

PSNI UPDATE - CJINI 'CARE AND TREATMENT OF VICTIMS AND WITNESSES ACROSS THE CJ SYSTEM

Section	Comment
Summary	<p>The recommendations are accepted in full and an internal action plan has been developed to support implementation.</p> <p>There are a total of 19 actions on the plan with progress against the majority restricted due to COVID-19 related pressures within the PSNI and partners across the Criminal Justice system. Timeframes have been reviewed in light of these pressures and the current dates are the current best estimate of delivery.</p> <p>Whilst progress has been made, further implementation has been slowed by the COVID-19 global health emergency and timescales have been adjusted accordingly.</p>
Strategic Recommendations	
Strategic Recommendation 2 - PSNI should review how current strategic prioritisation of vulnerability aligns delivery of outcomes impacting on all victims within 3 months of publishing.	<p>This recommendation is accepted in full. PSNI intend to review the current role of PSNI's Victim Champion by considering policy identifying levels of input and preparing options on developing the role. It is hoped that an options paper will be available by September 2020.</p> <p>PSNI intend to map current vulnerability governance structures and assess if it meets</p>

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	<p>needs of Victims and Witnesses. A map of vulnerability structures will be created by September 2020.</p>
<p>Strategic Recommendation 4 – PPS in partnership with PSNI should establish a VWCU working group to examine future VWCU modelling with focus on enhanced provision of care to victims and witnesses in NI within 3 months of publishing.</p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted in full. PSNI and PPS have met to discuss this, decide upon who should be included in the working group and develop a Terms of Reference. Discussions have been pended whilst respective organisations deal with COVID public health emergency. It is anticipated that resumption of discussions will commence in August or September with the aim of having a Terms of Reference by October 2020.</p>
<p>Strategic Recommendation 4 – A 'next steps' options paper with recommendations should be prepared and submitted to Criminal Justice Board for consideration within 6 months thereafter. The paper should include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options for future human resource approaches/models 	<p>The Joint Working Group will review and prepare 'next steps' options paper for consideration of the Criminal Justice Board by November 2020.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options to develop the current VSNI service provider role to include a Victim and Witness Needs Assessment Service adjoined to and supporting existing VWCU services. 	<p>The Joint Working Group will review the VSNI support, carry out a gap analysis and training needs assessment for VWCU staff by November 2020.</p>
<p>Operational Recommendations</p>	
<p>Operational Recommendation 2 – PSNI in partnership with VSNI should review practices for the provision of victim information by police first responders to victims within 6 months of publishing.</p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted in full. PSNI will work with VSNI to revise guidance for dealing with victims to include first responder responsibilities and communication with the victim further into the process. This will include a review of current approach to providing investigation updates to victims and/or bereaved family members. Consultation with the Department of Justice Northern Ireland (DoJNI) and VSNI through the VWSG has already commenced regarding provision of information to victims by police first responders. This will be included in the VWSG action plan. Revised guidance will be available November 2020.</p>
<p>Operational Recommendation 3 – PSNI should</p>	<p>Through the Working Group a training plan will be developed for officers by</p>

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<p>review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Victim Support NI input to Student Officer and District Training within 3 months of publishing. 	<p>November 2020.</p>
<p>Operational Recommendation 4 – PSNI should review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use of current risk and needs assessment tools that have evolved in response to vulnerability. The review should explore operationally effective technical solutions and based on the concept of single data input within 6mths of publishing. 	<p>PSNI will review current risk assessment and needs assessment tools and introduce revised models. A Vulnerability Risk Matrix is currently being developed and seeks to be victim and witness focused. PSNI aim to have this in place by November 2020.</p>
<p>Operational Recommendation 5 – PSNI should review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The current approach to providing investigation updates to victims within 3 months of publishing. 	<p>PSNI will work with VSNI to revise guidance for dealing with victims to include first responder responsibilities and communication with the victim further into the process. This will include a review of current approach to providing investigation updates to victims and/or bereaved family members. Consultation with DoJNI and VSNI through the VWSG has already commenced regarding provision of information to victims by police first responders. Revised guidance will be available November</p>

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	2020.
<p>Operational Recommendation 6 – PPS and PSNI should review policy and practice for single point of contact arrangements (SPOC) in line with provision of information under article 2 of the EU directive to ensure best practice meets the needs of bereaved victims and family members as defined under Article 1 of the EU directive within 3 months of publishing.</p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted in full. The PSNI will work with VSNI to revise guidance for dealing with victims to include first responder responsibilities and communication with the victim further into the process. This will include a review of current approach to providing investigation updates to victims and/or bereaved family members. Consultation with DoJNI and VSNI through the VWSG has already commenced regarding provision of information to victims by police first responders. Revised guidance will be available November 2020.</p>
<p>Operational Recommendation 7 – PSNI should centralise command and management of Family Liaison Officers within 3 months of publishing.</p>	<p>The command structure of PSNI Family Liaison Officers has been centralised and is coordinated by a Detective Superintendent from Serious Crime Branch, Crime Operations Department. This recommendation is ready for review and with a view to closing.</p>