

Scrutiny panel - responsibilities

Key Entitlements – Where data collection for scrutiny should be focussed from Ministry of justice	RAG status	Comments
Key Entitlement 1 – Be informed at key stages of the case.		
Was the victim provided with a written acknowledgement of the crime and basic details of the offence?		There is a letter available on Athena, however more work needs to be done around communicating this message to officers that this needs to be done in all investigations.
Were they informed when the suspect was arrested/charged (including bail conditions) and the outcome of the case (case stopped, acquitted, guilty plea, guilty verdict, including an explanation of the sentence)?		Most victims are updated on the case outcome however comms. required to ensure that this is updated on Athena for monitoring purposes.
Were they informed about the Victim's Right to Review scheme?		More work needs to be done around this as this only tends to be mentioned if the case outcome is No Further Action (NFA).
Key Entitlement 2 – Be referred to organisations supporting victims of crime		
Did the police explain to the victims that they will automatically pass their details to the victim support services within two working days of reporting the crime? (Victims are entitled to ask police not to pass on details). <i>The police need to seek explicit consent from victims of a sexual offence or Domestic violence or bereaved relatives.</i>		Comms. required to ensure that officers ensure they ask this question and update the result on Athena (opt-in model).
Key Entitlement 3 – Be provided with regular updates on the progress of their case.		
Was the victim provided with a written acknowledgement of the crime and basic details of the offence?		<i>As above, key Entitlement 1.</i>
Was the victim informed as to how often they will be updated on the status of the case?		Majority of victims are asked but this is not always accurately recorded – now need to address data quality and recording issues.
Was the victim provided with an explanation, within 5 working days, of a decision not to investigate a crime?		This letter is sent out by the Investigation Management Unit (IMU) as a matter of course. (Outcome 18).
Was the victim advised when no person has been charged?		Already part of the process.

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Was the victim advised of a Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decision not to prosecute?		Already part of the process.
Key Entitlement 4 – Be given the opportunity to make a victim personal statement (VPS) and be informed how it was used in court.		
Was the victim told that they are entitled to be offered the opportunity to make a VPS at the same time as giving the witness statement? When making the VPS, they are entitled to say whether or not they would like to have their VPS read aloud or played (where recorded), in court if a suspect is found guilty.		<p>This is not always done by officers at the time of taking a statement, some officers send a VPS pack to the victims in the post with a covering letter.</p> <p>Comms already undertaken in relation to VPS, linking with the VPS national guidance document produced late 2018.</p>
Was the victim advised that they are entitled to say whether they would like to read their VPS themselves or for someone else to read their VPS aloud (a family member or CPS advocate)		As above.
Key Entitlement 5 – Be informed when an offender is released under the victim contact scheme.		
In cases where an offender has committed a serious violent or sexual offence, and been sentenced to 12 months or more in custody or detained under the Mental Health Act 1983. With or without restrictions, was the victim offered the opportunity to join the Victim Contact Scheme (VCS)?		<p>Proposed approach could be to cross reference a list of actual release dates against VCS and identify if the victim is on VCS - if they are, have they been informed of release? This would require a case by case file check.</p> <p>This is a core process which will be considered as part of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) review of the code.</p>
If the victim is part of the VCS were they given a victim liaison officer who will keep them up to date with what's happening with the offender's sentence, including release provisions and possible dates.		Partnership responsibility for discussion.