

Decision Note – Victim Gateway Service



REQUEST FOR DECISION BY THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

	Policing:	Crime:	Fire & Rescue:
This decision relates to:		X	

APPROVAL (for completion by Staffordshire Commissioner only)

Rationale for approval

STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

Signature

Date 4th December 24

Date decision required by: 29th November 2024

If an urgent approval is required, please state reasons: There is a necessity for the standstill letters to be sent as soon as possible so that the Procurement Lead can start the contract paperwork, given there are a number of services commencing on the 1st April 25.

For completion by Staffordshire Commissioner’s Office only:-

Decision Number: SCP/D/202425/010

Date Received: 11 December 2024

	Yes	No
Has the required decision been considered under the guidance of the Staffordshire Commissioner’s Decision-Making Policy?	X	
Has the required decision been deemed to be a Key Decision as defined within the Staffordshire Commissioner’s Decision-Making Policy?	X	
Who is empowered to make the required decision? Staffordshire Commissioner		

Title	Contract Award – Victim Gateway Service
<p>Summary:</p> <p>This report seeks to obtain approval for the award of the Staffordshire Victim Gateway (SVG) Service following a successful tender exercise.</p> <p>The SVG service operates against a locally defined specification and the Victims’ Code of Practice (a minimum standard of service, which must be provided to victims of crime). SVG provides a confidential, free, victim-led front door service to victims of crime to help them recover from the impact of crime and the harm they have experienced, regardless of whether they have reported the crime to the police or not.</p> <p>It is delivered in a respectful, sensitive and professional manner without discrimination. The service encompasses a triage assessment, tailored advice, emotional and practical support and a managed and supported handover to specialist services.</p> <p>The service, covering Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, will commence 1st April 2025 for a period of 3 years with relevant clauses allowing for an agreed extension of up to a further 2 x 12month periods.</p> <p>The total contract value for the 5year term is ██████████ plus a non-recurrent mobilisation cost of ██████████</p>	

Recommendation:

To award the Victim Gateway Service to Victim Support

Chief Executive

I hereby approve the recommendation for consideration.

Signature

Date

04.12.2024



REPORT AND ADVICE TO THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

1. Introduction and background

The SVG service has been operating across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent since 2016. It is currently delivered by Citizens Advice Staffordshire North and Stoke-on-Trent (CASNS) and funded by the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime via the Ministry of Justice Victim Grant.

Following the Victim & Witness Needs Assessment in 2021 and the refresh undertaken in 2024 the SVG Service was re-commissioned again to continue to provide a free, confidential, high quality service across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, which will help victims cope and recover and live fulfilling, independent lives. The Needs Assessment provided an up-to-date picture of victims and witnesses, both locally and nationally. It also included a range of factors such as types and levels of need, services available and gaps in service provision.

Victim 'front door' service specifications have been requested from other Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) areas via the APCC Victim Group and reviewed to identify best practice. The review did not reveal anything significant to necessitate change from the current delivery model. All models provide a very similar function and have very similar specifications. All PCC areas fund some form of victim gateway / front door; the key variable being the funding amount (based on geography and need) and the approach (in house, externally provided or a hybrid).

Additionally, a number of facilitated engagement events with stakeholders and the market / current and prospective providers have been held. Albeit well attended, interesting and productive, there was nothing identified which would result in a case for change.

The tendering exercise therefore commenced in 2024. The exercise included market engagement events, a locally designed service specification and a clear and transparent competitive process as well as ensuring that quality and financial requirements had been met. A panel was established made up of key representatives from the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office, Procurement and the Police, who directed and maintained oversight of the tendering exercise.

The SVG service is for adult and child victims of crime (historic or current) irrespective of residence status, citizenship or nationality.

It will help victims cope and recover from the impact of crime and live fulfilling, independent lives - available regardless of whether the crime has been reported to the police or not.

The SVG service will comprise of the following elements:

- A gateway service or “front door” into support services for victims;
- A cope and recover support service for victims;
- Awareness raising for professionals and the community;
- Response to Major Incidents of Crime.

The ‘front door’, will manage and respond to the receipt of all referrals and will be accessible and welcoming, seeking to engage victims in support services; ensuring they fully know and comprehend their Rights. There will be a differentiated and graded response to enhanced, non-enhanced and vulnerable victims.

The Cope and Recover Service will provide a range of victim-led interventions to victims of crime. The interventions will be tailored, informed by the needs and risks identified in the triage assessment and will be agreed with the victim. Support will be delivered until agreed outcomes have been achieved, as negotiated with the victim.

Awareness raising sessions to professionals and the community will be delivered in order to generate referrals, raise awareness and increase knowledge and understanding of the SVG and its offer.

The Provider will also be expected to respond to major incidents of crime and will act as the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent victim service’s Single Point of Contact (in terms of providing and facilitating support for victims).

3 bids were received; one from CASNS (the incumbent), one from Victim Support and one from Citizens Advice Mid Mercia. Based on the submissions and the agreed evaluation criteria, Victim Support were identified as the preferred provider.

The total contract value for the 5year term is ██████████ plus a non-recurrent mobilisation cost of ██████████. This money will come from the Ministry of Justice Victim’s Grant.

2. Issues for consideration

The proposed recommendation will ensure the service is maintained, improved and statutory obligations are fulfilled. Quarterly monitoring and the evaluation of the service will continue to ensure a high-quality service is delivered and built upon.

It is important to note that notification of the Victim’s Grant is usually made every three years but this needs to be confirmed given the new political landscape.

3. What other options have been considered?

There are no other options for consideration.

4. Consultation and Engagement undertaken

A Victim & Witness Needs Assessment refresh was undertaken in 2024, which provides an up-to-date picture of victim and witnesses both nationally and locally.

An engagement session was held with the current service provider.

Two market engagement events took place for prospective bidders and stakeholders.

SVG specifications and investments have been sought from other PCC areas to enable comparisons to be made on service options and benchmarking.

Report Implications

5. Monitoring Officer comments:

A robust business case and recommissioning exercise has been undertaken, and due process followed.

Signature _____ Date 03.12.2024



6. Section 151 Officer comments:

Contract retendered to new supplier at a lower cost plus increased outcomes

Signature _____ Date 04.12.2024



	Yes	No
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Has legal advice (outside of that provided by the Monitoring Officer) been sought on the content of this report?	X	
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7. Legal Comments:

Legal services have been engaged throughout the re-commissioning exercise.

8. Risks - please give the details of any operational or strategic risks that are affected by this decision (add risk reference number and title below)

9. Equality Comments – please attach the completed EIA

The service is available to victims regardless of their, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and transgender.


The service provider will undertake campaigns to engage and raise awareness of hard to reach groups, including improving partner and self-referral pathways; making the service more accessible.

10. Background/supporting paper

Victim & Witness Needs Assessment Refresh 2024.
 Provider and Stakeholder engagement feedback.
 Service Specification 2024.
 SVG Business Case.
 Other PCC area specifications.

Please answer the following questions	Yes	No
11. Public access to information?		X
12. Does this decision involve the processing of personal data? (If yes please attach a completed Data Impact Assessment)		X
13. Is the publication of this form to be deferred? (If yes approx. how long?)		X
14. Does this form contain commercial or operationally sensitive information which is to be redacted?	X	

15. ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Author	Nicky Jolley
Signed	
Date	25.11.24

The purpose of this EIA is to ensure you consider any equality issues as part of your decision making when developing / reviewing your policy / procedure.

Please complete the sections below and send to the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office to be quality assured. New / revised policies cannot be published on the policy database until the EIA has passed the quality assurance process.

Title of policy/procedure:	Victim Gateway Service Award
Department:	Commissioning and Partnerships Team, OPFCC
Date:	15 th November 2024

1. Identify the aims and purpose of the policy
<p>To approve the award for the recently re-commissioned Staffordshire Victim Gateway Service (SVG).</p> <p>The SVG service will operate against a locally defined specification and the Victims' Code of Practice. It will provide a confidential, free, victim-led front door service to victims of crime to help them recover from the crime and the harm they have experienced, regardless of whether they have reported the crime to the police or not. It is delivered in a respectful, sensitive and professional manner without discrimination. The service encompasses a triage assessment, tailored advice, emotional and practical support and a managed and supported handover to specialist services.</p>
2. Identify the individuals and organisations who are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy.
<p>Victim Support Staffordshire Police Specialist Service Providers Third Sector Partners Local Authorities Victims of crime Criminal Justice Agencies</p>

3. Data

- In the financial year 2022/23 Staffordshire Police recorded a total of 97,980 crimes, a rate of 85.5 per 1,000 population.
 - 86% were victim based
 - 14% were crimes against society
- Over the last 5 years overall crime has increased by 15% (n=13,070), victim-based crimes by 10% (n=7,944) and other crimes against society by 58% (n=5,126) in Staffordshire.
- Victim-based crimes are not equally distributed across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Stoke-on-Trent consistently has the highest rates of crime.
- During 2023/24 Staffordshire Police recorded 51,539 individuals who were the victim of a crime. This figure is a 26% increase on the figures from 2019/20 where 40,994 individuals were victims of a recorded crime.
- Over half of victims were victims of violent crime 52%, this was by far the largest category. A further 10% were victims of theft, 9% of arson and criminal damage and 8% were victims of vehicle crime.

3.1 Age

This policy will not discriminate against age. The service is available to any victim regardless of their age.

3.2 Disability

This policy will not discriminate against disability. The service is available to any victim regardless of their disability.

3.3 Race

This policy will not discriminate against race. The service is available to any victim regardless of their race.

3.4 Religion or Belief

This policy will not discriminate against religion or belief. The service is available to any victim regardless of their religion or belief.

3.5 Sex

This policy will not discriminate against sex. The service is available to any victim regardless of their sex.

3.6 Sexual Orientation

This policy will not discriminate against sexual orientation. The service is available to any victim regardless of their sexual orientation.

3.7 Transgender

This policy will not discriminate against transgender. The service is available to any transgender victim.

4. Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy for all or any of the protected groups. This could include information you have obtained from other sources e.g. Home Office.

The data detailed in sections 4.1 to 4.7 has been taken from the Victim & Witness Needs Assessment 2024 and relates to the reporting period 2023/24.

4.1 Age

- The largest proportion of recorded victims in Staffordshire are made up of those aged 30 to 39 (22%) while those aged 18 to 39 account for 43% of all victims. Overall, the average age of all victims of crime is 38.

4.2 Disability

There is no data to support this group, however, this service will be available to any victim regardless of their disability.

4.3 Race

- Staffordshire police data shows that around 11% of victims belong to Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups compared with 9% in the Census data for 2021 for the force-area population.

4.4 Religion or Belief

There is no data to support this group, however, this service will be available to any victim regardless of their religion or belief.

4.5 Sex

- Staffordshire Females represent 52% and males represent 47% of all local crimes. While around 52% of all local crimes involve a female victim, this increases to 60% for violent offences (other) to 83% for sexual offences.

4.6 Sexual Orientation

There is no data to support this group, however, this service will be available to any victim regardless of their sexual orientation.

4.7 Transgender

There is no data to support this group, however, this service will be available to any transgender victim.

5. Consultation

The following consultation exercises were undertaken to inform the procurement exercise, in particular the development of the service specification:

- A Victim & Witness Needs Assessment refresh was undertaken in 2024, which provides an up-to-date picture of victim and witnesses both nationally and locally.
- An engagement session was held with the current service provider.
- Two market engagement events took place for prospective bidders and stakeholders.
- Victim 'front door' specifications and investments have been requested from other PCC areas to enable comparisons to be made on service options and benchmarking.

5.1 Age

see above

5.2 Disability

See above

5.3 Race

See above

5.4 Religion or Belief

See above

5.5 Sex

See above

5.6 Sexual Orientation

See above

5.7 Transgender

See above

6. Conclusions

This project will not have an adverse impact on any of the equality strands and is available to all victims of crime.

The service will be sensitive to diversity; support individuals of all genders, ages, ethnicity and sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, languages or those with a disability and all literacy levels regardless of residence status / citizenship.

<p>6.1 Age</p> <p>See conclusions</p>
<p>6.2 Disability</p> <p>See conclusions</p>
<p>6.3 Race</p> <p>See conclusions</p>
<p>6.4 Religion or Belief</p> <p>See conclusions</p>
<p>6.5 Sex</p> <p>See conclusions</p>
<p>6.6 Sexual Orientation</p> <p>See conclusions</p>
<p>6.7 Transgender</p> <p>See conclusions</p>
<p>7. Decisions</p> <p>If the policy will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how the policy will change or why it is to continue in the same way. If no changes are proposed, the policy needs to be objectively justified.</p> <p>No negative impact expected.</p>
<p>8. Monitoring arrangements</p> <p>If the policy is new what consideration has been given to piloting the policy?</p> <p>If monitoring is not already in place what arrangements have been made to monitor the effects of the policy on equality and diversity?</p> <p>This is not a new service. It will continue to support the PFCCs drive to improve services and responses to victims of crime. Contract management and performance monitoring will continue to be overseen by the OPFCC.</p>

This equality impact assessment will be published on the OPFCC website.