

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP16/21

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
10 JUNE 2016**

SUBJECT: VICTIMS' STRATEGY

SUMMARY:

1. As part of the work to continually improve its services to victims, a Suffolk Constabulary Victims' Strategy has been written.
2. This paper has been prepared to introduce the Strategy and outline how the Strategy will be used to improve the quality of service given to victims by the Constabulary.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to endorse the Victims' Strategy and the accompanying action plan.
2. It is recommended that the Accountability and Performance Panel review the effectiveness of the Victims' Strategy and progress of the action plan after 6 months and 12 months.

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1 Every victim of crime is important. Suffolk Constabulary recognises that every victims experience is different, and the Constabulary must tailor its services to meet the needs and expectations of those individuals. The Suffolk Constabulary Victims' Strategy has been produced to ensure that victims receive the best possible quality of service. The Strategy is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2 In October 2015 a revised Victims' Code of Practice was published by the Ministry of Justice.
- 1.3 The Code places statutory obligations on the Police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and other Criminal Justice Agencies.
- 1.4 The Victims' Strategy clearly sets out what victims can expect from organisations dealing with victims, from first point of contact, which is usually reporting a crime, through to charge and/or outcome, including a court case. The code also sets individuals rights as a victim.
- 1.5 Delivering the Victims' Strategy will also ensure that the Constabulary meets the statutory responsibilities placed on it with regard to victim care effectively and efficiently.
- 1.6 With changes in demographics, as well as new and emerging crime types such as exploitation and others affecting the most vulnerable in our communities, together with the growth in cyber enabled crime (grooming, exploitation and malicious communications) and cyber dependent crime (denial of services and fraud), there is a clear need to ensure that the services provided are effective and relevant to all victims.

The Aim of the Victims' Strategy

1.7 The aim of the Victims' Strategy is to:-

- Improve the services provided to victims by Suffolk Constabulary;
- Ensure consistency in approach regarding the quality of information provided to victims by officers and staff;
- Ensure the Constabulary is accessible and open to receiving compliments and complaints and that these are used to inform strategy and improve services;
- Ensure that officers and staff are aware of the relevant support services in receipt of grants to demonstrate connection between commissioned services and service delivery.

Delivering the Victims' Strategy

- 1.8 The Victims' Strategy has been written as a 'public facing' document to provide clarity as to what that the public can expect from Suffolk Constabulary. It will be accessible through the Suffolk Police website.
- 1.9 The Victims' Strategy is also a document for the Officers and Staff from the Constabulary who work with victims and sets out what is required and expected of them.

- 1.10 A revised leaflet has been produced that all officers will be required to hand to victims. The leaflet includes a section called 'Keeping you informed'. This ensures the Constabulary meets this part of the requirement under the victims' code. In cases where the Constabulary engages with the victim online or via the telephone the leaflet will be posted or emailed to them.

Partnership

- 1.11 In writing the Victims' Strategy partners have been consulted and engaged with ensuring that the Strategy is fit for purpose.

Partners include:-

- Criminal Injuries Compensation Board;
- Victim Support Referral and Assessment Service;
- Crimestoppers;
- Restorative Justice;
- Domestic Abuse Partnership;
- NHS Direct;
- Citizens Advice.

- 1.12 This has ensured that the Strategy is 'fit for purpose' and all of the above are content for their contact details to be provided in the information provided to victims.

Communication

- 1.13 The Victims' Strategy will be internally and externally communicated as follows:-

Internally

- The Victims' Strategy will be launched via a Force announcement on the Intranet;
- An article will be published in Constables County;
- Operational staff will be required to have an objective in their Professional Development Review (PDR) to ensure they interact and engage with victims in line with the requirements set out in the Victims' Strategy.

Externally

- A media announcement will be made launching the Victims' Strategy via traditional and social media;
- The Victims' Strategy will be made available on the Suffolk Police website;
- The Victims' Strategy will be shared with key partners and stakeholders.

Monitoring Progress

- 1.14 An action plan has been completed to ensure that work is carried out to ensure that the Victims' Strategy is delivered and that outcomes can be measured.

- 1.15 Suffolk Constabulary will monitor the completion of the action plan and delivery of the Victims' Strategy through the Victim Satisfaction and Confidence Board which is chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 There are no significant costs associated with this report.

3. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

3.1 There are no other implications for risks associated with this report.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	Yes
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes