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MOPAC's Review of Victim Services in London RoadPeace response

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Key points

- With support services for victims to be funded locally as of October 2014, a review of victim services in London was commissioned by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).
- The review made no mention of victims of road crime or the services they receive, including the RoadPeace Resilience Building Programme, an evidence based service previously funded by the Ministry of Justice for those bereaved by law breaking drivers.
- In light of this omission, RoadPeace calls for assurance from MOPAC that victims of road crime will be treated as victims of crime with support services funded.

1 Introduction

An independent review of victim services in London was commissioned by MOPAC, and led by Baroness Newlove, the Victims' Commissioner. The review was to:

- Improve the understanding of the needs of victims for more effective delivery and value for money of services for victims.
- Review the effectiveness of victims' services in London, including by the voluntary and community sector (VCS).
- Identify and address gaps in service provision.
- Make recommendations for commissioning of victims' services in London.

2 Methodology

The review included a survey, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with victim service providers, criminal justice agencies and victims of crime. The Crime Survey of England and Wales and its findings for London were reviewed as was police recorded crime. But both exclude the victims of summary motoring offences who account for the vast majority of victims of road crime.

Services were surveyed as to who they helped. This included crime victims who were young, female, disabled as well as specific types of crime (domestic violence, rape/sexual violence, racial discrimination, hate crime, repeat victimisation, and gender based crimes. Victims of road crime were not included. The emotional impact of victims of car crime and bicycle theft was highlighted—not that of those bereaved or injured by road crime.

3 Review's recommendations

Organised into four main themes, the review produced 13 key recommendations

Commissioning strategy and funding

1. Commissioning should address key gaps in provision.
2. Ensure that the provision of core support and specialist services is underpinned by clear referral protocols.
3. The commissioning strategy should recognise the need for a personalised victim-centred approach.
4. Develop fully integrated and individualised support which links to local services and community organisations.
5. Create sustainable funding models for providers of victims' services.

Capacity building

6. Develop a capacity building approach to support the engagement of VCS organisations in the commissioning of victims' services.
7. Help improve VCS and criminal justice staff awareness of, and responsiveness, to the diverse range of victims' needs.
8. Establish a centralised database of victims' services.

Data recording and monitoring

9. Develop a framework that enables victim satisfaction and confidence to be understood, measured, and confidence to be understood, measured and monitored across all parts of the criminal justice system.
10. Improve the way that victim data is recorded and shared across the criminal justice system.
11. Develop a robust and consistent outcomes framework which measures and monitors how victims are coping and recovering in London.

Continuous improvement

12. Conduct detailed mapping of the victim journey and support pathways.
13. Introduce reforms to further improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system to respond to victims' needs.

4 Implications for road crash victims

This review was tasked with identifying gaps in services for victims of crime, but failed to include victims of road crime. In 2012, 133 people were killed in crashes in London. In 2013, 88 drivers were prosecuted for causing a death and 59 convicted. Whilst the review referred to the national homicide service which supports families of murder/manslaughter victims, no mention was made of the services available for those bereaved by culpable crashes, including RoadPeace's flagship Resilience Building Programme, a six week support programme for those bereaved by road crime.

Over 28,000 people were injured in collisions reported to the police in London in 2012 (The number involving law breaking is not reported by the police). This review did not address any of their needs for information or support, or even acknowledge their existence.

With MOPAC now responsible for commissioning victim services, this omission needs to be addressed. RoadPeace repeats its call (RoadPeace response to Draft Policing and Crime plan, March 2013) for MOPAC to confirm that it does treat road crime as real crime, and victims of road crime as victims of crime.