

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

NON-CONFIDENTIAL
NOTICE OF DECISION
027/2014

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Victims Services – Capacity Building Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Funding for victims of crime transfers to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in October 2014. They will be responsible 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 from April 2015. These are the services that help victims to cope with and recover from the impacts of crime.

An allocation of funding was provided by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) late in the financial year, and this was to enable PCCs to:

- build the capacity and capability of potential providers of services for victims (including potential providers of restorative justice services) from the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector;
- commission restorative justice services if capacity and capability are sufficient in relation to these services;
- prepare for local commissioning.

It is not envisaged that PCCs roll over large funds and they have been asked to report to the MoJ on expenditure in 2013-14 and specific plans to spend any rollover on capacity and capability funding. Only where plans are in place for spend in relation to capacity and capability building and in preparing for local commissioning will roll over be allowed. It is not possible to roll over funding for the actual commissioning of Restorative Justice services or wider victims services.

DECISION

I have considered the funding allocation for capacity and capability funding of £20,000 for Victims Services. I approve the allocation set out in the attachment at Appendix 1.

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.....Yvonne Mosquito.....

Date..... 22 July 2014.....

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 and community sector in their area. 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. Across the country, local commissioning is replacing the old system of grant-funding by the Ministry of Justice, although some services will still be commissioned nationally, including the witness service, homicide service, trafficking service, rape support and some victims' helplines. £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.
3. The total MoJ budget for commissioning services at both the national and local level consists of £50m core victims' services budget and up to a further £50m of additional revenue to be raised from offenders through the Victims Surcharge, and increases to the value of penalty notices for disorder and motoring fixed penalty notices.
4. PCCs will be responsible for commissioning both a 'non-specialist' overarching victim referral mechanism including onward support and more 'specialist' services for victims of crime in the West Midlands, including Restorative Justice services.
5. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will retain responsibility for commissioning certain specialist services

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. The total budget for Victims Services in 2013-14 is £1,015,821 and in 2014-15 is £1,172,137. It is split in the following way:

Funding period	Purpose	Allocation for West Midlands
2013 - Oct 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity and capability of wider VCSE support providers in advance of local commissioning • Build restorative justice capacity in the area and, where capacity is sufficient, fund RJ activity • Prepare PCCs for local commissioning 	Preparatory funding: £827,821 Restorative Justice* £188,000 Total £1,015,821
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

7. The funding is issued as a grant under s56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.
8. 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.

Development of Volunteer Counselling Provision

In 2013/14 CRASAC supported 5,780 victims/survivors throughout all of its services. Since 2008/9 to 2013/14 CRASAC has experienced a 125% increase in the number of clients across the three core services (Counselling, Helpline and ISVA), with an average increase per year of 18% or 642 clients. More specifically, between 2008/9 to 2013/14 CRASAC's one to one Counselling service has experienced an increase of 109%, with an average year on year increase of 16% or 61 extra clients. During 2013/14 CRASAC's counselling service supported 581 counselling clients. The impact of this significant increase in demand particularly for the counselling service has resulted in clients experiencing significant increases in their wait for on-going counselling support. The current wait for counselling clients is approximately 6 months.

With an acknowledgement that funding for counselling posts has become more challenging and competitive in the current financial environment, this project would enable CRASAC to develop its volunteer base and expand it for the first time to incorporate counselling volunteers. This project would build on our successful experience of managing helpline volunteers and would ensure that we can reduce the wait time for our clients and ensure they are seen and supported more effectively and rapidly than current resources allow for. It is estimated that the recruitment and support of a pool of up to 10 counselling volunteers (each supported 4/5 clients per week) will reduce the waiting time for counselling from 6 months to approximately 1 month.

Via providing this support in a timelier manner CRASAC's 33 years of specialist experience would ensure that clients would be able to achieve more effectively the following improvements: mental and physical health, reduced reliance on negative coping strategies, such as drugs and alcohol, improvements in outlook and attitudes, increase social interactions and a decrease in isolation. In addition counselling support would be provided to ----- family/supporters of the victims of sexual violence. The hard outcomes that our clients achieve following support such as improved access to education and employment would also be achieved through this project.

This project would be delivered and supported by a qualified volunteer Co-ordinator with administrative support who would also ensure that the volunteer counsellors received appropriate support and guidance, including clinical supervision. It would also ensure that travel and appropriate training costs incurred by the volunteer counsellors was supported.