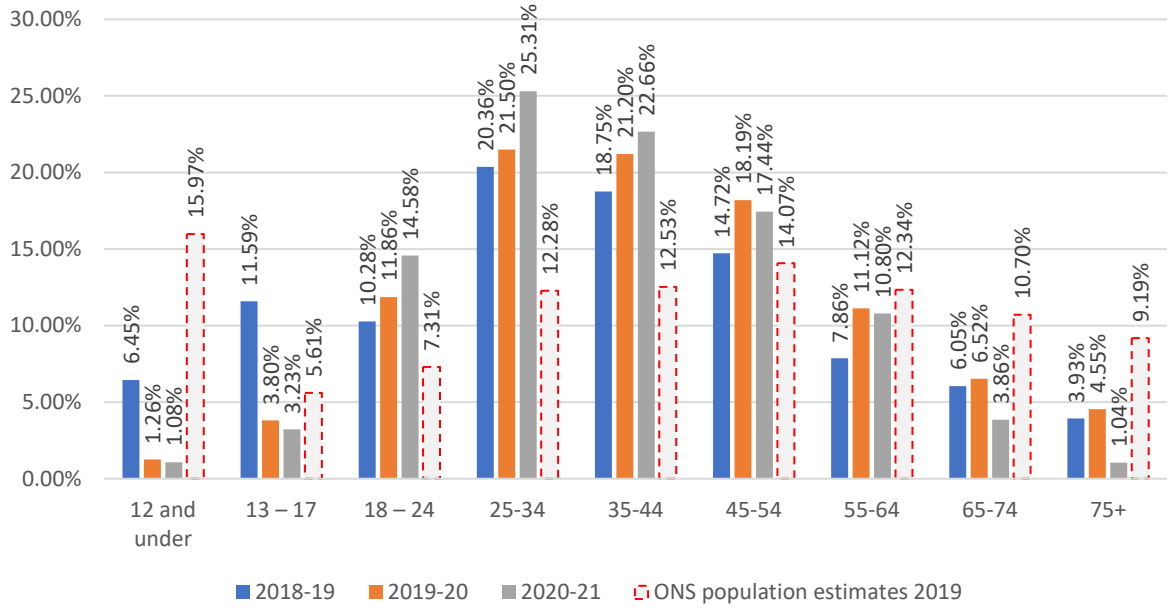
females being supported as the higher volume of crime that impacts victims are gendered crime such as domestic abuse.



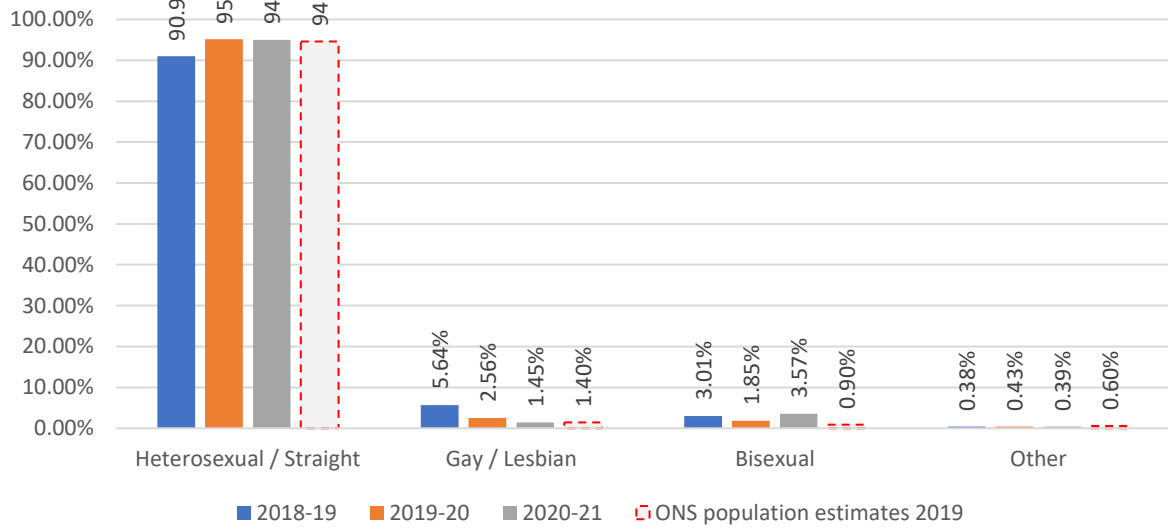
Victim Support provide services to all ages. In 2018-19 the data was not as accurately recorded compared to 2019-20 and 2020-21. Victim Support have invested a lot of time to improve the gaps in their data; the result is that VS captured age data from 992 victims however in 2019-20 this increased to over 5,000. The graph below shows the distribution of support to the different age groups compared to the population estimates of Essex. The data shows;

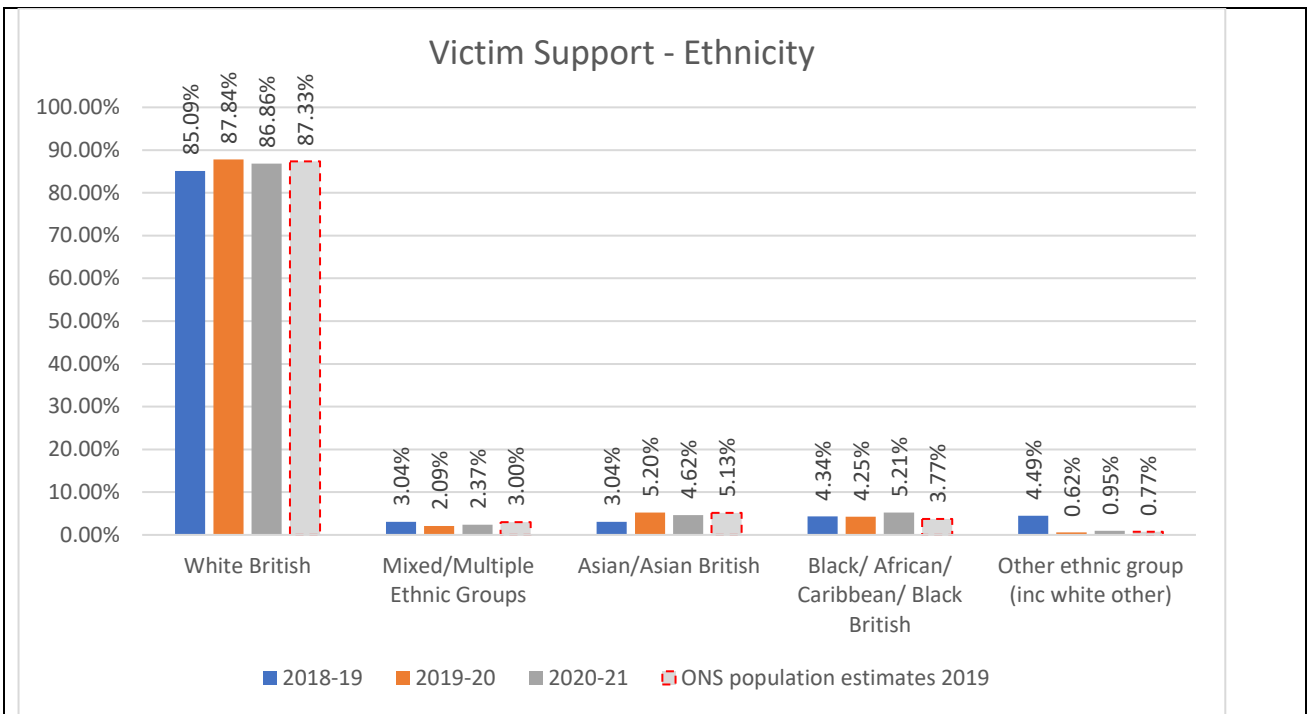
- The volume of children and young people supported (under 17 years old) is significantly lower than the population of Essex. This is to be expected as child victims of crime would typically have other support networks such as parent, guardian, schools, and social care.
- Over 65s is an age group that would benefit from additional focus. Compared to 2019-20 the 2020-21 figures have decreased. COVID could be a factor in the lower figures with this age group more likely impact of COVID restrictions.

### Victim Support - Age



### Victim Support - Sexual Orientation





#### Public satisfaction survey

Essex Police conducts an independent longitudinal survey that measures satisfaction and public confidence in the Police. The most recent report (Q4, 2021-22) noted that “there is no significant difference between respondents from an ethnic minority background (excluding white minorities) and white respondents in thinking Essex Police is doing a good/excellent job in Q4. This has not changed in the last 12 months. The areas where there are statistical differences this quarter, respondents from an ethnic minority background have answered more positively compared to white respondents.

The survey also notes that there “continues to be a significant disparity between victim and non-victim levels of confidence in Essex Police. Victims continue to report low levels of satisfaction with less than half of victims feeling satisfied with the service they received and how well they were kept informed of progress with their case.”

The report highlights the following differences by gender; “There is no longer a significant difference between females and males in overall confidence that Essex Police is doing a good/excellent job. However, females are significantly more confident that Essex Police are dealing with important issues in the county including ASB, tackling serious crime and bringing offenders to justice when compared to males.”

What relevant qualitative data has been considered?

During the term of the current contract, Victim Support recruited a hate crime prevention officer to encourage and increase reporting of this crime. VS also employed a community outreach officer to improve partner (professional) and victim awareness of the service, and to increase engagement in groups and communities that may not engage in more traditional ways. Victim Support has also reflected victim feedback from the service and encouraged enhanced support being offered to victims of burglary.

The PFCC is using the opportunity of an open tender process for this service to emphasise the importance of making the service as accessible as possible. This is driven by a sense that, whilst improvements have been made in improving engagement of all groups, for instance those from ethnic minorities, we could improve the level of engagement with other groups that are less likely to engage via traditional routes (ie self-referral or reporting to Police)

Has the function/policy been subject to consultation? If no, why not? If yes, which individuals and organisations were consulted and what form did consultation take?

The PFCC is undertaking an open and competitive tender process to identify a provider for this service for the next 6 years (3+1+1+1). The proposed procurement approach has been presented to the PFCC's Senior Management Team and a decision sheet for the proposed approach has been approved.

The PFCC has also informed relevant partnerships about the proposals, including presentations at Essex Police's Victims' sub-group, the Victim & Witness Action Team (sub-group of the Essex Criminal Justice Board), and the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board.

A market engagement event has also been carried-out to promote the opportunity, in collaboration with the 7 Force procurement team and Kent PCC's office which is undertaking a similar exercise at the same time. This event gave potential bidders the opportunity to hear from commissioners and to ask any clarification questions about the process or service.

Were any gaps in information identified? If so, what consideration has been given to commissioning work where required?

The quantitative data from the current contract shows that whilst there have been sustained improvements, there is still work to be done encouraging victims of crime from different demographic groups, including age, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation into the service.

The current Victim Support commissioning model includes a community worker who can be tasked to review and responded to underrepresented cohorts.

### Stage 3- Assessment of impact

		Yes/No	Comments and evidence where appropriate
Potential for differential/ adverse impact based on analysis of data and information	Race	Y	It is essential that the PFCC and Essex Police make available victim services that are accessible to all. To ensure commissioned services are meeting the needs of all individual's, demographic data is captured by the service. This is demonstrated in the graphs shown in section 2 above. The data suggests that the current Victim Support contract has a positive impact on those individuals engaged, and provides a service that is generally representative of the population of Essex.
	Disability (Including physical, sensory and mental health)	Y	
	Gender reassignment	Y	
	Age	Y	
	Religion or belief	N	Pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and religion or belief are not captured by the support services as it is deemed not proportionate information to capture and hold. It is not envisaged that barriers would be created due to these characteristics.
	Sexual orientation	Y	
	Pregnancy and maternity	N	
	Marriage and civil partnership	N	We know that some members of the community may have less trust in the Police and therefore may be less inclined to report to Police. This would prohibit them from accessing support services via an automatic referral and may limit their opportunities to cope and recover from harm.
	Sex	Y	

## Stage 4 – Deciding the way forward

If potential for differential/adverse impact remains explain why implementation is justifiable in order to meet the wider policy aims.

We are using the opportunity presented by this tender process to emphasise the importance of making the service as accessible as possible. As an example, we have included the following requirements;

- “Promote access to the service for those not reporting to the Police, working proactively to ensure that a non-discriminatory service is accessible to all victims and overcoming barriers to access for vulnerable and under-represented groups
- “Ensure equality of access to all who need it and must ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.”

We have included “Demographic information for referred individuals, broken down by the 9 protected characteristics as defined in the equality act 2010.” as one of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the service specification to ensure we are able to track, and act upon, any potential issues as they arise during our regular monitoring of the new service from April 2023

We anticipate that these actions will help to reduce the risk of differential or adverse access to services in the new contract.

Summarise any changes made to the policy to reduce or remove the potential for differential/adverse impact

As above, we have included requirements in the spec to minimise the likelihood of adverse impact. We are dependent on potential bidders responding positively to this requirement, but can use the tender evaluation process to mark bidders against the response to this element of the service specification.

If the function/policy is to be abandoned, please explain why and how the implications will be managed

If this tender process does not proceed there is a significant risk that victims across Essex would not be able to access a fit for purpose support service that meets their need to cope and recover from crime. This would mean the PFCC not fulfilling its role to commission local support services for victims of crime and Essex Police would be failing to meet its VCoP responsibilities to refer victims to support services.

There is no opportunity to extend the current contract as it expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March and all contract extension options have been exhausted. Failure to undertake this exercise would mean the PFCC would be required to put alternative arrangements in place which may mean different services being provided depending on a victims’ need, geography or characteristics, and would therefore be much less likely to provide equality of access to all victims of crime.



Describe how the function/policy promotes good relations

Provision of this support service will;

- Enable victims impacted by crime to cope and recover
- Ensure victims are satisfied with the support provided
- Enable Essex Police to comply with the Victims Code of Practice
- Enable the PFCC to comply with statutory responsibilities

### Stage 5 - Monitoring Arrangements

Describe how the function/policy is (or will be) monitored

Quarterly performance reviews are conducted with the provider where performance is monitored by Essex PFCC and Essex Police. Demographic data is provided to review how proportionately the service is supporting different cohorts of victims.

Have the assessment outcomes been fed back to those consulted?

n/a

<b>Impact assessed by:</b>	<b>Greg Myddelton</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>4.8.22</b>
<b>Approved by (owner):</b>		<b>Date:</b>	