**Accountability Report: Thematic Reports: Support:**

**C2: Improving Victims and Witness experiences of the CJS**

|  |
| --- |
| **Victims Code of Practice** |
| This report provides an update since the previous Strategic Resources and Performance meeting.The purpose of this report is to update the Police and Crime Commissioner in relation to performance and compliance with the Victims Code (Victim Code of Practice (VCOP)) since the previous report.The updated Victim Code went live in April 2021 and was fully supported by Nottinghamshire Police in its implementation.The Victim Code, now simplified to 12 Victim Rights provides clear guidance to Criminal Justice Services on the level of service required of them.Nottinghamshire Police are fulfilling all 12 Victim Code Requirements and continue to develop monitoring and recording processes. This work is being undertaken in conjunction with the NPCC Victim and Witnesses Sub Performance Group which is also attended by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to ensure compliance, joint development.**Governance, Compliance and Audits**Nottinghamshire Police governance of the Victim Code is well embedded.In Force, quarterly Victim and Witness Assurance Board meetings, chaired by the Head of Crime (Detective C/Supt) review, monitor and develop the deliverance of the victim code in line with NPCC strategy. This consists of:* Delivering a consistent, good quality service to victims and witnesses;
* support vulnerable victims and witnesses through the Criminal Justice system; and
* Build the confidence of victims and witnesses to report and remain engaged with the Criminal Justice process

The Victim and Witness Assurance Board reports to the Nottinghamshire Police Criminal Justice Board chaired by T/ACC Griffin, which subsequently reports to the Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Partnership Board (NCJPB) chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).In support of the governance, available for depts, supervisors and staff/officers for the management and delivery of the Victim Code are:* Team Packs
* Daily Performance Report (DPR)
* Victims App

Further to the above, monthly and annual data is produced and accessible from Management Information for officers and staff, which includes:* Numbers of VCOPs completed
* VCOP Completed on the right victim/witness
* VCOP Quality compliance percentage
* Number of victims who consented for Information to be shared
* Identification of Priority offences/victim/witnesses
* Frequency the victim/witness would like to be updated

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has provided all Police Forces with guidance in relation to completing undertaking Self-Assessments and completing Victim Code Audits. The MoJ guidance provided to date, however is subject to review requires Police Forces:* Dip sample of not fewer than 30 cases per quarter, for each agency involved in the victim’s journey to be completed.

For the Police, this encompasses the following key points to be included in future audits:* Does the victim receive a written acknowledgement that a crime was reported?
* Is the victim assessed and, unless opting out, referred to support services, within 2 days of the crime being reported?
* Are the updates the victim receives on the next steps including arrest, charge and bail timely and of a high quality?
* Is the victim informed of the end of their CJS journey?
* Was a VPS taken?

Nottinghamshire Police have a schedule to audit the Force’s compliance with the Victim Code, which provides greater scrutiny than that suggested by the MoJ guidance.The Nottinghamshire Police Audit samples 84 occurrences per quarter. The Audit includes 12 tests of compliance with the Victim Code, including those suggested by the MoJ.The sample occurrences used are:* Vehicle crime
* Burglary dwelling
* Violent crime (including weapon enabled violence)
* Domestic Abuse
* Hate crime
* Sexual Offences (non-recent/historic)
* Sexual Offences (recent reports)

The inclusion of sexual offences and historic sexual offences supports the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into Sexual Abuse (IICSA) and provides further scrutiny of victim code compliance.**Victim Code Compliance Performance – Key Highlights**Key Highlights* Over 95% compliance with Victim Code requirement over a rolling 12 month period (2021/22)
* Over 93% compliance of Victims Needs Assessments completed. Most recent data Quarter 4 2021/22 has achieved 96% compliance
* 100% compliance of victims assessed being referred to Victim CARE services within two days.
* Over 80% compliance of victim updates being completed within 21 days, unless otherwise specified by the victim. This continued to improve year on year.
* Over 86% of victims informed of how the investigation has been finalised.

**Victim Support Offered**Victim CARE is the commissioned provider of victim support services. Nottinghamshire Police currently operate an ‘Opt In’ choice, where referrals are only made with the consent of the victim.Once consent is given an automated referral is made within two working days. Over 95% of all victims and witnesses are offered Victim CARE services.Over the 12-month period (2021/22) the percentage of people accepting the Victim Care referrals has increased by 5% to over 20%.**Training and Future Developments**New training has been developed for all new recruits to Nottinghamshire Police and is provided as part their induction. This includes Force and National requirements and the use of the Nottinghamshire Police Victim App.Currently over 87% of all officers and staff have completed Ncalt training on the Victims Code.Despite the challenges of Covid, during 2021/22 all front-line police officers and supervisors received training on the new Victim Code. This was completed jointly by the Force Victim Lead and Victim CARE services.This training is due to be delivered to Public Protection Teams during 2022. The updated Force Intranet Site provides a resource for all officers and staff to access 24/7 support reference the Victim Code.Further work is being undertaken at Force and National level to improve Victim Code recording and compliance with new developments within Niche proposed for later 2022 to support front line officers and provide more quantitative and qualitative data. |