



**OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR THAMES VALLEY**

Report for Decision / Information

Title: Victims First Emotional Support Service – extension of contract

Executive Summary:

The PCC's Victims Services Budget amounts to an annual grant from the MoJ of approximately £2.7m per year. Since April 2018, Thames Valley Partnership has delivered the Victims First Emotional Support Service to provide short-term interventions and advocacy support to victims with relatively low level needs.

The contract was awarded for an initial two-year term with an option to extend for up to two further years. The original contract term comes to an end on 31st March 2020 therefore a decision needs to be taken by the PCC on whether an extension period should be sought. The provider has indicated they would be prepared to accept an extension to this contract.

The recommendation to the PCC is to extend the Victims First Emotional Support Service (VFESS) for a one year period, subject to review and agreement by the OPCC of the contract price. Proposed funding for the 12 month period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 is £244,488.

Recommendation:

1. To award a 12 month contract extension to Thames Valley Partnership to continue to deliver the Victims First Emotional Support Service at a cost of £244,488 to approximately 1,200 victims of Thames Valley requiring short term and/or advocacy support.
2. To maintain robust performance management of the Service following the PCC's Contract Management Strategy with an agreed performance framework contained in an up-dated Service Level Agreement.

Police and Crime Commissioner

I hereby approve the recommendation above.

Signature

Date 27.4.20.

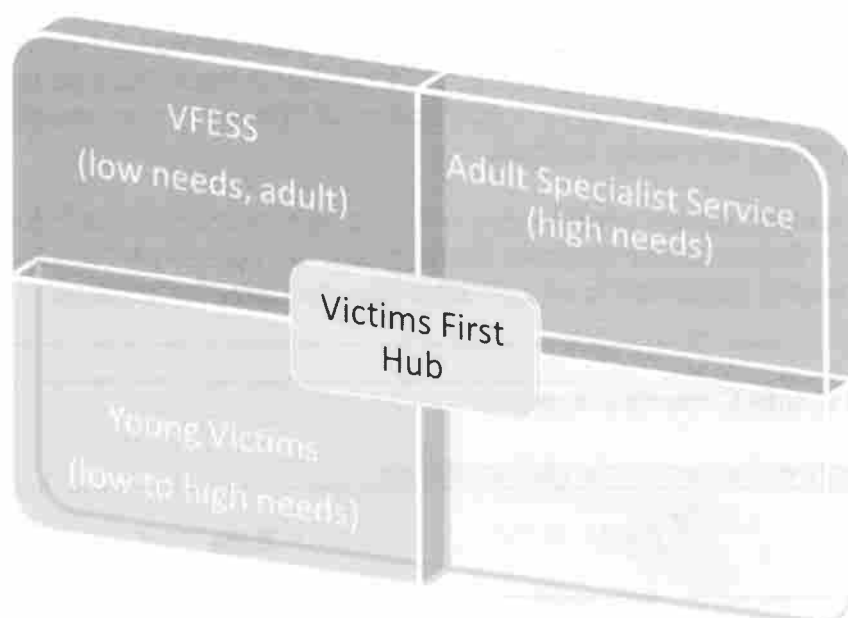
PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Government consultation, *Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses*, concluded that PCCs should become responsible for commissioning the majority of emotional and practical support services for victims in their local areas from October 2014.
- 1.2 The Thames Valley PCC's Victims Grant awarded annually from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) amounted to £2,765,254 in 2019-20 and has remained broadly similar or higher each year since 2015.
- 1.3 Thames Valley Partnership was awarded £503,063 to deliver the Victims First Emotional Support Service between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2020. The Service delivers short-term interventions and advocacy support to victims of crime across Thames Valley.

2 Issues for consideration

- 2.1 The 2-year initial term of the Contract for VFESS run by Thames Valley Partnership is due to end on 31st March 2020. The contract contains an option to extend this contract for up to two further years from 1st April 2020.
- 2.2 The PCC is entering the final phase of a three-phase, victim's services re-design plan which began in 2017. In 2017-18, the Victims First brand and website was launched; in 2018-19, the Victims First Hub was launched providing a 'single-front door' to all victim's services in Thames Valley; in 2019-20, the PCC has re-commissioned an extended Young Victims Service and a new Victims First Adult Specialist Service and undertaken a review and overhaul of the PCC's Specialist Counselling Service.
- 2.3 VFESS complements the newly designed services as depicted below:-



- 2.4 In Year 1 of the contract, a total of 1075 referrals were deal with by VFESS. The majority of these were referred from the Victims First Hub, approximately 70% of referrals were female victims, and around 50% of all referrals involved violent offences (VFESS are the only provider to offer support to standard risk domestic violence victims across Thames Valley) with other key crime categories including lower level sexual offences, anti-social behaviour offences or criminal damage, and theft offences.
- 2.5 While data is awaited for Quarter 1, Year 2 at the time of writing, the number of referrals from the Victims First Hub has continued at a commensurate rate to Year 1, or slightly higher.
- 2.6 In 2019-20, VFESS have also begun to use a newly developed a Victims 'Outcomes Star' developed jointly between the OPCC, Thames Valley Partnership and Triangle Consultancy Ltd.

3 Financial comments

- 3.1 The cost of this 12 month contract extension is £244,488.
- 3.2 Assuming a low estimate of only 1,000 referrals to the service in Year 3, this constitutes good value for money at an average cost per referral received and person supported of £245 each.

4 Legal comments

- 4.1 The existing contract provides for the option of an extension beyond the initial contract term to 31st March 2020 up to a further 2 years. Performance management information is satisfactory there have been no contract breaches reported to the OPCC during the initial term of the contract.

5 Equality comments

- 5.1 This contract offers equal access to the service across the Thames Valley Police area, and the geographical and demographic breakdown of referrals into the service are closely monitored by the OPCC. Service waiting times are also closely monitored and have led to improvement targets being set to increase volunteer support in some areas of Thames Valley.

6 Background papers

Public access to information

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the website within 1 working day of approval. Any facts and advice that should not be automatically available on request should not be included in Part 1 but instead on a separate Part 2 form. Deferment of publication is only applicable where release before that date would compromise the implementation of the decision being approved.

Is the publication of this form to be deferred? No

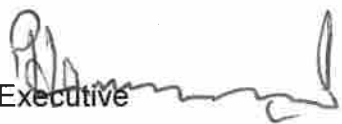
Is there a Part 2 form? No

Name & Role	Officer
Head of Unit The Service has delivered successfully for two years and continuation for a further year is recommended and meets wider commissioning strategy while new services establish in 2020-21.	Shona Morrison
Legal Advice No specific comments or legal advice	Vicki Waskett
Financial Advice This contract is fully funded by the annual grant from the MoJ for Victim and Witness services	Ian Thompson
Equalities and Diversity No specific comments	

STATUTORY CHIEF OFFICERS' APPROVAL

We have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that financial and legal advice have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

We are satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Chief Executive 

Date 27/1/2020


 Chief Finance Officer

Date 27/1/20