

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

28th November 2024

Commissioning Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 One of the key roles of Police and Crime Commissioners is commissioning projects, services and activities geared towards promoting community safety, mitigating offending behaviour and providing support for victims of crime.
- 1.2 During 2023/24 the OPCC managed over £6 million of funding to support this aim. A considerable portion of this funds Surrey-based charities and organisations, enabling the OPCC to offer support that aligns with the requirements of Surrey's residents whilst fostering long-term local resilience.
- 1.3 **The Head of Policy and Commissioning will provide a presentation to the Panel at its meeting, setting out the OPCC's commissioning activities in more detail. However, to provide greater context, this paper sets out the main funding streams used by the team to support local services.**

2. Victim Services

- 2.1 In October 2014 Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales took on responsibility for the commissioning of support services for victims and witnesses of crime. This had previously been undertaken nationally by the MoJ.
- 2.2 Each financial year, the MoJ devolves circa £1.4 million to the OPCC for Surrey, to support delivery of victim support services. In addition, the OPCC makes periodic bids for additional funding to government to support specific initiatives and has historically also used a proportion of its own internal budget to top-up this central funding. In Surrey, victims funding is allocated to two areas of delivery, both of which are open to all Surrey residents, irrespective of whether they have formally reported a crime to the police:

2.2.1 Victim referral, assessment and local support service

- 2.2.2 On 1 April 2019, the OPCC established a new Victim and Witness Care Unit (VAWCU), designed in collaboration with and operated by Surrey Police.

2.2.3 This professionally trained team was established to help victims of crime cope and, as far as possible, recover from their experience, putting in place care plans tailored to the needs of the individual. All victims of crime in Surrey are automatically referred to the Unit at the point a crime is reported, with subsequent contact based on an individual's need and vulnerability. Individuals can also self-refer or use the Unit's dedicated website (<https://victimandwitnesscare.org.uk>) to find local specialist support services.

2.2.4 The team also provides support to witnesses of crime, linking with other criminal justice agencies, departments and charitable organisations in order to obtain information and ensure individuals are kept informed about their case and possible attendance at court. At its heart, the VAWCU is designed to allow a truly end-to-end service for victims of crime, from initial contact through to court, and beyond if needed.

2.2.5 The OPCC's Head of Policy and Commissioning chairs the bi-monthly Victim and Witness Care Unit Governance Board, which oversees and supports the continued development and performance of the Unit.

2.2.6 Specialist Support Services

2.2.7 There are victims of crime and survivors who, due to the nature of their experience, circumstances or both, require more specialist, longer-term support to rebuild their lives. This includes individuals who suffer domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences, children and victims of modern slavery.

2.2.8 Dedicated funding from the OPCC allows for the provision of this expert and targeted support, predominantly delivered by local independent organisations and third sector providers.

3. The Reducing Reoffending Fund

3.1 The RRF was introduced in 2018 to enable the OPCC to support a broad spectrum of services and projects aimed specifically at reducing reoffending in Surrey in line with its Reducing Reoffending Strategy. This has included a focus on key social factors such as a lack of housing, education training & employment, positive relationships, support for women who have experienced sexual or domestic abuse and substance misuse issues.

4. Community Safety Fund

4.1 The Community Safety Fund was introduced in 2013 to enable the Police and Crime Commissioner to commission and support services through grants that improve communities and tackle community safety concerns. Working alongside the Reducing Reoffending Fund and the Victim's Fund, the CSF is flexible and helps meet the needs of communities.

5. Children and Young People Fund

5.1 Introduced in 2023, the Children and Young People Fund provides funding to local organisations that help children and young people to lead safe and fulfilling lives.

Support from the OPCC includes funding to protect children and young people from harm, reduce risks and create opportunities through education, training and work.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Panel is asked to note the content of this report and the presentation.

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