

**VICTIM SERVICES, VICTIM SATISFACTION**

**AND**

**REPEAT VICTIMS.**

**1. Overview.**

One of the four key objectives of the Police and Crime Commissioner's 'Police and Crime Plan 2016-2021' is putting victims and survivors first. A 'Victims and Witnesses Charter' was consequently a pledge the PCC made during his election and the OPCC has subsequently worked closely with Warwickshire Police and the other agencies involved in delivering justice to make it a reality. The Charter consists of nine key expectations that set out the standards of service communities should receive from the police and criminal justice agencies in the county if they fall victim to, or witness, a crime.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018, a report was presented by the PCC to the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) on the impact of the Charter since its launch in November 2017. The report also presented an opportunity to more generally review the situation with the provision of victim and witnesses services. The report discussed in some detail the role at that time of Warwickshire Police's Victim Management Unit (VMU) located in the Harm Hub, the purpose of which was to work with repeat victims of crime and reduce their chances of repeat victimisation. It also mentioned the role of Victim Support in supporting victims of crime and the significant investment by the PCC in providing specialist support to victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and violence and child sexual exploitation.

This report again discusses these issues in further detail, summarising the progress made and the challenges that still exist to achieve the PCC's objective and realise the ambition of Warwickshire Police to be 'To be great at protecting the most vulnerable'.

**VICTIM SERVICES**

- i. [The PCP requests a report to detail the work of the commissioned Victim Services and how this has impacted on the wider Warwickshire Police Force.](#)

On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 a new set of PCC commissioned victim services commenced in Warwickshire. This followed an extensive commissioning process, based on the completion of the first ever comprehensive Victim's Needs Assessment (VNA) in the county. Key messages from the assessment were: -

- Victims wanted choice and flexible access to different types of support.
- Support services needed police involvement but needed to retain independence.
- Support services for sexual crimes needed to be specialist and available long term.

Contracts were subsequently granted to the following organisations to provide these services: -

- i. **Victim Support** - To provide general support services to victims of crime.
- ii. **RoSA and Barnardo's** - To provide support services in respect of sexual assault and child sexual exploitation.

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The contracts are for three years, with the options to extend their duration if performance is deemed satisfactory.

In addition, there are also jointly commissioned existing services with: -

- i. **Refuge** - To provide support to victims of domestic abuse.
- ii. **NHS** - To provide support services for paediatric victims of sexual assault.

### **2. Victim Support.**

The 'Code of Practice for Victims of Crime 2015' requires PCCs to be able to offer free support services to all victims of crime. This services is principally delivered by Victim Support in Warwickshire, through an annual contract worth £489k. The contract is designed to specifically offer support to victims of crime who are identified as particularly vulnerable.

Vulnerability assessment is largely based upon age, as older and younger victims of crime are of specific concern. However, mental health, physical health and identifying protected characteristics also feature prominently in determining vulnerability. However, there are no hard and fast rules and if a victim of crime is deemed to be vulnerable then priority support services will be offered.

There is a strong reliance on Warwickshire Police to identify vulnerability for the service to be effective and efficient. There is also a requirement in respect of the accurate and timely recording of victim's personal data in a crime recording context, where Athena is critical to its effective management. There have been well documented challenges to the force in respect of Athena processes, which have also impacted on Victim Support function. The force's Athena user group is focussed on supporting the workforce to make the best use of Athena. Developing the skills of those officers and staff who use the system is critical.

The Victim Support contract also requires specific crime classifications to require priority attention, where the victim will be identified and contacted, needs assessed and support offered: -

- Violence.
- Burglary.
- Hate Crime.
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
- Cyber enabled crime.

In order to try and ensure maximum efficiency and to develop an Integrated Victim Management (IVM) philosophy, Victim Support were required to become principally located at Bedworth Police Station with the Victim Management Unit (VMU) of the force's Harm Hub. The purpose of the VMU is to ensure the joint resources of Warwickshire Police and Victim Support are co-ordinated to meet the needs of the victim, problem solve, prevent crime and reduce repeat victimisation.

Whilst the concept is sound, the first year of operating in this format has not been completely smooth. The termination of the alliance resulting in the force having to re-organise staff and re-establish structures has presented challenges for those involved in delivering IVM services. There is, however,

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an immense partnership will to get the right service to consistently, effectively and efficiently deliver on the vision.

On average Victim Support will scrutinise about 4,000 referrals per financial quarter. Most of those referrals are from Warwickshire Police. Experience shows approximately 75% of victims will not require any substantial support, but are nonetheless grateful and reassured by the contact made and offer of support provided. The remainder will require ongoing support of some sort.

Most support needs are dealt with over a relatively short time scale, a minority require longer term commitment that are provided without time limits. Typically support needs can comprise of advice, advocacy, emotional support, financial support, practical support, information provision, personal safety advice and access to restorative justice processes.

In respect of repeat victims, there is broadly a downward trend and this cohort attracts a lot of scrutiny and tailored response. The number of victims that are subject to multiple repeat offences are relatively few.

The Victim Support contract also requires the delivery of positive outcomes, as well as outputs. As a consequence Victim Support report on the differences its service has made in respect of personal wellbeing, re-integration, perception of safety, feeling informed, experience of the criminal justice system and the ability to cope. The data strongly suggests that victims receiving integrated support report positive benefits as they progress along their journey of cope and recovery.

Most victims requiring support simply want a reliable, consistent and efficient point of contact that is informative and provides understanding and reassurance. It is the constant challenge to all involved, from the point of very first contact to disengagement at the end of the victim's journey, to consistently get it right.

### **3. Rape or Sexual Abuse Support (RoSA).**

The key elements of the Sexual Abuse and Violence Recovery Service are that RoSA will help assure the short and long term emotional, sexual and physical safety of victims of rape, sexual violence and sexual abuse.

RoSA also provide an ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Adviser) and ChISVA service (Child Independent Sexual Violence Adviser) for victims of sexual abuse and violence. For RoSA to be successful it is vital they are committed to working in a multi-agency framework approach actively and positively engaging with all agencies from across all sectors.

The impact on Warwickshire Police is that they must also be actively part of that multi-agency approach committed to safeguarding and working in the best interests of the victims immediate and longer term needs. The force, therefore, must be ready to respond to increased victim referral and expectations. For that commitment to be effective and efficient, Warwickshire Police must ensure that their relevant officers and staff are trained to the appropriate skill levels to ensure best forensic opportunities, specialist evidence capture, judicial case progression and constructive participation in a safe, skilled and empathetic victim support process.

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In terms of the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences and in particularly the most serious sexual offences, there are distinct pressures on the police and the whole criminal justice system at present. Court availability, disclosure complexities, media scrutiny, victim blaming, and victim digital history are just some of the pressures that can impact on the chances of a successful prosecution. It is no longer exceptional for some three years to elapse from the point of victim first contact to actual trial. Some victims cannot endure that period of waiting and have been failed by the system.

An assessment of the commissioned service so far indicates that the service is performing well against the specification of the contract. There have been a total of 181 individuals referred to the service (125 adults and 56 children / young people). Increases have been noted in referrals from police, education, local authority and NHS. However, there has been a decrease in self-referrals. The total number of clients receiving a service to date is 614 (479 adults and 135 children / young people). A total of 188 people have left the service - all showing improvements against the set outcomes.

### 4. Barnardo's.

The Child Sexual Exploitation Victim Service provides support across Warwickshire to children and young people aged less than 18 years who may be vulnerable to being sexually exploited, are being groomed or targeted for the purposes of sexual exploitation or are being sexually exploited through both physical contact and through the use of technology.

Referrals to the service are through Warwickshire Police, other victim services and through self or parent / carer referrals and from case allocation following a multi-agency case allocation meeting. A structured, multi-agency approach is required to support victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), supported by effective local safeguarding arrangements and information sharing.

Barnardo's are thoroughly integrated into local partnership working, structures and pathways, with an understanding of the local thresholds for engagement and the need to liaise with other agencies and services in the county.

Barnardo's contribute to and operate as part of the Warwickshire CSE multi-agency approach by engaging with multi-agency meetings to work within agreed operating models, providing operational responses, delivering an effective service and responding to patterns and trends of high risk issues. They also provide outreach and training provision which contributes to the prevention and reduction of crime by delivering CSE training and awareness raising programmes in line with Warwickshire's multi-agency CSE strategy and in partnership with Warwickshire Police, Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Board.

The contract is performing well against the specification. The Barnardo's workers are embedded within the multi-agency child exploitation, missing and trafficking team at the Leamington Justice Centre. This is a good reflection of Warwickshire Police and their commitment to engage with this very vulnerable cohort of victims. There are currently 53 young people receiving support but the team is very aware of the constantly changing needs of exploited young people. Work is currently underway to ensure working models are able to meet the challenging demand.

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Barnardo's have delivered training to over a 1000 individuals and professionals in this first contract year so far and have worked with 16 agencies to progress the understanding and needs of this form of exploitation. Social media is also a powerful influencer and so far Facebook posts have reached 67,106 individuals in Warwickshire and beyond.

### **VICTIM SATISFACTION**

- ii. Victim satisfaction is central to assessing the effectiveness of Warwickshire Police and the PCP requests the PCC to bring a report detailing the work being done to improve satisfaction.

#### **5. Introduction**

Over the last two decades the Home Office (HO) has required police forces to measure victim satisfaction as part of the Annual Data Requirement. This consisted of measuring victim satisfaction for five 'service stages' for a prescribed set of crime types (including particular categories of burglary, vehicle and violent offences) and was restricted to certain types of victims. Most recently, the Home Office required that all forces collect data using a telephone interviewing methodology.

From April 2017, the only mandatory measure of victim satisfaction required by the HO is that of victims of domestic abuse (DA). Forces are also able to decide which methodology they use to collect this data. The rationale behind this is that forces should focus on what they would consider to be their priority crimes. Although the Home Office does not collect comparative data, the expectation is that forces will continue to solicit feedback from victims of crime in line with their own strategic priorities at the local level and, most importantly, to use this feedback to improve services.

#### **6. Victim Satisfaction Surveys: The Alliance Context**

At present, the victim satisfaction surveys are conducted by the Consultation and Engagement (C&E) team that sits within Analysis and Service Improvement (A&SI). On the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020, A&SI will become disaggregated from the alliance as a consequence of its termination, and until this time A&SI will continue to deliver its function to both forces. A commercial company has been contracted by Warwickshire Police to deliver the victim satisfaction surveys once the transition of A&SI has been completed.

#### **7. Methodology**

In line with the previously HO mandated requirements, there are currently three surveys that are conducted using the five service stages, namely: -

1. Aggregate - consisting of: -
  - Burglary
  - Vehicle Crime
  - Violent Crime
2. Domestic Abuse
3. Hate Crime

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A seven-point satisfaction scale is used, with victims being able to select a response from the following options: -

1. Completely satisfied
2. Very satisfied
3. Fairly satisfied
4. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
5. Fairly dissatisfied
6. Very dissatisfied
7. Completely dissatisfied

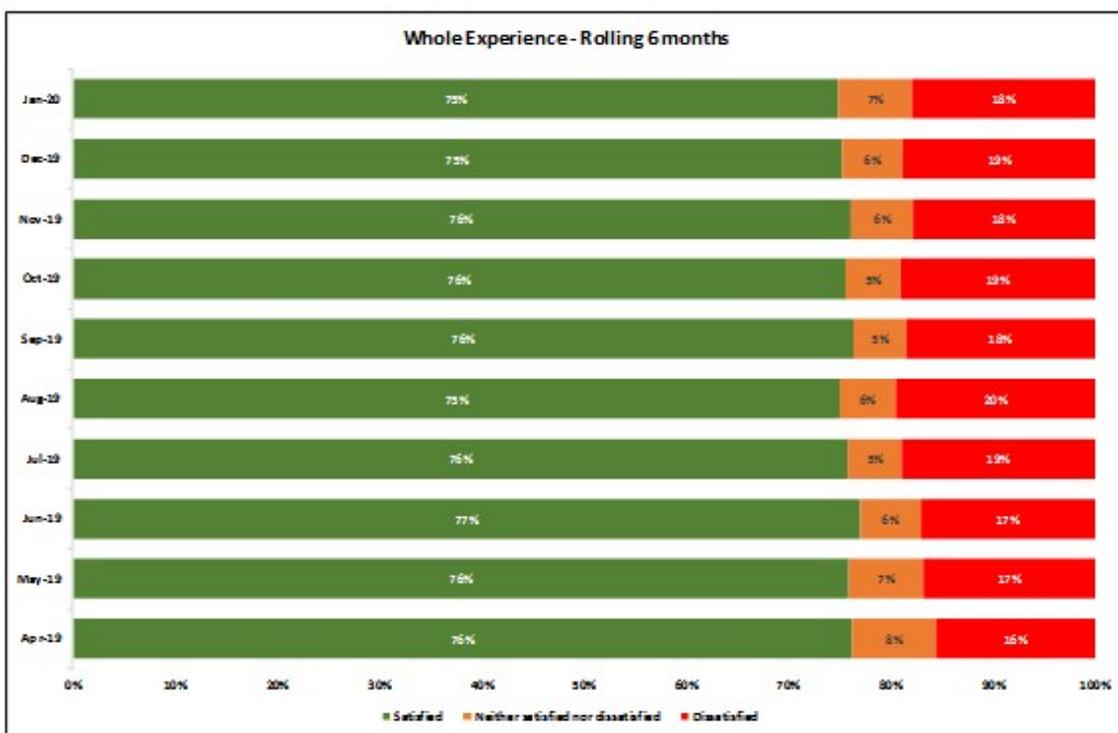
The surveys are undertaken between 6 and 12 weeks after a crime record is reported, the rationale for the time frame is that at this point in the ‘victim journey’ the victim will have been through the five service stages, including the level of satisfaction with how well they were kept informed.

### 8. Performance

#### i. **Aggregate Crime.**

The current performance levels for Warwickshire Police are as follows: -

**Figure 1- Aggregate Whole Experience satisfaction rates (2019/20)**



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Figure 2 - Aggregate Whole Experience satisfaction rates (Jan 2018 to Dec 2019)

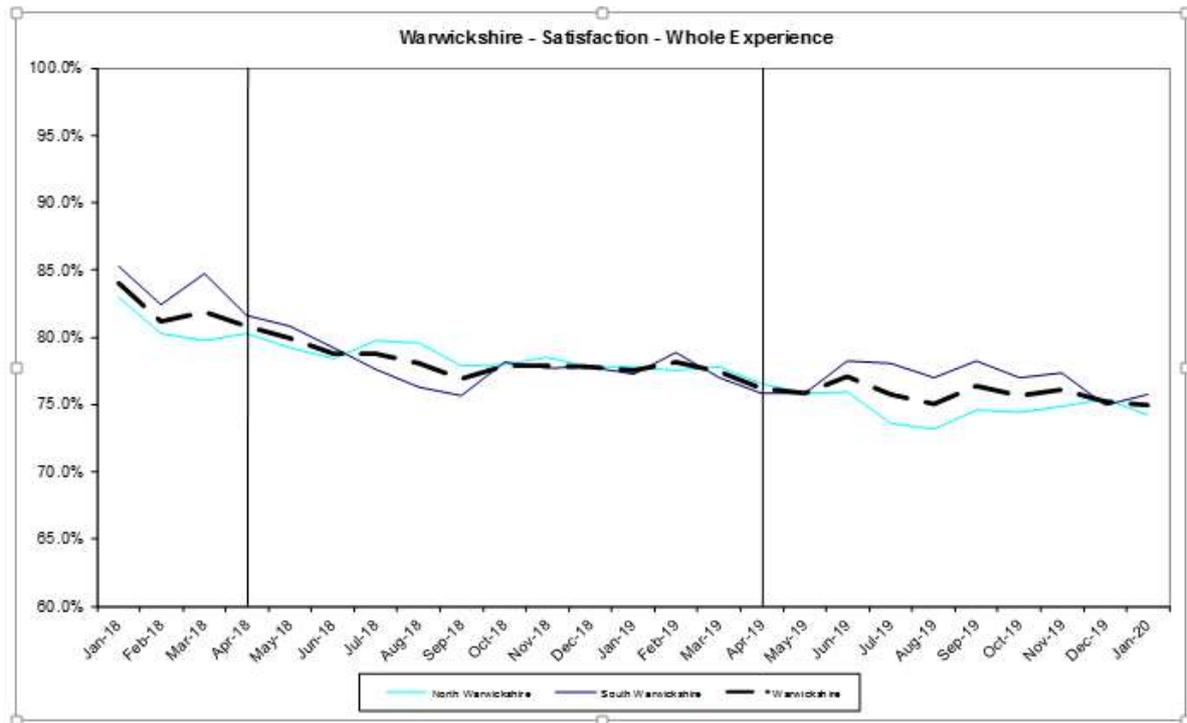


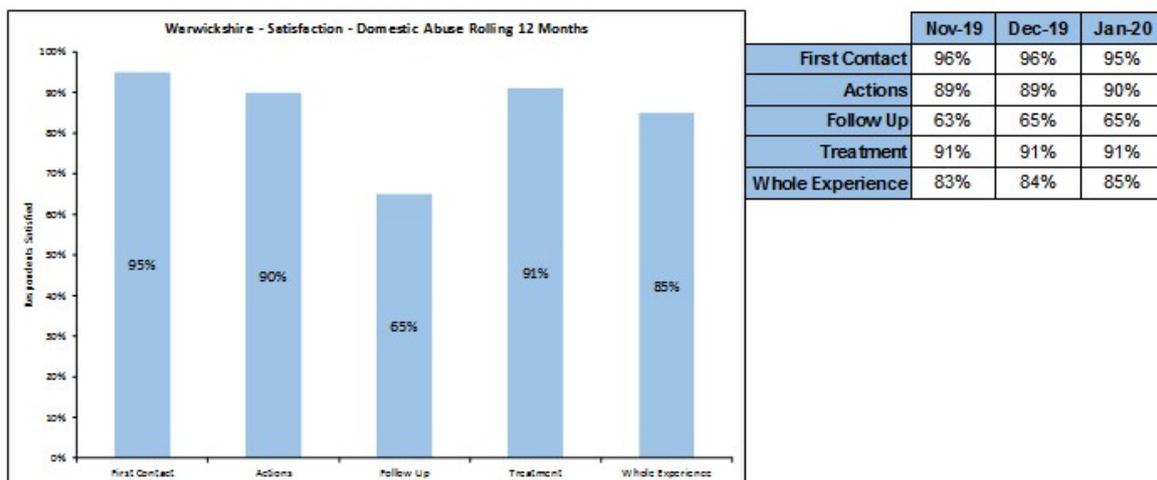
Figure 3 - Aggregate offences victim satisfaction across the 5 service stages (rolling 3 months YTD)

User Satisfaction - Rolling 3 months					
	Burglary	Vehicle Crime	Violent Crime	All (Standard Survey)	Hate
Ease of Contact	96.8%	92.3%	91.4%	93.0%	94.2%
Actions	85.5%	65.6%	73.6%	74.0%	78.2%
Follow Up	72.7%	47.7%	62.8%	61.2%	72.5%
Treatment	94.4%	91.6%	90.4%	91.8%	89.4%
Whole Experience	85.9%	73.2%	75.2%	77.2%	82.5%

Of note are the relatively low levels of 'Follow-Up', particularly for vehicle crime at 47%.

ii. Domestic Abuse (DA)

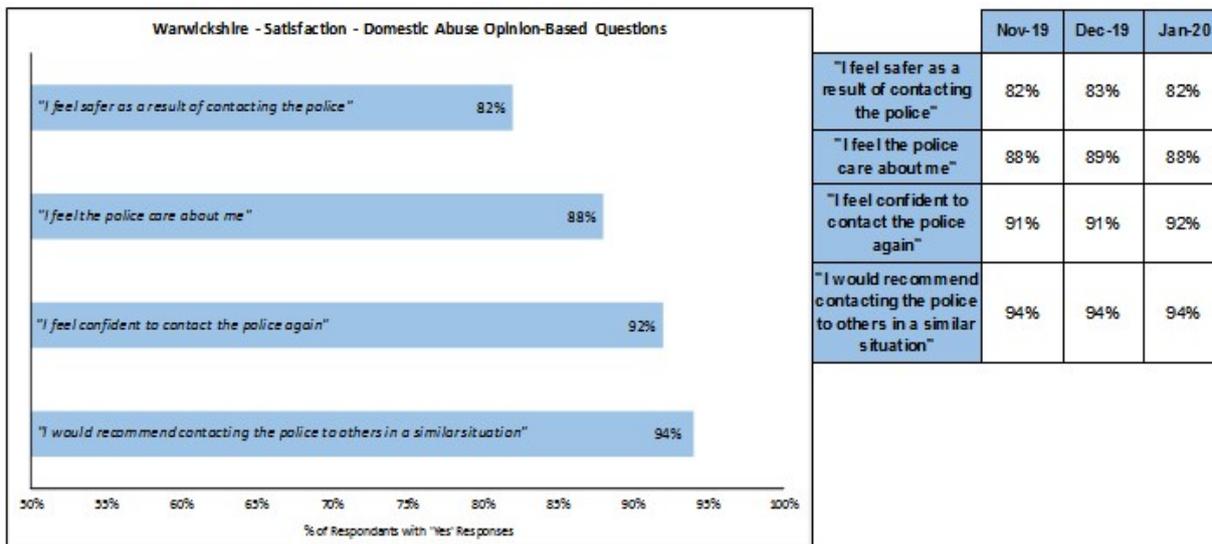
Figure 4 - DA victim satisfaction across the 5 service stages (rolling 12 months).



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The domestic abuse satisfaction survey aims to gain a better understanding of how police actions affect the victim’s experience. So, as well as measuring the five stages of satisfaction a series of opinion-based closed questions are also included in the survey, as shown in Figure 5.

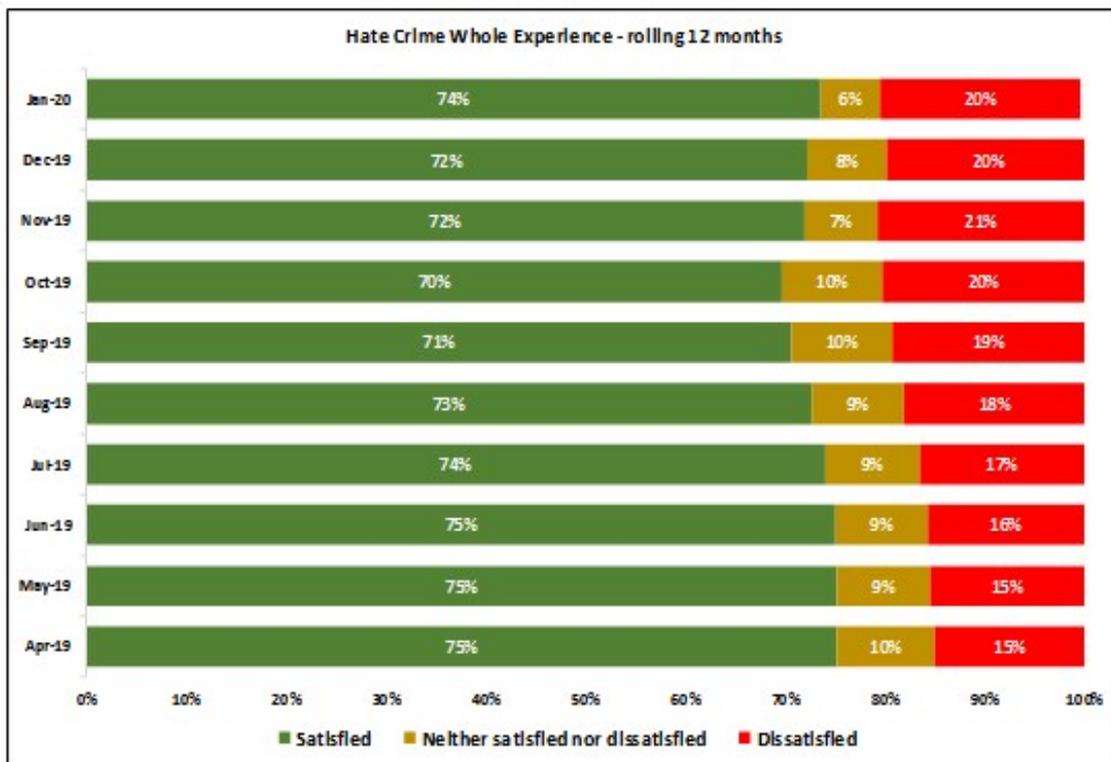
**Figure 5 - DA victims opinions (Nov19 to January20).**



Of note is that 94% of victims would ‘recommend contacting the police to others in a similar situation’.

**iii. Hate Crime.**

**Figure 6 - Hate Crime Whole Experience satisfaction rates (rolling 12 months)**



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### 9. Commentary.

The more detailed data in Figure 3 (from the force's 'Performance Dashboard') illustrates that the follow-up element continues to be a weakness in the process of the victims journey, particularly in respect of vehicle crime and violent crime. It is not clear as to whether the cause is omission, a process issue, or some other factor. There is nonetheless a strong correlation between the follow-up element and the overall satisfaction rates, which detract from the strong performance seen in some of the other areas of the victim satisfaction metrics.

Of relevance is the investigative 'pathway' a crime may take through the organisation. For example, some 40% of all crime is dealt with by the Crime Bureau and its Telephone Investigators. In the absence of any lines of enquiry the crime may be filed soon after its report. Conversely, a burglary dwelling will usually be investigated by the Serious and Complex (CID) crime teams and be retained whilst lines of enquiry are developed and follow-up is provided to the victim by the officer in the case (OIC).

The differences seen in the victim follow-up for the three categories of aggregate victim satisfaction may therefore be indicative of a process issue, rather than officer behaviour. In the case of vehicle crime for example, the crime may have been dealt with by the Crime Bureau and filed relatively early in the process, the survey is therefore attempting to measure some six weeks later a follow-up service that is not actually provided for that particular type of investigation.

The Investigation, Standards and Outcome (ISO) Board has initiated some work to better understand and address this issue. This board group has recently evolved in name to become the Investigations and Victim Satisfaction Board, in order to reflect its equal focus on the objectives of the Victims Code and its compliance.

This Board is supported by the Task and Finish Group that has been established to drive activity and implementation. As part of this work, the Service Improvement Team (SIT) of A&SI dip-sample investigations and provide analysis on the findings, together with tracking the actions of the ISO.

**Figure 7 - Investigations Dip Sampling (rolling 6 months)**

Rolling 6 months						
	Crime Data Integrity	Safeguarding / Vulnerability	Investigative Strategy	Supervision	Victim Update	Average No. Respondents Per Area
Mar-19	92%	89%	81%	65%	68%	323
Apr-19	94%	90%	84%	69%	67%	298
May-19	95%	91%	86%	71%	67%	308
Jun-19	95%	91%	86%	72%	68%	302
Jul-19	94%	88%	85%	75%	69%	279
Aug-19	94%	88%	85%	72%	68%	275
Sep-19	93%	88%	82%	64%	68%	277
New sampling method implemented						
Nov-19	NA	87%	81%	64%	67%	356

Through this audit process, supervisory input into crime investigations has been identified as both a weakness and a significant factor in delivering investigative improvement, along with rectifying issues associated with inconsistent data input into Athena in respect of victim contact.

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There have been a number of initiatives introduced to rectify this supervisory issue, including Supervisor Development Days, Officer Development Plans, Supervisor Passport Scheme and the inclusion of relevant criteria for promotion. More specifically a Victims of Code training package has been delivered to all supervisors, which includes prescriptive instructions on the recording of victim contact on Athena to improve compliance.

In respect of Hate Crime, the survey sample is small and therefore maybe subject to wide fluctuations and for this reason it is represented on rolling six month basis. The current rate of 74% of Hate Crime victims being satisfied with the service provided is disappointing given the potential vulnerability of the victims of this crime type. The OPCC have consequently requested that further analytical work is undertaken to better understand the causes. This is to include exploring if there is a distinction between the victim satisfaction rates of those victims subject to a Hate Crime (involving a statutory criminal offence) and those subject to a Hate Incident (an event without a statutory criminal offence), which are subject to entirely different processes and levels of police response that may not meet with the victims expectations.

### **10. Victim Satisfaction Review.**

In July 2018, an external review of the alliance's delivery of its victim satisfaction surveys was commissioned, with a view to professionalising the approach to gathering this data and using it to support the drive to increase victim satisfaction. In December 2018 a report into the findings of the review was published, which contained a number recommendations. Whilst these recommendations were accepted by Warwickshire Police at the time, they were not universally conceded by the alliance. The key points from the review were: -

1. There needs to be a greater focus on understanding the dynamics of satisfaction (i.e. the reasons why some people are more and others less satisfied, and what can be done about achieving improvements).
2. The 'performance culture' needs to evolve from having, primarily, a monitoring function to one which is conducive to gaining a deeper level of understanding around victim satisfaction in order to inform service improvement. This means letting go of the idea that the data must be both recent and local - in truth, they need be neither.
3. There needs to a shift in the performance culture with an increased focus on the broad dynamics of satisfaction, including reassurance, and less of a focus on satisfaction at geographical areas on a month-by-month basis.
4. The practice of holding supplementary focus groups and semi-structured interviews with victims of certain types of crime was also recommended following the review, as these can highlight issues that statistical surveys cannot identify. This is also particularly suited to the most sensitive crime types.

### **11. Proposals.**

Taking cognisance of the recommendation from the victim satisfaction review, it is proposed that once A&SI has transitioned from the alliance in April 2020 that the survey method for victim satisfaction will be amended. The new survey will have a greater emphasis on measuring victim satisfaction against

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the requirements of the Victims Code, and by association the PCC's Victims Charter, rather than the five stages of service delivery.

In the survey there will also be supplementary diagnostic questions that have been identified as being fundamental to providing reassurance to the victims of crime. This will allow measurement of tangible and specific elements of service delivery, which will in turn allow better focus on areas to improve performance. In the meantime, compliance with the Victims Code of Practice is audited by dip-sampling 60 investigations each month to review quality and compliance. A further review of how this data can more efficiently be captured from Athena is being undertaken in order to develop a more accurate recording and assessment process. In addition, the development of 'supervisor's dashboard' to contemporaneously monitor compliance is being progressed.

Analytical work conducted by A&SI from the results of the surveys will be used to identify the investigative pathways taken by certain crime types, thereby identifying where there are weaknesses in processes and thereby permitting improvements to be made.

A Public Priorities Survey is in the process of being conducted during Q4 of 2019/20, as a joint enterprise between the OPCC and Warwickshire Police, which will also provide information on public expectations in respect of victim care that will serve to inform the continuing debate on service provision and performance management.

The OPCC are fully engaged in these proposed developments and the anticipated improvements in achieving greater levels of victim satisfaction over the medium term, in volume crime, domestic abuse and hate crime are awaited with interest.

### **REPEAT VICTIMS.**

- iii. The Panel requests that the PCC bring a report on Repeat Victimisation detailing the numbers of repeat victims, how this is measured and how the force is seeking to protect those individuals with a focus on sexual offences, domestic violence and hate crimes.

#### **12. Introduction.**

The current arrangements for the management of repeat victims is centred on the Problem Solving approach that Warwickshire Police has implemented. In July 2018 the initiative was launched by the OPCC and Warwickshire Police at a joint partnership conference in Rugby. This event saw more than 100 delegates hear how structured problem solving techniques can be used across all aspects of policing to ensure that the issues that matter most to local communities can be tackled in a measured way, making the best use of resources and partnership expertise.

At the time the Chief Constable gave his commitment to putting problem solving at the heart of everything the force does in order to tackle the underlying causes of problems and finding workable solutions, with the intention of making a positive difference to communities and in doing so reduce the demand on police and other partnership resources. The force have been at the forefront of its application and this approach has most successfully been utilised to date by the Safer Neighbourhood Teams in addressing persistent issues in relation to locations, victims and offenders, thereby achieving

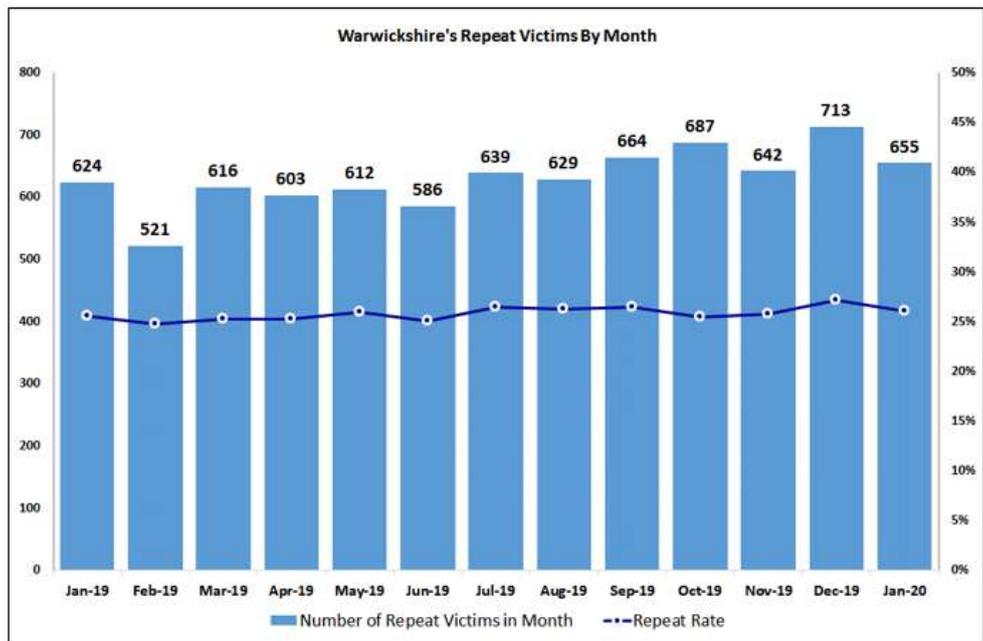
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significant reductions in anti-social behaviour as a result. It is anticipated that this success can also be replicated in reducing repeat victimisation and mitigating the harm caused.

### 13. Performance.

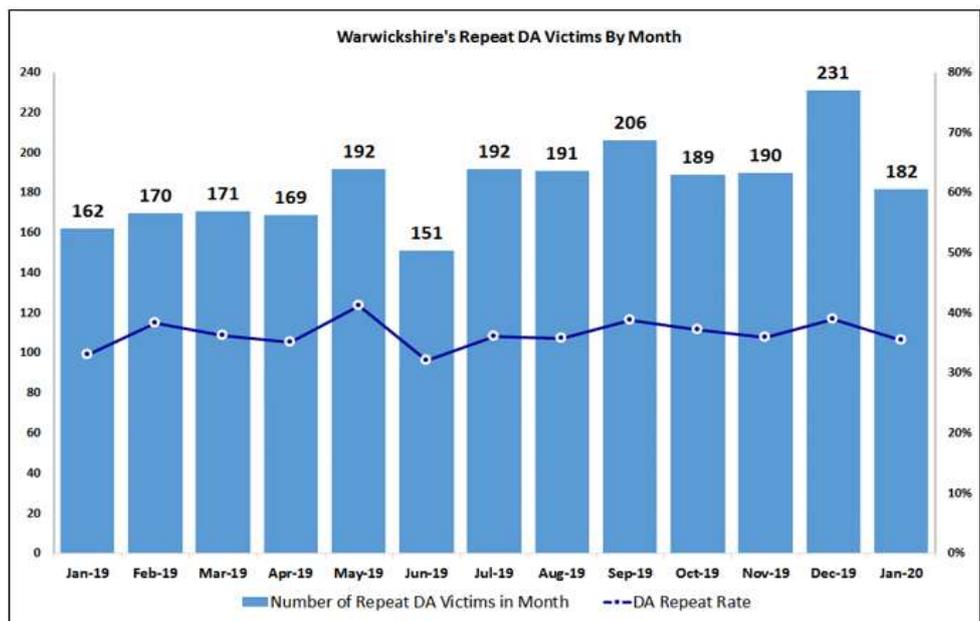
A repeat victim is defined as an individual recorded as a victim in the current reporting month that has had at least one other offence in the preceding 12 months.

**Figure 8 - Warwickshire Repeat Victims.**



In January, 26% (655) of all victims (2,517) were repeat victims. This represents an 8% reduction from the highest peak seen in the previous month. A total of 25 individuals were a repeat victim in each of the last 3 months.

**Figure 9 - Domestic Abuse Repeat Victims.**



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In January, 35% (182) of all DA victims (514) were repeat victims. This is a 21% reduction from the peak seen in the previous month. A total of 8 individuals were a repeat DA victim in each of the last 3 months.

### **14. Victim Management Unit**

The Victim Management Unit (VMU) of the Harm Hub has the principal responsibility for supporting and safeguarding the most vulnerable repeat victims. There is a distinction to be drawn between this function and that of attempting to significantly reduce the volume of repeat victims.

The VMU has recently undergone a change of management, structure and processes and is undertaking additional recruitment in order to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency in its commitment to protect the most vulnerable. The composition of the VMU is key to understanding its function, it consists of: -

1. IVM Coordinators.
2. Problem Solving Coordinators.
3. Hate Crime Support.
4. Designing out Crime Officers.
5. Licensing Officers.

Sitting alongside the VMU in the Harm Hub are the Domestic Abuse Unit (DAU), who have an investigative arm and also Domestic Abuse Referral Officers (DARO) to provide support to those victims of DA who are assessed as being at 'High' risk of harm.

- **Processes**

Prior to December 2019, the process employed to identify those victims considered to be most vulnerable was by analysing the number of crime reports made by a victim. The IVM Coordinators would then create a report on those victims with the highest number of crimes and then arrange a multi-agency meeting with partner agencies. Any actions for the police would be cascaded to the OIC and actions for partners would be allocated to them. A monthly meeting with partners would then be held to review the progress made.

Unfortunately, these monthly meetings were often a duplication of the Problem Solving Meetings that were being held with the SNTs and partners. It was felt that the process lacked clear ownership of the problem solving process, created duplication and was failing to reduce the demand being undertaken by the SNT and other departments who had ownership of the investigations.

The new processes introduced are that the repeat victim data is still reviewed by the IVM Coordinators on a daily basis. However, instead of creating a list of those victims featuring the **highest** number of crimes, the focus is now more on the assessment of the **vulnerability** of the victim. In such cases, the IVM Coordinator will take each individual identified as high risk from the repeat victim data and research the background information from available information systems. The IVM Coordinator will then create Problem Solving Plan referral form. This referral is then assessed by the manager as to its suitability for a formal Problem Solving Plan (PSP) to be created. If agreed, then the matter is

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allocated to one of the VMU Problem Solving Officers to develop a PSP. They will then take on the problem solving process, liaising with the OIC (who still retains ownership for any investigations) and any partner agencies identified. Those referrals that don't meet the criteria for escalation into a PSP will be offered ongoing Harm Hub support, advice and partnership referral.

The previous monthly meeting held with all partners is now condensed into a direct meeting with only those involved, achieving greater focus and efficiency. This also means that tasks required to try to resolve issues or protect individuals occur more urgently and do not need to wait days or weeks to occur. The increasing expertise of the VMU in the PSP process enables the different resources available in the multi-faceted Harm Hub to be utilised more effectively.

### **15. Domestic Abuse.**

All domestic abuse (DA) incidents are reviewed by the Harm Assessment Unit (HAU) of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) who will orchestrate actions with partner agencies as needed. All DA incidents are graded on the perceived risk of harm as either High / Medium / Standard following the completion of a DASH form.

If graded as High risk, then alongside the criminal investigation a Risk Management Plan (RMP) is created and allocated to Domestic Abuse Risk Officer (DARO) in the Domestic Abuse Unit (DAU) of the Harm Hub to own and progress.

If three or more Medium risk, or four or more Standard risk with children involved occur in a 12 month rolling period, then these will be reviewed for consideration of taking to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for a multi-agency focused approach.

If identified as Medium risk (or Standard moving to Medium risk) and any repeat circumstances are identified, then alongside the investigation there will be consideration given to creating a RMP and a request for SNT intervention to manage the activity required.

The appointment of a DA Protection Order Officer to manage the perpetrator programmes and the application of protective orders from both the criminal and civil courts should further reduce DA victimisation. Of note is that the PCC has allocated £68,000 under the Commissioner Grant Scheme 2020/21 in order to fund DA perpetrator projects.

A further enhanced support provision for victims of DA is being piloted in Rugby. This initiative involves a specific single point of contact for RMPs across the policing area to allow a more consistent practise with vulnerable victims. Initial feedback shows that approach has benefited the safeguarding of Medium risk DA victims, led to more confidence in the criminal justice system and improved referrals to support agencies, thereby raising the victims trust and confidence in the police.

### **16. Hate Crime**

Prior to September 2019 the Harm Hub incorporated a High Harm Investigation Team (HHIT) whose focus was primarily on Hate Crime investigation. Following initial recording and assessment these officers would be allocated some of the higher risk investigations to try to focus efforts in this area of

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vulnerability. This would also include crimes which featured repeat victims. This process was subject to review and some short comings were identified.

The investigation of Hate Crime has consequently been replaced by Hate Crime support as a function of the Harm Hub, in an attempt to re-imagine how best the force can achieve its ambition to protect those victims and repeat victims. To that end the Harm Hub are in the process of recruiting a Hate Crime Administrator to provide a more professional focus. In the meantime, Hate Crimes are assessed and the most vulnerable victims included in the PSP process. The Harm Hub will then offer guidance to the OIC's for those investigations.

Letters are also be sent out to all Hate Crime victims providing enhanced follow-up contact, advice on entitlements and providing an offer of continuing support. This has complemented work shared by the Warwickshire Hate Crime partnership to build better confidence in victims of Hate Crime, to improve both reporting and continuing engagement. The process in the Harm Hub is currently being reviewed to focus more pro-actively on those identified as most vulnerable across all areas of business.

### **17. Sexual Offences**

The departmental leads for Serious & Complex Crime, Proactive CID & Offender Management deal with reviewing all sexual offences. Many of the cases relate to repeat historical DA offences and will be given the appropriate focus and attention commensurate with the serious nature of the crime in order to safeguard the victim and reduce the risk of repeat victimisation.

### **18. Summary**

At present there are 14 high risk PSP's owned by the VMU, although this number is anticipated to rise with their increased capacity once fully resourced. The PSP approach of the Harm Hub does not exclude any type of incident or crime type being managed by this process. The focus is solely on the vulnerability of the victim and the perceived risk and level of harm that exists, as opposed to concentrating solely on the investigation. For this reason the referral process will not remain just within the VMU, but will be available to other departments and even partners for consideration to provide either direct action or support.

## **COMMENTS**

In considering the work of the recently commissioned victim services and the impact on Warwickshire Police, it is pleasing to report the force has a Victim and Witness Governance Group on which the PCC is represented. It can be seen that the force has a grip on the resolution of victim and witness issues.

The force is intent on delivering victim focussed policing services that benefit and mutually assist the PCC victim commissioned services. Recent investment in training of supervisors, dip-sampling and quality assuring files and the setting of PDR objectives for all officers and staff in relation to victim focus, investigation and compliance with the Victims Code bodes well for Warwickshire commissioned victim services and how they impact on Warwickshire Police.

## **APPENDIX F - VICTIMS**

The imminent establishment of Warwickshire Police's A&SI will provide an opportunity to improve the force's audit and survey capability and at the same time develop a new performance framework that meets the needs of the organisation and the public it serves. This advancement will be conducive to gaining a deeper level of understanding around victim satisfaction in order to inform service improvement

The developing work of the VMU and DAU in the Harm HUB and their problem solving initiative to the issue of victim vulnerability provides confidence that those in most need of protection will not only be safeguarded, but that the often complex and challenging causes of the re-victimisation will be addressed through a prompt, coordinated and partnership approach.

The OPCC remain engaged with the force at relevant meetings and discussions to shape the provision and performance of victim services, victim satisfaction and repeat victimisation through a process of scrutiny, support and challenge. The subjects discussed in this report are scheduled to be raised as a deep-dive topic at the PCC's monthly 'holding to account' Performance Accountability Meeting (PAM) in March, where these relatively complex, nuanced and esoteric issues will be explored in depth.

It is hoped that this report demonstrates the PCC's continued commitment to his pledge to 'Put Victims and Survivors First' and to achieving the ambitions of his Victims Charter.