



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD
13 May 2014

DECISION

Victim Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement to the draft decision around the continuation of a number of specific services for victims that are due to come to an end on October 1 2014.

BACKGROUND

2. The Commissioner has indicated that he intends to seek the views of the Board on any decisions that he intends to make. Attached to this report at Annex A is a copy of the draft decision report for consideration..

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The Board is asked to note the contents of this report and comment on the draft decision at Annex A.

Author of the Report: Alethea Fuller, Policy Manager, West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime.

**WEST MIDLANDS POLICE
AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

**NON-CONFIDENTIAL
NOTICE OF DECISION
000/2014**

Contact Officer: Alethea Fuller

Telephone Number: 0121 626 5366

Email: a.fuller@west-midlands.ppn.police.uk

Title: Victims Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funding for victims of crime transfers to Police and Crime Commissioners (Commissioners) on the 1 October 2014 along with responsibility for commissioning locally most of the emotional and practical support services for victims of crime that are provided by the voluntary and community sector. These services help victims to cope with and recover from the impacts of crime.

A number of organisations providing services to victims of serious crime – sexual and domestic abuse – will have a shortfall of funding from October 1 2014, due to the Ministry of Justice's Victim and Witness General Fund coming to an end. This paper sets out an interim position.

DECISION

I have considered the funding allocations for the 4 organisations whose funding from the Ministry of Justice Victims and Witness General Fund comes to an end on the 1 October 2014. I approve the allocations set out in the attachment at Appendix A.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in this decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for the West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime. Any interests are indicated below.

Signature.....

Date.....

NON - CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Funding for victims of crime and responsibility for services for victims of crime transfers to Police and Crime Commissioners on the 1 October 2014. They will take on responsibility for commissioning locally most of the emotional and practical support services for victims of crime that are provided by the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. These services help victims to cope with and recover from the impacts of crime. Cope and recover are the outcomes which services for victims should be aiming to achieve as far as possible.
2. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will retain responsibility for commissioning certain specialist services and £22 million of the core budget has been allocated for these national services. Support includes services for those bereaved through homicide, rape support centres, court based witness services, human trafficking and some telephone helplines such as BRAKE. In terms of homicide, the national service will not pick up those victims who were affected prior to 2010, when the initial service was introduced.

Victims and Witness General Fund (V&W General Fund)

3. £5.05million has been previously allocated to local organisations that have a proven track record in supporting victims and witnesses of the most serious crimes, those who are the most vulnerable and those who are the most persistently targeted. The funding has come through the MoJ Victims and Witness General Fund. MoJ funding through this fund will stop at the end of September 2014, and local commissioning will begin. From October 2014, it is up to the Commissioner to decide that a service is needed in their local area. In the West Midlands this will be done through a Victims Commission, led by the voluntary and community sector.
4. All organisations that were awarded funding through the V&W General Fund were granted a 6 month extension up until the end of September as part of the transition period.
5. The MoJ has been clear that the V&W General Fund comes to an end in September 2014, and there has been no further budget allocated for the continuation of any funding to voluntary and community organisations from 1 October 2014. From this date, the Commissioner will have the West Midlands budget and the powers enabling him to commission victims' services locally. The budget has not been transferred.
6. This fund currently provides funding to 4 organisations in the West Midlands to provide critical services to victims of serious crime – domestic and sexual abuse - and those services will come to an end when that funding finishes at the end of September.
7. It is important that funding from the Commissioners Victims Services budget is allocated on an interim 6-month basis from October 2014-March 2015, to enable these services to continue.
8. Any further decisions regarding funding will be made by the Victims Commission who will make decisions on priorities, service provision and funding allocations.

Organisations affected

9. The organisations that will be affected and the funding that is needed to keep the services delivering the current service are set out in the table below. The 6 month allocation is 50% of the total annual allocation previously awarded by the MoJ.

Organisation	Service Provided	Crime Type	Funding Oct-Mar 2015
Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid	Provision of 2 court based Independent Domestic Violence Advisors in Birmingham	Domestic Abuse	£20,889
Sandwell Women's Aid	Provision of 1 court based Independent Domestic Violence Advisor in Sandwell and Dudley	Domestic Abuse	£19,085
Crisis Point	Provision of practical and emotional support to vulnerable victims of sexual abuse in Walsall and Wolverhampton	Sexual Violence	£29,539
Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (CRASAC)	Provision of outreach, specialist support and counselling services in Coventry for vulnerable groups of BME women and young girls from the age of 11 who are victims of rape or sexual violence	Sexual Violence	£51,246
Total allocation requested			£120,756
Funding period Oct -Mar 2015			
Victims Services SV/DV			£586,068
Total allocation			£63,491
			£649,559
Total remaining for allocation via the Victims Commission (minus £120,756)			£528,803

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. The total budget for Victims Services in 2014-15 is £1,172,137 and is split in the following way:

Funding period	Purpose	West Midlands Funding
Oct 2014 - Mar 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build restorative justice capacity and activity• Support Services for victims• 50% of the victims allocation will be retained for the national referral mechanism (Victim Support)	Total Victims Allocation £1,172,137 50% kept for Victim Support £586,068 £586,068 for Victims Services Restorative Justice* £305,244 SV/DV £63,491 Total £1,540,871

*Funding for Restorative Justice is not ringfenced

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11. The funding will be issued as a grant under s56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.
12. Schedule 9 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 provides Commissioners with the powers to award crime and disorder grants to any organisations and projects they consider will help them achieve their crime prevention and wider priorities.

Schedule of Background Papers

1. None

Public Access to Information

2. Information contained in this decision is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation. This decision will be made available on the Commissioner's website.

Appendix A

Organisation	Service Provided	Crime Type	Funding Oct-Mar 2015
Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid	Provision of 2 court based Independent Domestic Violence Advisors in Birmingham	Domestic Abuse	£20,889
Sandwell Women's Aid	Provision of 1 court based Independent Domestic Violence Advisor in Sandwell and Dudley	Domestic Abuse	£19,085
Crisis Point	Provision of practical and emotional support to vulnerable victims of sexual abuse in Walsall and Wolverhampton	Sexual Violence	£29,539
Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (CRASAC)	Provision of outreach, specialist support and counselling services in Coventry for vulnerable groups of BME women and young girls from the age of 11 who victims of rape or sexual violence	Sexual Violence	£51,246
Total allocation requested			£120,756