



**VERA BAIRD**<sup>QC</sup>  
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

## **Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Supporting Victims Fund 2017-18**

### **Overview and Funding Priorities**

#### **Background**

The aim of the Northumbria PCC Supporting Victims Fund is to build capacity and maximise the potential of organisations to help ensure the improved provision of vital services to support victims of crime and help them cope and recover from the impact of crime.

In early 2015 a comprehensive mapping and consultation exercise was undertaken to identify the services needed for victims of crime in Northumbria. Funding priorities each year are refreshed to ensure that we continue to target funding in the areas that are needed.

#### **National funding**

The national picture with regards to funding victim services remains complex and continues to change at a pace. Local organisations are vulnerable to different funders taking decisions without understanding the impact on local services.

Whilst additional investment through the Governments VAWG Strategy is welcome, competitive bidding rounds like the current ones for refuge provision and the VAWG Transformation Fund does complicate matters further. Parallel to this investment we continue to see the reduction in mainstream budgets for statutory services, often many of whom provide vital services to people who have been victims of crime.

The introduction of grant programmes in place of mainstream funding further puts fragile victim resources at risk due to the competitive and unknown nature of funding.

#### **Local funding**

As the financial landscape continues to change at a national level this has significant ramifications for local budgets and provision. Local government has already delivered savings targets, following cuts of 40% in funding since 2010. Reductions on this scale have created huge financial challenges for councils and local services in Northumbria and puts vital services such as refuge and domestic abuse provision at risk. Furthermore, evidence suggests that central Government grant reductions have disproportionately hit the areas with the highest need the hardest, such as the North East.

Victim services budgets continue to be provided to the PCC by the Ministry of Justice on a one year basis, despite calls to provide the budget over a three year period, which would

help to build, grow and sustain vital local services. One year settlements from government mean that services in Northumbria will continue to be grant funded on an annual cycle for the 2017-18 period.

### **Purpose of the fund**

Victims of crime can be of any age, gender, race or sexual orientation and can be vulnerable due to these characteristics or other factors such as a disability, their mental health, religion/belief or the type and nature of the crime committed. In Northumbria we are striving to ensure that victims with the greatest need have access to support that is tailored to meet their needs and help them to best cope and recover.

We want to ensure that victims of crime feel confident to seek help when they need it and when they do, the right type of support is available to them.

The fund is managed by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria and is in place to support work across the Northumbria area, including the local authority areas of Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

Funding is available for organisations providing support to victims of crime to help them cope in the aftermath of a crime and to help their long-term recovery.

The Supporting Victims Fund will support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan priority “Putting Victims First” and will help to achieve the following:

- More victims encouraged to come forward
- A specific tailored approach to victims of personal crimes like sexual and domestic violence burglary and hate crime
- Increased opportunities for restorative justice
- Improved victims and witnesses experience at court
- The most vulnerable victims of crime are identified and provided with personal support and firm action
- Victims have access to appropriate advice and a high quality practical and emotional support service tailored to their needs.
- Victims have access to specialist services where these are needed to help victims to cope and recover from their experiences.

Organisations can apply for funding individually or in partnership with other organisations. Where partnership applications are submitted a clear lead applicant will be needed.

### **Grant themes and funding priorities**

To help us identify the victim services we require in Northumbria we have analysed information from a wide range of sources including crime trends and victimology, public and partner priorities, demands on existing victim services and demand for services where need is unmet.

Understanding the victims landscape in Northumbria allows us to best provide services that fulfil our vision “to ensure that victims of crime feel confident to seek help and when they do, they are provided with a choice of high quality support tailored to meet their individual needs”.

We particularly welcome applications that provide support to those most vulnerable in our society who under the Victims Code of Practice are entitled to enhanced support. Taking this into consideration with what we know about our vulnerable victims in Northumbria we have identified the following grant themes:

#### **Domestic and sexual violence and abuse**

- Specialist support and counselling for male and female victims of domestic and sexual abuse and violence
- Enhanced outreach provision for minority ethnic victims including support for honour based violence and FGM victims
- Specialist support for male and female adults and young victims who have experienced child sexual abuse
- Support for children of domestic abuse victims - breaking the generational cycle of abuse
- Emotional and practical support for victims of stalking and harassment
- Specialist support for victims of modern slavery and exploitation
- Support for isolated/marginalised victims of domestic abuse for example victims 55+, rural victims and those with a disability
- Emotional and practical support for parents who are subject to domestic abuse by their adolescent children

#### **Young people under 18**

- Direct emotional support for young people following a crime - to include specific support for victims of violent crimes
- School based support and guidance
- Support for young victims of domestic and sexual abuse
- Breaking the cycle of victim to offender
- Emotional and practical support for young victims who experience cyber related crime, exploitation and harassment

#### **Victims of hate crime**

- Personal emotional support for victims and repeat victims of all hate crime
- Building trust and confidence in public authorities
- Building community cohesion and support for victims of race hate crime
- Peer based support to assist victims cope and recover

#### **Victims with mental health needs and other vulnerabilities**

- Specialist support for those victims of crime who are vulnerable due to a mental health need

- Tailored support for individuals who may have additional language or communications needs
- Support for victims of cyber-crime including those at risk of exploitation
- Specialist support and practical guidance for victims of crime with regards to criminal injuries compensation and understanding the criminal justice system

### Strengthening services

Grants are available to cover any costs relating to work which builds the capacity and maximises the potential of organisations working to support victims of crime. This could include a range of activities including:

- Widening geographical coverage
- Enhanced provision through the increase in training
- Strengthening operating procedures and referral routes to maximise victim engagement
- Recruitment and training of volunteers
- Changes to operating practices to meet victim demand
- New and innovative approaches and techniques to supporting victims

### Key dates

- The deadline for applications is **2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017**
- Assessments will take place immediately after this date
- Organisations will be informed of the outcome in mid-February
- Services and projects must be ready to begin from **1<sup>st</sup> April 2017**

### Making an application

There are three key documents in addition to this that you should read carefully before making an application:

- Fund guidelines – information about the fund and eligibility
- Guidance notes – tips on how to fill in the application form and the information you need to provide
- Application form – available electronically

If you would like any further information or advice please contact Rachel Snaith at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner on [rachel.snaith@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.snaith@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk) or 0191 221 9800. Alternatively you can contact Amy Robson [amy.robson@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk](mailto:amy.robson@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk) or 0191 221 9810.