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DYFED-POWYS
POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER

Police and Crime

Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys

Scrutiny Panel

Dip Sampling Exercise

Review of 2018 (Feb-Jul)

Updates provided to victims of theft

Panel Members' Findings & Feedback

January 2020

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1.0 Summary

2.0 Outcome

Dyfed-Powys Police (DPP) carry out victim satisfaction surveys in line with the requirements set out by the Home Office. Victim satisfaction surveys:

- a) take account of the experience of victims not just at the initial stage of police action, but in the subsequent activity; and
- b) provide information about victim experience which can be actioned by forces and Police and Crime Commissioners to improve service delivery.

Victim satisfaction surveys are structured around a number of core questions, exploring satisfaction responses across four stages of interaction: initial contact, actions, follow-up (kept informed), treatment, plus the whole experience. The groups of victims currently considered by Dyfed-Powys are: domestic burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime, hate incidents; arson & criminal damage, theft and robbery.

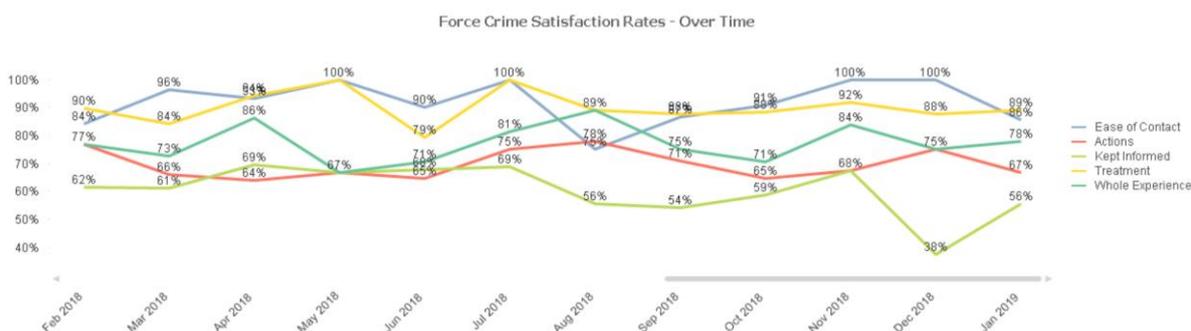
The aim of the Panel’s review was to provide Dyfed-Powys Police with an independent opinion on how victims of theft have been communicated with throughout their case, and the identification of any potential areas for learning and improvement.

3.0 Situation

3.1 Statistics

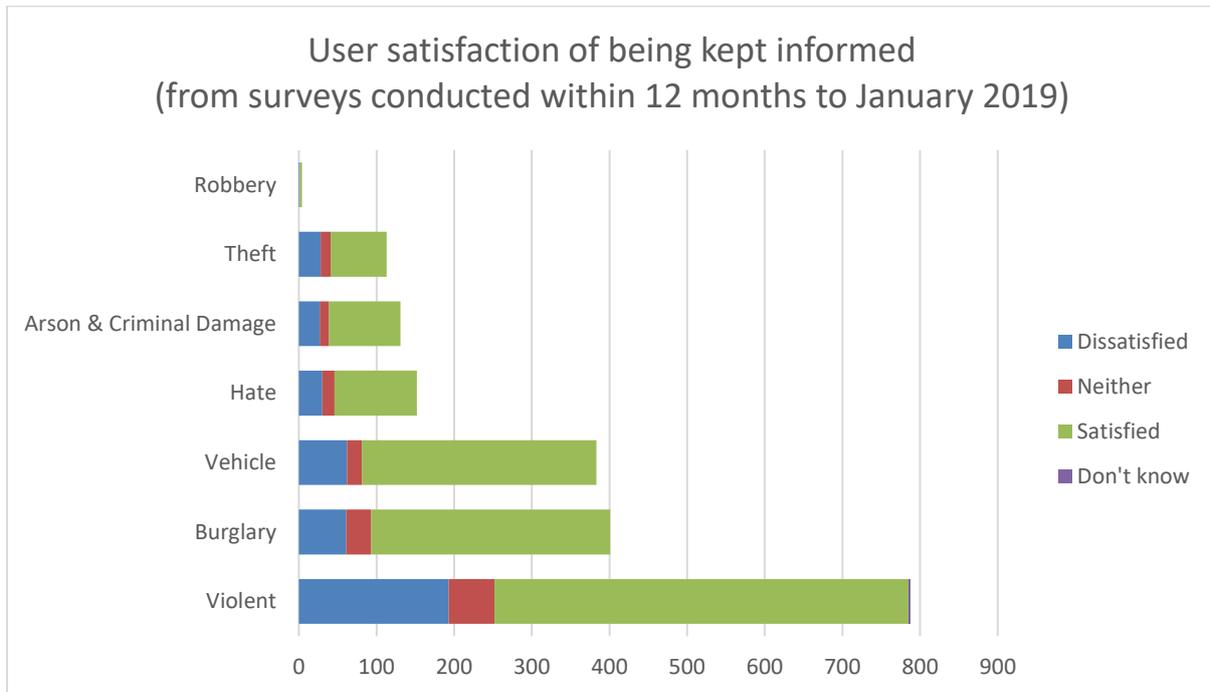
The following graphs demonstrate surveyed victims’ perceptions of the service provided by Dyfed-Powys Police. The data relates to surveys conducted throughout 2018 as it was the most up to date information currently available to the Commissioner’s office at the time.

The following graph shows the trends over time, demonstrating that victims are consistently more satisfied with the ease of contact and how they have been treated, and less satisfied with being kept informed than all other aspects of their experience.



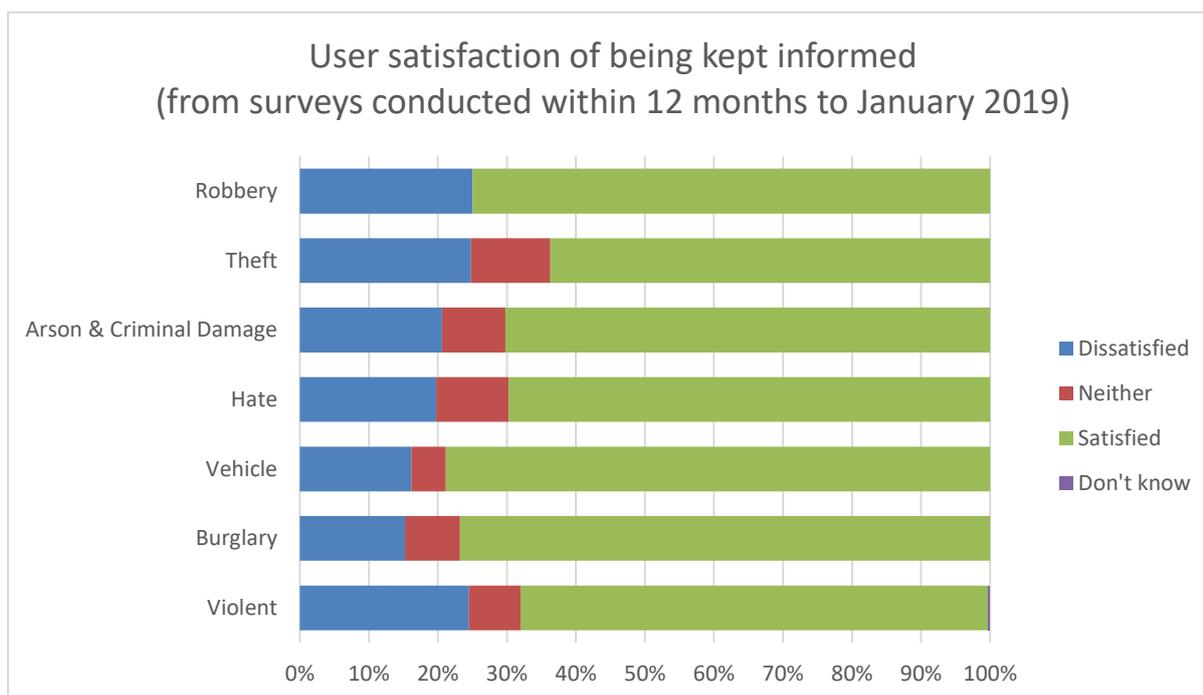
Source: Qlikview

The next graph shows the total responses for the “kept informed” question, broken down into each victim group. Respondents have the opportunity to answer questions on a 7 point scale, ranging from very dissatisfied through to very satisfied. For simplicity, the responses have been grouped into three options – dissatisfied, neither and satisfied.



Source: Qlikview

In order to understand the comparable proportion of dissatisfaction, the following graph was produced to show the results as a percentage of all surveys conducted. This showed that approximately one quarter of victims of theft, violent crime and robbery who were surveyed expressed some dissatisfaction about how well they were kept informed of the progress of their case. This led to the selection of a dip-sample of 18 theft cases to be reviewed by the Quality Assurance Panel.



Source: Qlikview

3.2 Previous findings

The Quality Assurance Panel considered the matter of victim updates within their last meeting (October 2019), under the broader topic of support for victims of domestic-related crimes. Their relevant findings are listed in the below table.

Criteria	Number of cases	Comments
Victim contract created	8	One declined, one opted out and another was a mental health ward inpatient and unable to engage fully.
Victim updates in line with contract	13	Many updates were not applicable due to there being no contract, or a lack of victim engagement (they opted out). One case where the victim had been updated on numerous occasions but there was no evidence that the victim had been informed of the final outcome.

3.3 Progress made since last review

Feedback was provided to Dyfed-Powys Police and progress will be assessed through future scrutiny activity.

4.0 Consequences

4.1 Summary of cases reviewed

18 cases of theft were selected from a sample which had victim satisfaction surveys completed. Six cases occurred in Carmarthenshire, four in Ceredigion, four in Pembrokeshire and 4 in Powys. The Panel reviewed 17 of these cases – one was excluded as the stolen item was merely lost and found shortly later by the reporting individual. The satisfaction survey responses were not viewed by the Panel Members.

Outcome	Number of cases
14 – Victim declines / unable to support action. Suspect NOT identified	1
15 – Victim supports action but evidential difficulties	2
16 – Suspect identified but victim does not (or has withdrawn) support	2
18 – Investigation complete: no suspect identified	12

4.2 Summary of findings from this review

In addition to providing their views on how victims had been kept informed of their case's progress, Panel Members were asked to measure:

1. the number of cases where a communication contract had been agreed with the victim; and
2. whether this contract was adhered to throughout the life of the case.

Criteria	Number of cases	Comments
Victim contract created	11	Some victims opted out of confirming a contact agreement. Other cases did not have evidence of a contract, but the victim had been appropriately updated. Only one case was found to have delays in when the victim was updated.
Victim updates in line with contract / regular contact made	12	

4.2 Best practice

- The Panel noted that a number of cases evidenced that all reasonable steps had been taken by the Police to investigate the crime and keep the victim informed. Five cases in particular were highlighted as best practice.

- Eight cases showed evidence that appropriate follow-up support had been offered to the victim, although had not necessarily been accepted by all.
- Eight records were noted by the Panel as having been regularly endorsed by the supervisor. Eight cases' supervision records were not commented on and therefore more may have been endorsed but not recorded by the Panel.
- The officer in one case in particular had documented that whilst the victim had declined additional support, they had been left with a Victim of Crime Leaflet and 'WE CARE' card. This was identified as very positive, as it would ensure that the victim could request further support in the future if required.

4.3 Areas for learning

- There was no evidence of support offered within nine of the cases reviewed. However Members noted in two cases the person who reported was not the victim of the crime, which may have confused the matter of who to offer the support to.
- In one particular case, Members felt the supervisor conclusions did not seem fully justified and were possibly pre-emptive.
- One case appeared to have only have progressed following the intervention of the victim satisfaction survey researcher. Members queried whether supervisors should, or do, regularly review outstanding cases to ensure there are no undue delays to either the investigation or the contact with the victim.

4.4 Detailed case breakdown

Case 1

- This crime was solved and there was evidence of appropriate support being offered to the victim.
- Members considered that in the circumstances the victim had an excessive wait to have their property returned.

Case 2

- The victim in this case was updated as evidence became available, as per their request.
- It was considered that the investigation as a whole was somewhat protracted and appeared to have stalled until the intervention of the victim satisfaction survey researcher.

Case 3

- Members found that appropriate support had been offered to this victim, who had signed to confirm they did not wish to pursue for what was a very low value theft.

Case 4

- Due to the documentation provided to the Panel being incomplete, some of the progress could not be viewed. From what was available however, Members considered there to have been a thorough investigation and significant contact made with the victim.

Case 5

- The victim within this short case was updated regularly in accordance with their agreement.

Case 6

- Members noted prompt police action and reassurance was provided to this victim, with reasonable enquiries made.
- A PCSO follow-up visit was also conducted, however the Panel could find no evidence of a victim contract being agreed.

Case 7

- The victim of this theft was reluctant to support police action and later withdrew completely, which was confirmed in writing.
- Their reluctance may have been a contributing factor to why a number of questions remained unanswered on the crime record.
- Members noted the officer involved appeared to have taken reasonable steps to interview a reluctant witness and deemed appropriate support had been offered.

Case 8

- Members noted that this appeared a straightforward case, but did note that it was not clear if the Constable had followed the Sergeant's advice to ensure the victim knew they would not be making any further enquiries.
- This victim had made it clear from the outset that they only wanted the crime recorded and did not want to pursue further action.

Case 9

- Members identified that although the case was dealt with promptly, the person reporting (victim's daughter) on behalf of the victim was not satisfied.

- Members were unclear as to whether support would have been provided to the victim or the person reporting the crime.

Case 10

- Members expressed concern that the victim of what seemed like a significant investigation had not appeared to have been updated regularly – it was noted that approximately five weeks had passed before contact was made.

Case 11

- Members raised no concerns with this case, stating that a contract had been agreed and adhered to, with the supervisor endorsing the conclusion of the crime.

Case 12

- This case involved a vulnerable victim who was being supported by their daughter.
- Members expressed concern that there appeared to be no evidence of a victim contract or support offered.

Case 13

- Members raised no concerns with this case, documenting that a victim contract had been created and support was offered, but the victim declined both.

Case 14

- This victim also declined further support and was updated in line with their agreed contract.

Case 15

- Members raised no concerns with the victim updates within the case but could not find evidence of appropriate follow-up support being offered.

Case 16

- The victim in this case had agreed to a contract and expressed their contentment with receiving a crime reference number for insurance purposes.
- Due to the delay in reporting the crime, there were no remaining lines of enquiry and so the case was closed after one day. The victim had been informed of this decision.

Case 17

- Members noted that the victim in this case had been kept informed of the progress of the investigation.
- No suspect had been identified, despite appeals through social media and the press.
- The victim had expressed that they only required an update if any suspects were identified, which was done.
- They declined any additional support but had been left with a Victim of Crime Leaflet and 'WE CARE' card.

5.0 Actions

Suggested actions & Force's response

Number	Observation	Force's Response
1	No evidence of support offered to victims in over half of the cases reviewed. In order to be assured that all victims are provided with an offer of further support, officers must ensure that this is evidenced within the records.	The issues raised by the QAP accord with recommendations from the recent OPCC deep dive into victim withdrawal and an independent review of Goleudy victim services within Dyfed Powys. In response to these, the Force has established a Gold Group to oversee an action plan for victim-related work and have set aside a dedicated resource. A Chief Inspector will focus solely on this project for a 3 month period, ensuring that cross-departmental actions are agreed and implemented to bring the Force to a position where it can respond positively to all recommendations raised. The QAP will be provided with an update on this work in due course.
2.	Robust supervisor endorsement not evidenced in every case. If this is an expectation on supervisors, their review should be evidenced fully within the crime record.	

4.0 Review

As this work is being taken forward within a larger project, the OPCC will work with the Force to agree an appropriate timescale for reviewing progress against the actions.