

PART ONE

Item 10

To: Joint Audit Committee
Date: 16th December 2014
By: Johanna Burne, Chief Executive
Title: Specialist Victim Services

Purpose of Report/Issue: To provide Members with information about the victim specialist service breakdown

Recommendation(s) - For information only

Equalities / Human Rights Implications – None arising.

Risk- As discussed in the report.

Background papers -

Contact details –

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1. Introduction

PCC Kevin Hurley took responsibility for commissioning specialist services to support victims of crime in October this year.

The PCC must ensure funding is spent to support victims of crime to cope and as far as possible recover from their experiences – particularly victims of the most serious crime, persistently targeted victims and vulnerable or intimidated victims.

The excellent Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations capable of providing local victim services in Surrey are recognised and for this reason, the option of grant making is the OPCC's chosen commissioning approach. A robust procedure to determine grant applications is in place, which includes an applications approval panel with representation from OPCC and Surrey Police. The first phase of bids is now complete, with a total of £182,584.18 awarded.

A Victim Strategy Board will be convening quarterly to develop and oversee the commissioning of effective services and ensure these respond to the needs of victims.

2. Summary of specialist services commissioned

Services commissioned by the PCC form part of a complex and varied network of support that exists for victims across Surrey, funded by other commissioners and through charitable donations. The OPCC will work with all involved to ensure a cohesive approach, for resources to be appropriately allocated and duplication avoided. Providers will be expected to work together, to ensure effective pathways and the needs of victims are met.

The PCC has used this first funding round to invest in services to support survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse, including young victims and witnesses.

Prior to commissioning, the OPCC undertook consultation with survivors and research to identify early priorities. As a direct result, funding was awarded to ensure there is a service for children affected by domestic abuse, as well as male survivors, across the county. Support worker provision in refuges has also been strengthened.

Services for those affected by sexual violence have also benefited, both in terms of assisting with immediate needs and on-going recovery. Funding will help to sustain a counselling service, recruit and train more helpline volunteers and deliver training to improve expertise in helping adults come to terms with abuse that happened in childhood. In addition, individual therapy will now be available to children under 12 who have experienced sexual trauma, but who do not meet criteria to access support through Child and Mental Health Service – this closes a current gap in service provision.

3. Breakdown of PCC funding decisions

The below provides a breakdown of successful applications and the funding awarded:

Chapter 1

To award of £6744.96 to Chapter 1 refuge to increase specialist support worker hours by 15 hours a week. The support empowers women to take back control of their lives by gaining and maintaining skills and confidence necessary for independent life in the community. Through one to one and group work, women are helped to understand what has happened to them, how their children are affected by being exposed to abuse and how their lives are improved when the abuse is removed. The funds will also allow the refuge to buy resources for use by the clients in the refuge, such as computers and televisions.

yourSanctuary

To award £11,000 to yourSanctuary to extend the existing male domestic abuse outreach service currently operating in North West Surrey to the whole of the county. In 2013/14 Surrey DA services received over 300 male referrals, which represent just over 8% of total referrals for the year. Male victims experience the same emotions and issues that female victims do, however they face additional barriers and challenges in seeking support because of perceived gender stereotypes. By extending the service across the county, males can have the choice of engaging with a male and/or female outreach worker.

yourSanctuary

To award £7,200 to yourSanctuary to extend the support service in two refuges, which provide a safe haven for women and children fleeing domestic abuse. Whilst staying at the refuge, the women will engage with specialist support workers who provide emotional and practical support to enable them to cope and recover from the trauma of what they have experienced. The funding will enable the support workers to provide more one-to-one sessions, activities and daily ad hoc support, with more time available to assist women to access benefits, housing and other advice.

East Surrey Domestic Abuse Services (ESDAS)

To award £55,300 to ESDAS to provide specialist services for children and young people affected by domestic abuse across the county. A children's worker currently operates only in East Surrey with ESDAS and this funding will enable the remaining three Outreach providers to recruit specialist workers. Children and young people (ages 5-16) who have experienced and/or witnessed domestic abuse will receive one to one therapeutic support to makes sense of their experiences, feel empowered to make choices about their future and develop positive coping strategies. The service will also work with the non-abusive parent to support and encourage them as they develop their parenting skills.

East Surrey Domestic Abuse Services (ESDAS)

To award £28,401 to ESDAS to increase capability and capacity across all four Domestic Abuse Services supporting victims across Surrey. IT systems and Case Management Systems will be improved and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors will convert qualifications to become Independent Domestic & Sexual Violence Advisors and undertake further specialist training (stalking, harassment, honour based and child to parent violence).

National Association of People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)

To award £21,966 to NAPAC to provide services aimed at helping adults come to terms with abuse that happened to them in childhood, and start to reclaim their lives. It is estimated that a million children a year suffer some form of abuse, but often it is only many years later, in adult life, that this is disclosed. A range of activities will be delivered by NAPAC, including print and online resources; training for those handling initial disclosure of abuse; training for counsellors and psychotherapists; a survivor support group and recruitment and training of volunteers.

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC)

To award £20,000 to RASASC to sustain services for rape and sexual abuse survivors, which are supporting both their immediate needs and on-going recovery. Demand for RASASC services is rising and the funding will enable the charity to fully train a new Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA); provide a fund for victims to travel to meet with the ISVA; sustain the counselling service and; recruit and train more telephone helpline volunteers.

Young Witness Service

To award £20,000 to Young Witness Service to support children and young people (under the age of 18) who are either victims or witnesses of crime and who are required to give evidence at the four criminal courts in Surrey. Children and young people who are victims of crime or have witnessed it can have a wide range of complex needs. The service provides one-to-one support tailored to suit the age and learning ability of the child, designed to return the power and control often stripped away by their experience, and to restore faith in the Justice System.

Surrey & Border Partnership (SABP) NHS Foundation Trust

To award £11,972.22 to the Sexual Trauma Assessment Recovery and Support resource (STARS) established in SABP. This project addresses a current gap in service provision, by offering individual therapy and support to children under 12 who have experienced sexual trauma but do not have mental health problems and would therefore not meet criteria to access support through Child and Mental Health Service. Their individual needs will be assessed and short term therapy package will be offered to promote their recovery and reduce the risk of developing mental health problems.

4. Next steps

A further £94,641.82 remains for commissioning support services during 2014/15, with the next panel meeting in December to review grant applications. The OPCC is working closely with providers and partners to scope how this can be best allocated, with a recognition that the lead time for implementing projects this financial year has been challenging. A range of applications are underway, including further support for refuges, Child Sexual Exploitation training and awareness-raising and enhanced resources for the Sexual Assault Referral Centre.

5. Conclusion

Feedback from providers has been very positive with regard to how the OPCC has approached this new responsibility. They have welcomed the time invested to build relationships, through visits at an early stage by the Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner and Policy Officers. This in turn has given the PCC has a much deeper understanding of their operating ethos and environment. They have also commented on the openness of communication, including simply being contactable by telephone instead of using an online portal to answer queries when bid writing. There are concerns too, such as sustainability of funding, capturing outcome measurements and reporting workload. The OPCC will maintain close working relationships to assist in overcoming these challenges.

Ends