



Decision Reference: 010 – VCAS  
Funding

## THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR CLEVELAND

### DECISION RECORD FORM

**REQUEST:** For Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) approval.

**Title:** Victim Care and Advice Service funding

#### **Executive Summary:**

Prior to 2016 victim support services, excluding domestic abuse and sexual abuse, were nationally commissioned and delivered by the national charity Victim Support with automatic referrals for support for victims of specific crime types.

In 2016 the Ministry of Justice devolved this funding to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to directly commission local victim support services.

Within Cleveland the OPCC conducted a procurement exercise with the tender being awarded to a local VCSE organisation, Safer Communities, to deliver the Victim Care and Advice Service.

In June 2021 the OPCC commissioned the Centre for Public Innovation (CPI) to undertake a review of the VCAS service together with a comprehensive victim needs assessment in order to inform a re-commissioning exercise.

As detailed in [DRF 2022-7485](#), in October 2021 a procurement exercise was commenced which resulted in Safer Communities being awarded the tender for the altered service specification under contractual arrangements running from April 2022 to March 2025 with an option to extend of one year plus one year.

As per the service specification, the commissioned service is:

- A standalone service independent of the Police
- Free of charge
- Open to all victims of crime and antisocial behaviour living in Cleveland, regardless of whether they have reported to the Police
- Easily accessible through a freephone number, email address and digital platform
- Equipped to provide one to one support during office hours as a minimum, Monday to Friday, 9 till 5, with flexibility outside of these hours based on victims needs and circumstances (eg, victim availability)
- Confidential (unless there is a serious safeguarding concern)
- Non discriminatory and inclusive (including being available to all regardless of residence status, nationality or citizenship)
- Able to provide support that is accessible to victims with disabilities and to victims in their first language via access to translating and interpreting services.
- Delivered in a way and through a communication channel which meets the needs of each individual victim

- Able to provide timely and widespread support in the event of a major crime incident
- Available before, during and for an appropriate time after any investigation or criminal proceedings
- Widely publicised in a variety of media and locations taking into account the needs of those with protected characteristics
- Delivered in a way that continually seeks efficiency and best value for money

During 2024 the OPCC undertook a review of the current service to provide options in relation to future commissioning arrangements. The review concluded that the re-commissioned VCAS service had largely managed to deliver on the areas of increased focus required from the OPCC. The current service is flexible in its approach to delivering support for victims whilst retaining high satisfaction rates with those supported. It was therefore recommended that current contract arrangements are extended by a period of one year.

**Decision:**

To extend contractual arrangements for the Victim Care and Advice Service for a period of one year to March 2026, with a review to take place during 2025 to provide options in relation to commissioning arrangements.

**OPCC Lead Officer:** Sarah Wilson

**Contractor Details (if applicable):** As listed above

**Implications:**

Has consideration been taken of the following:	Yes	No
Financial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equality & Diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**(If yes please provide further details below)**

**Decision Required – Supporting Information**

Financial Implications: (Must include comments of the PCC’s Chief Finance Officer where the decision has financial implications)

The funding to support the continuation of this service into 2025/26, which is expected to cost £490,226 to deliver in 2025/26, is included in the currently balanced long term financial plan and therefore based on current assumptions is affordable to the PCC.

Legal Implications: (Must include comments of the Monitoring Officer where the decision has legal implication)

There are no legal implications arising.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

None arising.

Human Rights Implications:

None arising.

Sustainability Implications:

None arising.

Risk Management Implications:

None arising.

**OFFICER APPROVAL**

**Monitoring Officer:**

Signed



Date 08.11.24

**Police and Crime Commissioner:**

Signed



Date 11.11.24

