

Victims and Survivors Service Limited

Annual Report and Accounts For the year ended 31 March 2018

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under the statutory provision for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2016,
by The Executive Office

on

19th December 2018

COMPANY NUMBER: NI 611922

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Any enquiries related to this publication should be sent to us at the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, First Floor, Seatem House, 28-32 Alfred Street, Belfast, BT2 8EN, or email: enquiries@vssni.org.

This publication is also available for download from our website at www.victimsservice.org.

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Officers and Professional Advisers

Officers and Professional Advisers

Directors

Oliver Wilkinson – Director appointed 13 December 2013, Chair appointed 1 April 2015

Bertha McDougall – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Richard Solomon – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Beverley Clarke – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Patricia Haren – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Stephen McIlveen – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Séamus Magee – Director appointed 1 April 2015, Resigned 9 July 2018

Auditors

Northern Ireland Audit Office

106 University Street

Belfast

BT7 1EU

Registered Office

1st Floor Seatem House

28-32 Alfred Street

Belfast

BT2 8EN

Principal Bankers

Danske Bank

8/9 Donegall Square North

Belfast

BT1 5GJ

Foreword

I am pleased to present the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Annual Report and Accounts for the 2017/18 financial year.

It has been a hugely rewarding and significant year for us.

This year has seen the benefits of the significant planning and preparation work of the co-design programme over the past two years with the implementation of a new needs based service delivery model from April 2017. We have significantly changed how we deliver support and services, with a move away from a grant-led approach towards a needs-based and outcomes-focused model of integrated services and support, working in partnership with funded organisations and other community and statutory agencies.

2017/18 was the first year of a three year business case for funding. Much has been achieved in this first year including the:

- establishment of a network of health and wellbeing caseworkers employed within the community and voluntary sector, working with five health and wellbeing case managers employed by us.
- establishment of an Advocacy Support Programme, with a specific focus on truth, justice and acknowledgment to support victims and survivors through legacy processes.
- development of a workforce training and development plan to build upon existing capacity, demonstrate the value of the work that we do and ensure quality services are delivered equitably across the region.

Much work has also been undertaken in collaboration with other key stakeholders to develop the Regional Trauma Network. We hope to see the benefits of this in early 2019. A pilot approach is planned with victims and survivors and our health and wellbeing caseworker network.

Most importantly, we are seeing real changes in the lives of victims and survivors through this approach. We know that psychological therapies are effective for 60% of individuals. We also know that 80% of individuals report a benefit following complementary therapies. Over the coming years, we look forward to continuously improving how we work and introducing new bespoke services to improve these outcomes. It is too early to report on the outcomes from the health and wellbeing caseworker network but early indications and individual case studies are extremely positive.

The year has not been without its challenges.

With better understanding and knowledge through more sophisticated monitoring and evaluation, we are now seeing emerging gaps in our support and services. Immediate

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and obvious gaps include perceived lack of acknowledgment of the bereaved, social isolation and loneliness, aging population and age-related health concerns. One of our priorities will be to find ways to address these gaps from 2018/19 and beyond.

We also continue to operate within a particularly challenging and uncertain external environment.

The impact of Welfare Reform, specifically the transition from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payments continues to impact on victims and survivors living with physical and psychological injuries. We are aware that the roll out of Universal Credit will present further difficulties for those we support.

The broader strategic and political uncertainty remains a concern. This includes the impact of Brexit on our future funding, the absence of a Northern Ireland Executive and the ongoing uncertainty around the implementation of the proposed Stormont House Agreement (2014) proposals on addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past.

These external challenges further emphasise the importance of the work that we do.

Continuing support from our colleagues in the Commission for Victims and Survivors (CVS) and The Executive Office (TEO) has been a critical element in our achievements this year. We are proud of these achievements and look forward to continuing to embed best practice and delivering the best possible services and outcomes for victims and survivors.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the drive and determination of our staff and fellow Board Members and to thank our partners within the community and voluntary sector for their support and commitment in helping us to implement significant changes in our service delivery models to improve the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors.



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairperson

Date: 5th December 2018

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1.1 Introduction and Background

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer's Statement

As Chief Executive of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, it is my role to support the Board in its work and to ensure the day to day operation and management of the organisation is effective and efficient.

Ensuring the performance of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in terms of delivery against business plan targets is one of my key functions. It is important that a key focus is maintained in order to achieve the best outcomes for victims and survivors alongside robust clinical and corporate governance arrangements.

2017-18 was the first year of a significant change in service delivery models. Within this context, I am pleased to report the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has achieved 27 out of 30 of its targets for the year, and partially achieved 3 out of 30. Victims and Survivors Service Limited has also managed its budget within the required tolerance of 1.5% of the budget allocation.

The implementation of an outcomes based approach to service delivery has continued to embed across the organisation during 2017-18, with data on outcomes now captured across a wide range of activities. Along with the new service delivery model, this approach is making significant improvements to the quality of services provided and to the health & wellbeing of victims & survivors.

Introduction

This section of the Strategic Report outlines the strategic context and operating environment of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. This includes:

- Key strategies and objectives.
- Key programmes.
- Key stakeholders and engagement.

Victims and Survivors Strategy 2009-19

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is the delivery body named in the ten-year Strategy for Victims and Survivors 2009-19 published by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, now known as The Executive Office. It is responsible for providing support and services to victims and survivors on behalf of The Executive Office.

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“Victims and Survivors” has the meaning ascribed by the Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, as amended by the Commission for Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Act 2008. This definition has two distinctive dimensions, as follows:

- (1) *In this Order references to “victim and survivor” are references to an individual appearing to the Commission to be any of the following:*
 - (a) *someone who is or has been physically or psychologically injured as a result of or in consequence of a conflict-related incident;*
 - (b) *someone who provides a substantial amount of care on a regular basis for an individual mentioned in paragraph (a); or*
 - (c) *someone who has been bereaved as a result of or in consequence of a conflict-related incident.*

- (2) *Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), an individual may be psychologically injured as a result of or in consequence of:*
 - (a) *witnessing a conflict-related incident or the consequences of such an incident;*
or
 - (b) *providing medical or other emergency assistance to an individual in connection with a conflict-related incident.¹*

Formation and Status

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited was established under the direction of The Executive Office and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was incorporated on 27 March 2012 as a private company limited by guarantee.

Strategic Priorities

The Strategy for Victims and Survivors 2009-19 emphasises the strategic focus of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited on the following three priorities:

1. Delivering a needs-based approach to allocating resources and defining services.
2. Ensuring the highest standard of service provision for those in need.
3. Measuring outcomes associated with the allocation of resources and services.

These priorities underpin the work of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in delivering three programmes of support: the Individual Needs Programme, the Victims

¹ Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, available at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2006/2953/contents>

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Support Programme, and the victims and survivors element of the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE IV).

Programmes

Support for Individuals: the Individual Needs Programme

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited aims to provide support that is responsive to the particular needs of the individual, and that respects the dignity and personal choices of each victim and survivor.

Assistance for individuals is delivered under the Individual Needs Programme, and is informed by advice given by the Commission for Victims and Survivors in relation to the needs of victims and survivors. It includes:

- Support for individuals living with physical and psychological injuries to access services and goods that contribute to improved wellbeing and quality of life.
- Support for primary carers and for the bereaved to access services and goods that contribute to improved wellbeing and quality of life.
- In certain circumstances: direct financial assistance for victims and survivors on low incomes.
- In certain circumstances: support for individuals to access education and training opportunities.

Funding for Organisations: the Victims Support Programme

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited provides support and funding to organisations that provide services and support to victims and survivors across Northern Ireland. The work funded through the Victims Support Programme within these organisations meets the Victims and Survivors Service Limited aims and objectives (outlined below) and is informed by advice given by the Commission for Victims and Survivors regarding the needs of victims and survivors.

The services and support delivered by organisations funded through the Victims Support Programme include:

- Services that support and maintain resilience and wellbeing among victims and survivors.
- Welfare advice and support for victims and survivors, and opportunities and activities focused on personal and professional development.

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- Support and activities for young people affected by the impact of trauma in families and communities.
- Talking therapies and complementary therapies that improve the mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of victims and survivors, and that enhance their quality of life.

PEACE IV Programme

The PEACE IV Programme is a unique cross-border initiative, financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) of the European Union and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Designed to support peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland, it also contributes to the promotion of social and economic stability.

In recognition of the needs of those who have suffered from the trauma of the Conflict/Troubles, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was identified in November 2015 as the single Lead Partner to develop the capacity for services to meet the needs of victims and survivors under Objective 3 of the Programme: Shared Spaces and Services. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited, as Lead Partner, received a Letter of Offer on 15 December 2016, for a project running from 1 November 2016 – 31 July 2021.

The PEACE IV Programme has added value to the existing Victim Support Programme by investing in cross-border health and well-being services that develop proven expertise within the region and increase the capacity and the quality of care in the sector for victims and survivors and their families. It has also complemented and enhanced the Individual Needs Programme by enabling the development of an engagement and outreach network of qualified and experienced Health and Wellbeing workers that connect victims and survivors to services, and the delivery of additional services and support.

Specifically, the PEACE IV Programme includes:

- The delivery of **Advocacy Support** to include practical support for victims and survivors engaging with institutions, historical process and inquiries (6 Advocacy Managers, 21.5 FTE Advocacy Support workers).
- The development of a **Network of Regional Health and Wellbeing Case Managers and Health and Wellbeing Case Workers** to identify and address the needs of victims and survivors (5 Case Managers, 25 Health and Wellbeing Case Workers).
- A **Resilience Programme** to address existing gaps and meet the individual needs of victims and survivors based on the Belfast Strategic Partnership Take 5 Framework for Health and Wellbeing (<http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/take-5-steps-wellbeing>).

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- The development of the capacity of the sector through **training and development** to meet national and regional standards, **research**, and **improved regulation**.

Strategic Framework: Victims and Survivors Service Limited

In December 2015, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board carried out a strategic review of the vision, mission, and values of the organisation.

The same strategic direction remained in place throughout 2017-18 as follows:

OUR VISION

To improve the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors

OUR MISSION

We work to ensure that victims and survivors, and the wider community, are aware of the support and services available to them

We work to support victims and survivors to access quality services in line with their individual needs

We listen to and learn from victims and survivors and others, creating and maximising opportunities to share information and knowledge

OUR VALUES

TRUST

Working confidentially, impartially and respectfully with victims and survivors and others to develop and sustain an open and honest relationship

UNDERSTANDING

Listening to and learning from victims and survivors and others

RESPONSIVE

Continually developing our people and services through growth and innovation

ACCOUNTABLE

Applying good corporate and clinical governance to all that we do

Stakeholders and Key Relationships

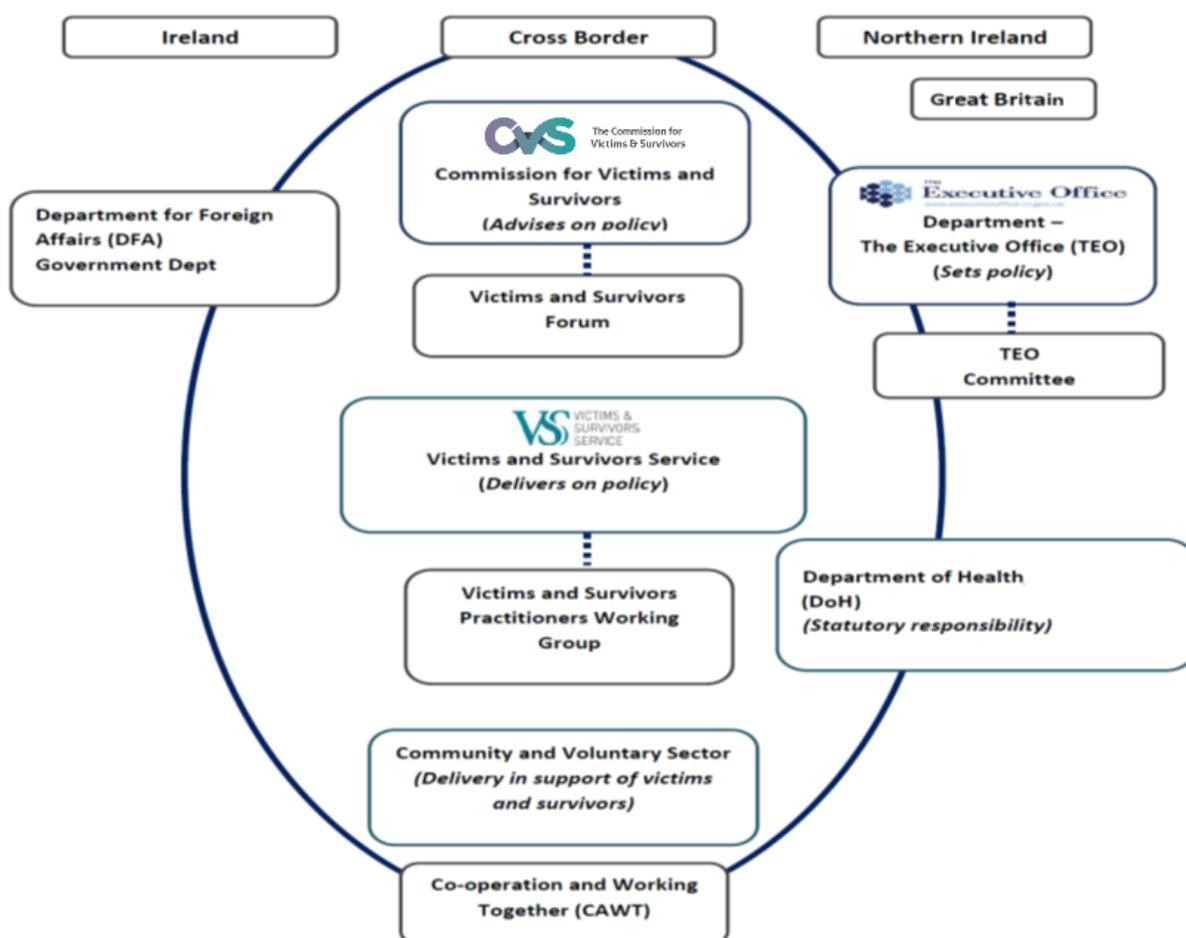
The Victims and Survivors Service Limited aims to support victims and survivors as they engage with the diverse services, agencies, and other parts of society that contribute to the full and healthy life of the individual.

To achieve this, the organisation needs and values a strong network of partners with whom it can communicate and work in the interests of victims and survivors.

Partnership-Level Stakeholders

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is supported in its efforts to deliver on its aims and objectives by The Executive Office, the Commission for Victims and Survivors, and the Victims and Survivors Forum. This is illustrated in Diagram 1 below.

Diagram 1: Partnership-level Stakeholders



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The 2009-19 Strategy for Victims and Survivors Limited outlines the relationship between these four key bodies as follows:

- *Government* is responsible for setting policy for victims and survivors, and is ultimately accountable for resourcing the victim/survivor sector.
- *The Commission for Victims and Survivors* is responsible for the strategic assessment of need and for oversight of the Forum. On the basis of these functions, it is responsible for ensuring that the correct structures are in place to meet assessed need, and for advising Government on victims' and survivors' issues. A memorandum of understanding is in place between The Victims and Survivors Service Limited and the Commission for Victims and Survivors.
- *The Victims and Survivors Forum* acts as an advisory body to the Commission, focusing on three areas of work: the development of appropriate services to meet needs; dealing with the past; and building for the future.
- *The Victims and Survivors Service Limited* is the delivery body within this arrangement, responsible for providing support to individuals and organisations by commissioning appropriate services and distributing funding in response to assessed and agreed need.

During 2017-18, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited participated in the meetings and working groups listed below. This engagement was undertaken in order to maintain and improve relationships with these partners, in the interest of delivering better services for victims and survivors.

The Trilateral Meeting

The Trilateral Meeting was established in 2012-13 and continues to facilitate ongoing communication and information-sharing between The Executive Office, the Commission for Victims and Survivors, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. This meeting is attended by managers in each of the organisations, with a focus on operational issues. Meetings are held on a quarterly basis.

The Forum Services Working Group

The Forum Services Working Group is a sub-group of the Victims and Survivors Forum. The Forum is convened by the Commission for Victims and Survivors to enable consultation and discussion with victims and survivors of the Conflict/Troubles. The Forum currently consists of 20 members, all of whom meet the definition of a victim as detailed in the Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

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Key functions of the Forum Services Working Group include discussing the provision of services and funding for victims and survivors, and assessing levels of satisfaction in relation to service delivery. On occasion, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and/or a Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board member is invited to attend these meetings, to update the Forum Services Working Group on current developments and to take the Working Group's feedback on an ongoing basis.

While engagement between the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and the Commission for Victims and Survivors Service is ongoing throughout the year, in both formal and informal meetings, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited met specifically with the Victims and Survivors Forum on 12 September 2017, and with the Forum Services Working Group on 13 March 2018. This engagement has provided valuable opportunities to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and Senior Management for hearing the views of victims and survivors and taking these into account when making decisions on the delivery of funding and support.

The Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Groups

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited convenes the Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Groups (VSPWG). The VSPWGs are a forum for practitioners from the statutory and community/voluntary sectors who work in the trauma field, with particular reference to victims and survivors. Two Regional VSPWGs, one in the North East and one in the South West of Northern Ireland are convened on a bi-monthly basis.

The aims of the VSPWGs are:

- To provide community/voluntary/statutory perspectives on working with victims and survivors of the Troubles/Conflict.
- To share/improve good practice to benefit service providers and users.
- To support collaborative working.
- To provide evidence of the needs of victims/survivors.
- To improve understanding of barriers that prevent or limit access to services and participation in relevant activities.
- To enable effective signposting to services.
- To inform policies and strategies relevant to support for victims and survivors.

The VSPWGs provide an important platform for networking and sharing of information between Victims and Survivors Service Limited funded organisations, as well as with relevant statutory and community/voluntary professionals. The VSPWGs focus on strategic rather than operational issues of concern to the victims and survivors sector. This engagement is a crucial for developing a network of services for victims and survivors and ensuring that organisations are aware of the wide range of services available.

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The VSPWG meetings held in 2017-18 are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Groups Meetings

Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Group	Meetings Held
North East Region	7 th June 2017 5 th September 2017 29 th November 2017 7 th March 2018
South West Region	14 th June 2017 14 th September 2017 19 th October 2017 30 th November 2017 22 nd February 2018

External Stakeholders

In addition to the partnership-level stakeholders discussed above, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has a large number of external stakeholders. Most important among these are victims and survivors themselves, and the organisations that have emerged over the past number of years to deliver dedicated services and support for them, funded by The Executive Office.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited engages with these key external stakeholders on an ongoing, proactive basis, ensuring clear communication in relation to both individual support and organisational and service delivery developments.

Maintaining and further developing and improving relationships with these stakeholders continues to be a key priority for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.

Strategic Developments Impacting Programmes Delivery and Stakeholder Engagement

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited continues to operate within a challenging, complex, and changing strategic context. Key elements of this context include:

- Continued **growing demand** for services and support;
- The implementation of a **new three year service delivery model** beginning in 2017-18;
- **Welfare Reform**, specifically the transition from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payments implemented by the Department for Communities commencing in December 2016, which, as envisaged to a certain extent by the Welfare Reform Mitigations Working Group Report (2016),² has impacted on victims and survivors living with physical and psychological injuries;
- The work being undertaken by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in collaboration with other key stakeholders to develop the proposed Mental Trauma Service,³ currently referred to as the **Regional Trauma Network**; and
- **Broader strategic and political uncertainty** with particular reference to the implementation of the proposed Stormont House Agreement (2014) proposals on addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past.

The ongoing Collaborative Design or Co-Design Programme enables strategic communication and partnership-level engagement in relation to all of these issues.

Victims and Survivors Service Limited Co-Design Programme (Ongoing)

The Co-Design Programme, led by The Executive Office in conjunction with the Commission for Victims and Survivors and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, was established in early 2015 to take forward a new innovative partnership approach to design improved 'victim led' services and support to victims and survivors. This ongoing process informed the Commission's policy advice approved by Ministers in late 2016, which shaped the new service delivery model being implemented from 2017-20 (see below).

Further key work and developments delivered by the Co-Design Programme in 2017-18 include the following:

² Available online at: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/welfare-reform-mitigations-working-group-report> [Accessed 20 July 2018].

³ As per the announcement made by then Minister for the Department of Health, Simon Hamilton, on 24 February 2016 (see statement online at: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/hamilton-announces-start-funding-new-world-leading-mental-trauma-service>) [Accessed 20 July 2018].

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- Successful progress made by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited as Lead Partner implementing the PEACE IV Programme to develop Health & Wellbeing Caseworker and Advocacy Support Worker Network for victims and survivors within Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Great Britain.
- Ongoing work in relation the development of the Mental Trauma Service (now referred to as the Regional Trauma Network – see detailed discussion below).

The Co-Design Programme Team members are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Victims and Survivors Limited Co-Design Programme Team 2017-18

Name	Organisation	Position
Roberta Dalton	Victims and Survivors Unit, The Executive Office	Acting Director of Equality, Victims, Human Rights and Delivering Social Change
Colin Moffett	Victims and Survivors Unit, The Executive Office	Head of Victims Unit
John Beggs	Commission for Victims and Survivors	Secretary to the Commissioner
Judith Thompson	Commission for Victims and Survivors	The Commissioner
Margaret Bateson	Victims and Survivors Service Limited	Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Extensive engagement with the sector which commenced in early 2015, continued throughout 2016. A total of 6 collaborative design workshops were held in 2016 in relation to the development of the PEACE IV Programme and the proposed new service delivery model of 2017-20. By 31 March 2017 the Co-Design Programme team had also met nine times. The release of PEACE IV funding, and approval of the 3-year business case for the new service delivery was the official end of Phase 1.

Phase 2 of Co-Design will continue over the next four years, from April 2017 to March 2018 the Co-Design team met on 6 occasions. The progress against the overall programme plan is reviewed regularly and any delays at this early stage reviewed and assessed regarding the impact (if any) to the overall plan or other key tasks. Key themes for Phase 2 are: Co-Design Phase 2 Communication and Engagement Strategy, PEACE IV research projects, Victims and Survivors Strategy (Post 2019).

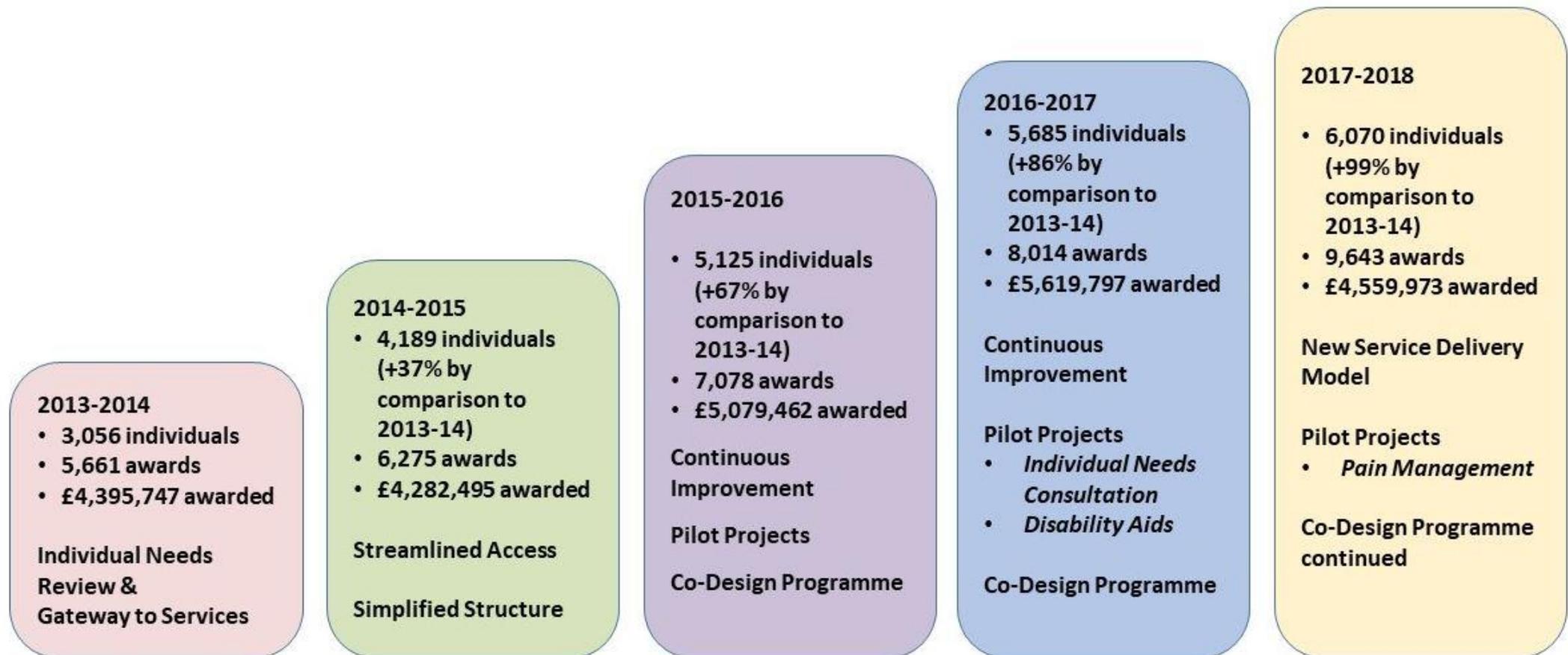
Continued Growing Demand for Services

The original business case for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in 2013 assumed the delivery of assistance to 3,000 individuals per annum. This projection has been exceeded every year since then: in 2017-18, the organisation provided support and services directly to a record 6,070 individuals, more than double the original business case modelling. This trend of increasing demand for services and support is a key strategic and operational challenge that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has worked hard to meet, year on year.

Diagram 2 below illustrates the growing demand over the whole period 2013-14 to 2017-18, and highlights key elements of the approach taken by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited to respond to this challenge, ensuring that client safety, effective support, and continuous service delivery remain central to the organisation's focus.

As shown in Diagram 2, adjusting the service delivery model has been a vital part of that response. Informed by the Co-Design Programme, pilot project testing, and ongoing engagement with our stakeholders, in 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited successfully transitioned to a new, more sustainable needs-based service delivery model that focuses less on delivering cash-based support to individuals, and more on the development of outcomes-based services delivered in partnership with our community-based organisations that receive Victims Support Programme and PEACE IV funding. This transition has been a closely managed process, informed by policy advice provided by the Commission for Victims and Survivors to Ministers in August 2016 (approved in November 2016), and enabled and supported by the timely implementation of the PEACE IV Programme.

Diagram 2: Level of Demand



The New Service Delivery Model (2017-20)

As indicated above, 2017-18 was the first year of implementation of a new three-year service delivery model (2017-20) based on the Commission for Victims and Survivors' *Victims and Survivors Delivery Model for 2017-2020 Policy Advice Paper* (August 2016) approved by Ministers in November 2016. That advice was informed in large part by monitoring and analysis delivered by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in relation to its service delivery experience, as well as by the findings and outcomes of the Co-Design process. The delivery of this model over the whole period is predicated on a new *Programme Funding For Victims And Survivors 2017-2020 New Service Delivery Model Business Case* (November 2016) provided by The Executive Office.

The new service delivery model involves a move away from a grant-led approach towards a needs-based and outcomes-focused model of integrated services and support, working in partnership with funded organisations across the region.

Under the new model, limited grant funding, now referred to as Self-Directed Assistance Payments, remains available under the Individual Needs Programme for eligible clients registered with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited on or before 31 March 2017. Further to this, both previously registered and new individuals coming forward all have access to needs-led assistance enabled through a range of measures including:

- New Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks under the Individual Needs Programme that deliver bespoke assistance to meet individual needs. This includes Disability Aids, Education and Training, and Psychological Therapies. Some elements of these Frameworks, additional and complementary to the Individual Needs Programme, benefit from PEACE IV Resilience Programme funding.
- The full range of services and support delivered by community-based organisations funded under the Victims Support Programme.
- One-to-one Health and Wellbeing Caseworker support, and Advocacy Support to engage with legacy institutions and processes, funded by PEACE IV.

The delivery of this assistance is underpinned by a client-led and needs-based approach, using an Individual Needs Consultation to discuss individual circumstances and agree personal packages of support in each case. This approach connects people with services, and is enabled specifically by the PEACE IV-funded Network of Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers and Regional Case Managers. The activities and performance of these interconnected and complementary elements of the new service delivery model are described in greater detail in the relevant sections below. A summary overview of the monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing progress towards the achievement of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited strategic outcomes for victims and survivors over the whole programme period is attached at [Appendix 3](#).

Change management and risk mitigation

While the new model builds upon engagement and capacity development conducted through the Victims Support Programme and pilot projects of the Individual Needs Programme in recent years, it represents a major change for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, its funded organisations, and most importantly, for victims and survivors themselves. Significant risks identified by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited prior to the model's implementation included:

- The likelihood that individuals would be confused by the changes;
- The likelihood that individuals would feel angry and forgotten by government (or more specifically, by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited) as a result of the reduced level of direct financial assistance available;
- The likelihood that new individuals coming forward after 31 March 2017, ineligible for direct financial assistance, would feel unfairly treated by government (or more specifically, by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited) by comparison to those registered prior to the deadline and determined eligible for payments; and
- The strong possibility that these reactions to the new model would give rise to challenging client behaviour, frustration among funded organisations, increased political scrutiny, and negative media coverage of the organisation, which all had the potential to negatively impact on staff wellbeing in the broader context of change.

To mitigate against these risks, the Victims and Survivors Service developed a detailed communication and engagement plan to ensure consistent and clear information sharing via all of its key communication channels, from internal staff briefings, to telephone call and reception query handling on the front line, face to face briefings and email updates to funded organisations, maintaining up to date and user-friendly information on the website, and targeted political correspondence to Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Successful implementation of the new model

The successful implementation of this transition to the new service delivery model is demonstrated by the following:

- A low number of formal complaints was received in 2017-18 (see p. 70 below).
- The volume of incoming calls and queries from individual Victims and survivors over 2017-18 (on average 1,015 telephone calls per month) was significantly lower than the extremely high numbers recorded in 2016-17 (on average 3,980 calls per month). As reported in the *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017*, this peak in client traffic was due to client confusion and

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uncertainty in relation to changes made to the administration of the Financial Assistance Scheme to satisfy public governance requirements that year (2016-17).

- Media coverage relating to the changes was very limited: only one negative news story was published in May 2017. The story was factually incorrect, but did concern a specific client's disgruntlement with the new model, which was based on a misunderstanding of the scope of the support available. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited engaged with individuals to resolve the misunderstanding and achieve a positive resolution.
- Client feedback in relation to the new model and the way the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has engaged with individuals over this period has been overwhelmingly positive. This is evidenced in the results of a client survey conducted by the organisation in February 2018, discussed in detail under 'Positive outcomes measured in relation to delivery of Self Directed Assistance Payments' on p.48 below.

As outlined above, these positive outcomes have been enabled by the extensive communication and engagement conducted by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited over the whole period 2015-16 to date, both at a strategic level through the Co-Design Programme and Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Groups, and directly with individual victims and survivors. The ongoing investment of time and resources in maintaining and building trust with our stakeholders remains a core priority for the organisation.

Welfare Reform and Mitigations for Victims and Survivors – Engagement with the Department for Communities

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited *Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2017* explained the background to the Welfare Reform process currently being implemented by the Department for Communities, the mitigations approved by the Northern Ireland Executive in respect of injured victims and survivors, and the engagement established between the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and the Department for Communities with regard to sharing relevant information for individual Victims and survivors affected by the transition from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). This engagement has continued and further developed over 2017-18, and has become an important area of effective cross-departmental communication and co-working with the specific collective aim of delivering positive outcomes for victims and survivors. Key developments over the period have included:

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- Ongoing daily engagement between the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Client Services team, Welfare Support Officers (funded under the Victims Support Programme) in our community-based partner organisations, Department for Communities staff members, and CAPITA, to facilitate the safe sharing of information as approved by individual Victims and survivors, and escalation of issues and queries as they arise. This arrangement continues to work very well.
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited and the Department for Communities have co-convened two round table stakeholder meetings to facilitate engagement and discussion between Welfare Support Officers, the Department for Communities, and representatives from CAPITA's assessment and clinical governance teams. These meetings took place on 23 November 2017 and 1 February 2018.

Facilitation of victims and survivors sector response to Department for Communities Public Consultation on PIP Assessment Process

Following the stakeholder meetings, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited facilitated a collective sectoral response to a public consultation by the Department for Communities on the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment process (the *Independent Review of the Assessment Process (Northern Ireland)*) in March 2018. This gathered evidence, comments, and recommendations from Welfare Support Officers across the Victims Support Programme network.

On this basis, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited identified a number of significant issues with the assessment process, notably:

- A lack of understanding of the impact of the Troubles/Conflict;
- The negative impact of the assessment process on the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors;
- Inconsistent and at times poor communication between CAPITA (the assessment function) and the individual;
- A lack of understanding of key complexities including circumstances of those who are in employment, and of those with one single diagnosed condition versus those with multiple conditions;
- Inconsistency in the skills and training of assessors;
- Delays and the length of the overall process from the application stage to assessment to mandatory reconsideration to appeal; and
- Lack of clarity around decision making processes and supporting documentation used.

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Drawing on the evidence identified, and on behalf of the funded Welfare Support Officers, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited made a practical suggestions for amendments to the assessment process.

The Independent Review published the findings of its public consultation on 28 June 2018. In its recommendations, this report addressed a substantial number of the issues highlighted by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, and made recommendations that reflected several of the practical suggestions submitted by the sector, including for example:

- Adjustments to communication around and scheduling of assessments;
- Consideration of a full medical history and emphasis on paper-based review for individuals with conditions that have no prospect of improvement and/or with life-limiting implications; and
- The development of enhanced training for Assessors specific to certain groups of conditions (e.g. conflict-related trauma).

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is continuing to monitor developments for issues and risks arising, and this engagement therefore remains a current topic of discussion and review by both the Victims and Survivors Service Limited senior management team and the wider Co-Design Meeting.

In pursuing this ongoing engagement, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited understands the operational challenges facing the Department for Communities to in relation to the operation of the PIP assessment and the wider implementation of the Welfare Reform process in Northern Ireland. Setting the practical challenges to one side, media coverage of the considerable problems identified in the implementation of Welfare Reform by the Department of Work and Pensions in Great Britain is giving rise to significant concerns and fear among people here, including those affected by the Conflict/Troubles. In this context, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited remains ready to provide any support it can to ensuring that our organisations collectively achieve better outcomes for victims and survivors.

Regional Trauma Network

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited involvement in work currently underway to establish a Regional Trauma Network is a significant strategic development that intersects significantly with the new service delivery model and future planning and delivery for victims and survivors. Its early development over the period 2016-18 has involved extensive stakeholder engagement that has included Victims and Survivors Service Limited stakeholders, to which our organisation has contributed significantly in terms of co-ordination, information sharing, and networking, both as part of the wider Co-

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Design Programme (see above) and with regard to the Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Groups. It therefore warrants detailed description in this report.

Background

The Northern Ireland Executive made a commitment in the Stormont House Agreement (2014) to establish a comprehensive Mental Health Trauma Service. This recommendation built on the *Comprehensive Needs Assessment* published by the Commission for Victims and Survivors (2012), which identified mental health as a priority area of need for victims and survivors, and recommended the development of a trauma-focused coordinated service network lead by the Department of Health in partnership with the Executive Office. This network would deliver a comprehensive regional trauma service drawing on existing resources and expertise from the statutory, community and voluntary sector.

Intersection with the New Service Delivery Model and PEACE IV Programme

As noted above, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is the Lead Partner to deliver the PEACE IV Programme for Victims and survivors, with a key focus on improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors and building capacity within the sector to deliver high quality services.

The most authoritative international guidelines on the effective management of trauma are provided by the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS) and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). NICE recommends the development of a 'stepped care' approach which is underpinned by a social model of recovery. The Stepped Care model is shown in Diagram 3 below. This model allows for a range of interventions, meeting the spectrum of need across the community and focuses on the recovery of the individual. It takes into account the clinical evidence that for people to recover, they may often need a combination of evidence-based social, family, psychological, and psychiatric interventions: a collaborative partnership across community, voluntary, and statutory services.

Diagram 3: NICE Stepped Care Model

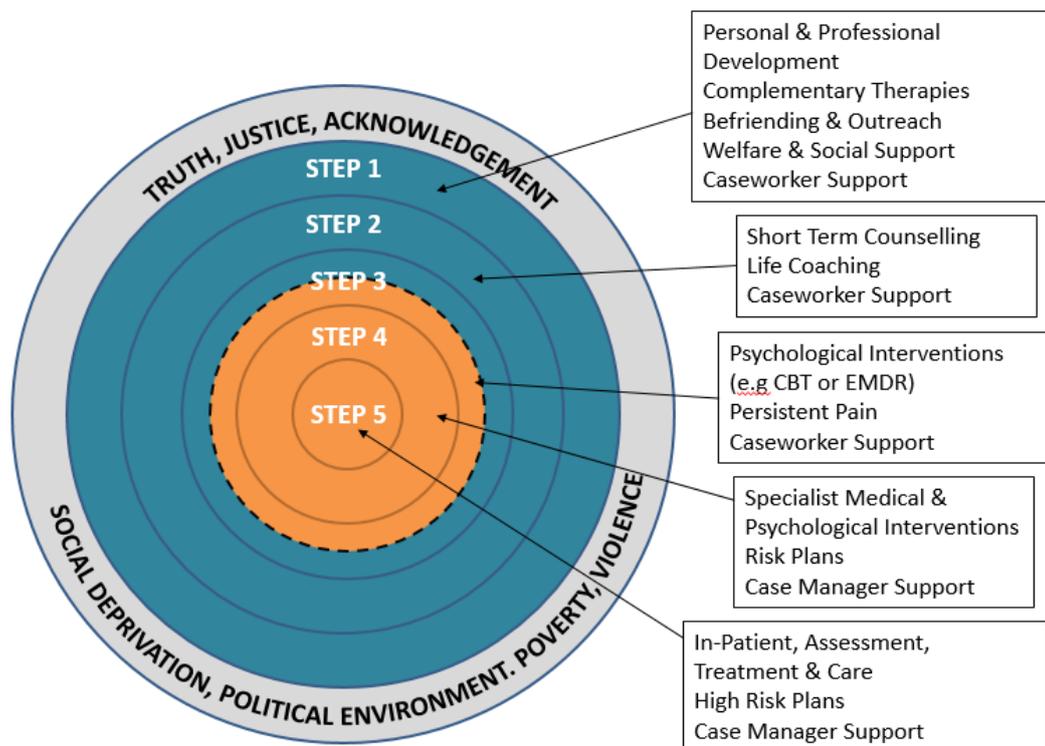


The PEACE IV Programme delivered by the Victims and Survivors Service creates the opportunity to engage with individual victims and survivors whose mental health has been impacted by the Troubles/Conflict and to remove barriers to accessing timely, effective, and integrated support from the community, voluntary, and statutory services in line both with the needs identified, and the stepped care model.

As described above, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited application for PEACE IV funding was approved in November 2016. On this basis, the community and voluntary sector provision of the new managed care network – or, the Regional Trauma Network – was established over the period April to September 2017, with the recruitment of Regional Health and Wellbeing Case Managers employed directly by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, and Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers employed across the region. This network has been established with the aim of connecting victims and survivors to appropriate services based on need.

Diagram 4 below demonstrates how this service delivery model intersects with both the Stepped Care Model and the wider provision of services and support under the Individual Needs and Victims Support Programme.

Diagram 4: Stepped Care Model – intersection with wider provision of services and support by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited



Key: VSS
Statutory Services
Context

Planning and delivery: Partnership Agreement

In December 2016 a Partnership Agreement was drafted between the Department of Health and The Executive Office. The Agreement awaits Ministerial approval. This set out the mechanisms via which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited would interface with Health and Social Care Trusts to ensure relevant, timely, accessible, and comprehensive trauma care for those whose mental health has been impacted by the Troubles/Conflict. The partnership agreement recognises the value of and integrates services funded by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in the provision of services at Steps 1 – 3 and the need to develop a more specialised workforce within Health and Social Care to provide services at Steps 3-5.

The Partnership Agreement clarifies the proposed aims of the Regional Trauma Network as follows:

- To comprehensively address the legacy of the Conflict and address unmet mental health needs (though services would not be limited to trauma acquired in this way);

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- To improve individual, family, and community experience of mental health trauma care;
- To increase the overall capacity of mental health services in Northern Ireland;
- To improve the psychological and social outcomes for individuals, their families, and communities who have been traumatised as a result of the Conflict; and
- To improve governance and accountability of trauma care provided by the Health and Social Care Trusts, and the voluntary and community sector.

Partnership Board

Following the establishment of the Partnership Agreement, the Partnership Board was set up, including:

- Victims and Survivors Service Limited.
- Health and Social Care Board.
- Department of Health.
- Executive Office.
- Commission for Victims and Survivors.
- Public Health Agency.
- Health and Social Care Trusts with responsibility for mental trauma care services
- Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University.

Summary

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has welcomed and participated fully in the developments described above, and is committed to the successful delivery of the Regional Trauma Network in partnership with all of the stakeholders highlighted. However, in monitoring the progress of these developments, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has registered concerns associated with the partnership approach. As part of the organisation's Risk Management Strategy (see p. 87 below) the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has closely monitored the risk of non-delivery of its element of the Regional Trauma Network, due to lack of effective partnership working, and demotivation among community-based stakeholders if the statutory services model does not change at the same pace. To mitigate this, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is continuing to communicate clearly with the Partnership Board, expressing its concerns and making practical suggestions for improved communication and engagement. The organisation remains committed to this work, and looks forward to constructive engagement with the newly appointed Network Manager over the months ahead.

Strategic and Political Uncertainty

The dynamic environment and developments described above have been underpinned in 2017-18 by the wider context of political uncertainty created by the absence of the Northern Ireland Executive since January 2017. The impact of this for victims and survivors is felt most acutely in relation to the delay in implementing measures discussed in the Stormont House Agreement (2014).

Delays to implementation of the Stormont House Agreement

In terms of devolved matters highlighted in the Agreement that have not been progressed, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is aware of frustration that exists among victims and survivors and their representatives in relation to two key issues:

- The lack of progress in relation to delivering a pension for the seriously injured; and
- The decision by to withhold funding for outstanding Legacy Inquests, which involve approximately 100 Conflict/Troubles-related deaths.

Regarding the substantive proposals made in the Agreement with regard to the establishment of new Legacy Institutions: there has been some progress made in early 2018-19. On 11 May 2018 the Northern Ireland Office launched a Public Consultation on the proposed measures for completing outstanding historical investigations into Conflict/Troubles-related deaths, facilitating information and truth recovery, establishing an oral history archive, and delivering thematic reports and insights into the overall process. This is discussed in greater detail under 'Important events occurring after the year-end' on p. 78 below.

While these developments are welcomed by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and its network of community-based organisations, they do not immediately resolve the prevailing uncertainty surrounding legacy issues and individual cases: the Public Consultation closes on 5th October 2018, and there will be a further period of deliberation, policy development, and structural implementation before individuals and families begin to feel any tangible progress in their cases. On this basis, as part of the organisation's Risk Management Strategy (see p. 87 below) the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has monitored the lack of political agreement on the Stormont House Agreement legacy institutions as a strategic risk that dilutes the potential strategic impact of the PEACE IV funded Advocacy Support Programme from April 2017 onwards, and has adjusted and managed its work programme and stakeholder engagement in this area accordingly.

Budget allocation and uncertainty

In addition to the uncertainty described above, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, like all other statutory bodies, is affected by the uncertain political environment to the

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extent that there is a risk of delays in budget allocation and a possible reduction in budget allocation. While also monitored as part of the organisation's Risk Management Strategy (see p. 87 below), this risk did not materialise in 2017-18.

1.2 Overview

The purpose of this section is to provide information in relation to how the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has performed during the year and outline key risks to the achievement of its corporate objectives.

Summary Performance against Delivery Plan Strategic Outcomes

The principal activities of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in this year have been outlined above. This activity was premised on **5** Strategic Outcomes, comprising **30** Key Actions (with associated outputs and outcomes), agreed with The Executive Office.

The 5 Strategic Outcomes for 2017-18 were as follows:

1. Improved health and wellbeing of Victims and Survivors.
2. Victims and Survivors, and those most in need, are helped and cared for.
3. Victims and Survivors, and their families, are supported to engage in legacy issues.
4. Improved access to opportunities for learning and development.
5. An efficient and effective organisation.

The achievement of these targets was monitored on a monthly basis and as at 31 March 2018, summary progress against all **30** key actions was as follows:

Achievement Status		Number of Targets	Status Description
BLUE		27	Completed
GREEN		0	Achieved or on track for delivery
GREEN/AMBER		3	Broadly on track and there is <i>justifiable</i> confidence of getting close to targeted outcomes
AMBER		0	Progress less than planned. Significant doubt around the achievement of targeted outcomes
RED		0	Commitments not achieved or not expected to be achieved within the current PfG period

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All business plan targets for 2017-18 were met with the exception of three which were partially achieved. These relate to the Additional Needs Based Frameworks supporting Disability Aids (an Individual Needs Programme-funded measure), and Trauma-Focussed Physical Activity, and One-to One Literacy & Numeracy (both PEACE IV-funded measures).

In respect of these three targets, whilst the final number of individuals (outputs) was below the targeted level, the outcomes – such as improved health and wellbeing, and improved numeracy and literacy for those individuals engaged – were achieved or exceeded.

The uptake and delivery of these three specific Frameworks were slower than expected in Year 1 of the new service delivery model due to the following reasons:

- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited was responsible for developing familiarity with the detail of the Frameworks and confidence in their delivery among Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers had prior to the implementation of this support. This was done through extensive induction and training activities across the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network. As the recruitment of these key workers by funded organisations only commenced in April 2017 following the issue of Letters of Offer, the earliest these activities could take place was from July to September 2017. Outreach and engagement with individuals and delivery of support through the Frameworks came on line after that point.
- Early indications from the activity of the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network show that Literacy and Numeracy involves broaching issues including social stigma and low confidence and self esteem, which present significant barriers to individual engagement. While the Victims and Survivors Service Limited expected to encounter this challenge, its impact has been greater than anticipated. To address this, a dedicated outreach programme and campaign will be developed for implementation by the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network in 2018-19.
- Early indications from the activity of the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network show that the Trauma-Focussed Physical Activity Framework, which is designed to operate in conjunction with and complement an individual's therapeutic process, has not been fully understood by Caseworkers. Steps have been taken in the latter part of 2017-18 to ensure a clearer understanding of the support available and its appropriate delivery. These actions will continue into 2018-19.

It is also important to note that this new needs-based approach provides bespoke care in response to individual and changing circumstances, and aims to deliver largely qualitative outcomes at an individual level. By its nature, therefore, it is a model that involves uncertainty and challenges in terms of forecasting numbers and budget. This general point has proved particularly true for the first year of the new model's operation, where the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has been responsible for simultaneously

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informing and building the confidence of its service delivery partners, ensuring ongoing provision and access to services, and maximising support. Over this critical period of change, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has monitored numbers, uptake, outputs, and outcomes carefully, to inform the planning and delivery of the Programmes in Year 2.

Further details of these summary performance indicators are outlined in the extracts of the Victims and Survivors Service Business Plan, provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Summary Programmes Performance

Victims Support Programme (2017-20)

- The Victims Support Programme provides funding to organisations to enable them to deliver services and support to victims and survivors. This Programme is delivered in four main streams (see table 4 below).
- Following a call for funding that opened in November 2016, applications to the Programme were assessed against published criteria and Letters of Offer were issued to 55 successful organisations to deliver services over a 3 year period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020.
- A further 5 organisations that were previously funded under the Victims Support Programme and were either unsuccessful or did not apply to this new call were provided with Letters of Offer to cover three months' exit funding in 2017-18.
- During 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited continued to embed an outcomes and impact-focussed approach to monitoring and evaluation, including the implementation of standardised measurement tools.
- These tools were introduced to the sector by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in previous years via a supportive process of training and capacity building for the organisations that use them. Their implementation is now a core element of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and wider sector's commitment to ensuring positive service outcomes and ongoing improvement.

Individual Needs Programme (2017-18)

- The Individual Needs Programme delivers funding and funded services directly to individuals who meet the definition of a victim or survivor, as per the Victims and Survivors (NI) Order (2006) (see p. 8 above).
- 2017-18 was the first year of implementation of a new three-year needs-based service delivery model, which has involved changes to the administration of the Individual Needs Programme and increased partnership working with Victims Support Programme-funded organisations across the region, supported and enabled by PEACE IV-funded Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network and Advocacy Support Workers.

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- Over 2017-18, target figures for the delivery of support under the Individual Needs Programme were exceeded: a total of **6,070** individuals accessed assistance.
- Overall, this first year of implementation has been a success, with low numbers of complaints and positive feedback from individuals recorded, and no major issues in relation to operational delivery to report.

PEACE IV Programme (2016-21)

- The PEACE IV Programme complements and enhances the existing services and support delivered under the Victims Support Programme and Individual Needs Programme. 2017-18 was the first year of implementation of this Programme, as an integrated and value-adding element of the new service delivery model.
- A call for applications to the PEACE IV Programme opened in November 2016, in conjunction with the Victims Support Programme. The assessment of applications and issuing of Letters of Offer occurred within the same timeframe described above.
- **18** organisations were awarded PEACE IV funding totalling **£7.5m** to deliver services under this Programme, which concludes on **31 July 2021**.
- During 2017-18, the structures for the implementation of the PEACE IV Programme were finalised and embedded. This has included: recruitment of staff, development and publication of guidance notes and support frameworks, the establishment of communication networks and reporting routines, and the commencement of outreach to Victims and survivors and delivery of funded services.
- Almost all staff were in post and had completed induction training by the latter part of the year, in both the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and its funded organisations.
- Activity and expenditure have increased in the last months of 2017-18, setting the Programme on course to meet its objectives for the remainder of the Programme period.

Summary Governance Performance

Corporate Governance

- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Internal Audit Plan was implemented, with an Annual Assurance level of *Satisfactory* awarded.
- The Senior Management Team continued to meet on a monthly basis to manage strategic and operational risks and ensure clear communication between functions.
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board met on a monthly basis, looking at a range of strategic issues in detail.

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- A new management information system was implemented, supporting an enhanced framework of Outcomes Based Accountability reporting.
- In October 2017, an appointment was made in the post of Head of Corporate Services on a permanent contract.
- The Audit & Risk Committee met on 4 occasions, including a review of the 2016-17 accounts prior to audit, and approval of the audited, unqualified financial statements.
- Both the Board and Audit & Risk Committee carried out self-assessment reviews, and noted resulting action points to ensure compliance with best practice.
- Detailed quarterly reporting to the Board has been provided throughout the year, supplemented by monthly exception reporting.

Clinical Governance

- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has an established and robust framework of protocols to support its commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors, including the identification and management of risk.
- The recruitment of five Health and Wellbeing Regional Case Managers in 2017-18 has strengthened the Victims and Survivors Service Limited core staff capacity in relation to clinical skills and insight: these staff are all registered health professionals.
- The health and wellbeing of staff within the service remains of significant importance, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited recognises the impact upon staff in dealing with vulnerable individuals. Relevant staff training and supervision are provided on a regular basis.
- A Workforce Training and Development Plan to enhance the skills and capacity across the sector for those delivering support and services to victims and survivors continued in 2017-18. The purpose of the Plan is to build upon existing skills and expertise across the sector and to promote and develop best practice and standardise services for victims and survivors.
- A Clinical Governance Framework was developed in 2016-17 and implemented in 2017-18. This comprehensive, live framework, developed in line with the *Standards for Services Provided to Victims and Survivors* published by the Commission for Victims and Survivors (21 November 2016), comprises four key components of Clinical Governance i.e. Risk Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Education and Training, and Effective Practice.
- As part of this Framework, a sub-group of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board, the Health and Wellbeing Committee, has been established and has met quarterly to review, comment on, and approve key policies, protocols, and developments in the area of Clinical Governance.

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Further detail on each of the above areas is outlined in the Performance Analysis below and in the Corporate Governance Report.

1.3 Performance Analysis

As summarised above, during 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was responsible for delivering funding and resources for victims and survivors through three key measures: the Victims Support Programme (2017-20), the Individual Needs Programme (2017-18), and the PEACE IV Programme (2016-21).

This section provides a detailed analysis of each of these Programmes, and assesses this information in the context of the organisation's agreed Strategic Outcomes (outlined above) and Key Performance Indicators (see [Appendix 2](#)).

Focus on Strategic Outcomes

As noted previously, the vision of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is to 'improve the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors'. The organisation has worked collaboratively with the Commission for Victims and Survivors, the Executive Office and our community and voluntary partners to develop four strategic outcomes to help us achieve this. These are outlined in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Programme Delivery: Strategic Outcomes

Thematic Area per Comprehensive Needs Assessment <i>(Commission for Victims and Survivors, 2012)</i>	Strategic Outcomes	
Health & Wellbeing, Social Support	1	We improve the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors and their families
Financial & Welfare Support	2	We care for victims and survivors and help those most in need
Truth, Justice & Acknowledgement	3	We support victims and survivors and their families to engage in legacy issues
Personal Development	4	We improve access to opportunities for learning and development for victims and survivors

All three of the Programmes delivered by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in 2017-18 have been modelled to reflect these key strategic outcomes. Reporting on

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progress against these objectives is a priority for the organisation: a detailed monitoring and evaluation framework that applies to this activity, which specifies desired outcomes in each thematic area, is included in the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Corporate Plan (2018-21), and is attached at [Appendix 3](#). This framework shapes and informs the below discussion of performance and outcomes measurement.

Note on reporting improvements made in 2017-18

The information provided below reflects the cumulative analysis of data monitored and reported on by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited on a monthly basis. This reporting, routinely scrutinised by the Senior Management Team and Board, is constantly under review to ensure its accuracy and usefulness. In 2017-18, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited implemented two significant improvements to its reporting capacities and processes. These are outlined below, followed by the detailed analysis of each of the three Programmes.

New Management Information System

First, the new Management Information System, 'VIM' (or Victims and Survivors Service Information Management) went live in April 2017 following an intensive development and user-testing process. The new system enables significantly improved information management and reporting capabilities that have improved both statistical month-end reporting and the quality of client contact and front line service delivery, such as the creation and maintenance of detailed and up-to-the-minute client contact records, and digitisation of key client information, enabling call handlers to deal efficiently with queries.

New quarterly Outcomes Based Reporting routine

Second, in 2017-18, the Victims and Survivors Service enhanced its monitoring and reporting by producing a Quarterly Outcomes Based Monitoring and Evaluation Report. This action was taken in line with the organisation's commitment to monitor progress and report on its delivery of the four Strategic Outcomes described in Table 4 above and wider outcomes reporting framework outlined in [Appendix 3](#), which in turn reflect the Outcomes-Based Accountability (OBA) model that underpins the *Draft Programme for Government* (2016-21). The Quarterly Report is shared at the Trilateral Meeting (see above), and with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's key stakeholders.

VICTIMS SUPPORT PROGRAMME (2017-20)

Background

In November 2016, Ministers approved a three year business case for funding which included an indicative provision of £6m annually for the Victims Support Programme. On

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that basis, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited opened a call for applications to organisations based in Northern Ireland to deliver services to victims and survivors. These services were required to reflect not only the vision, mission, and values of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, but also the key themes and needs identified in the *Comprehensive Needs Assessment* published by the Commission for Victims and Survivors in 2012.

The application process required organisations to submit a business plan demonstrating: need and demand within the current strategic context; an understanding of the alignment of services and outcomes to the *Draft Programme for Government (2016-21)*; and links and partnership working with relevant initiatives in the community/voluntary and health and social care sector. The services proposed by the applicant organisations were assessed in terms of their focus on improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors across the four key strategic outcome areas outlined in Table 4 above.

Funding delivered under the Victims Support Programme

55 organisations were successful in the application process. The Victims and Survivors Service issued Letters of Offer for Large Grants (i.e. greater than £30,000 annually) to 44 organisations across the region, and for Small Grants (i.e. less than £30,000 annually) to a further 11 organisations. The total expenditure for 2017-18 under the Victim Support Programme amounted to £6.9m. This is higher than the indicative budget value noted above of £6m, however TEO provides funding with no delineation at the outset between INP and VSP lines. TEO is content that VSS has discretion to vire funding between INP and VSP to respond to emerging needs, as has been the case during 2017-18.

A further 5 organisations that were previously funded under the Victims Support Programme and were either unsuccessful or did not apply to this new call were provided with Letters of Officer to cover three months' exit funding in 2017-18.

For a full list of organisations currently in receipt of funding, please refer to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited website (www.victimsservice.org).

The services and activities delivered under the Victims Support Programme in 2017-18 can be grouped into the following broad categories:

- Talking Therapies
- Complementary Therapies
- Befriending Services
- Personal and Professional Development
- Transgenerational Services
- Truth, Justice and Acknowledgement Activities
- Welfare Support

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- Other Social Support Activities

Monitoring and Evaluation

Since December 2014, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has been developing an outcomes-based monitoring and evaluation framework in consultation with the sector. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Monitoring and Evaluation Team delivers the training and ongoing support required by funded organisations to operate the relevant monitoring tools as part of their routine practice. Capacity and confidence building is an ongoing process, as is the requirement to analyse, verify/challenge, and constantly improve the quality and consistency of the data gathered

Outcomes-based monitoring is now fully operational in all organisations funded to deliver Complementary Therapies and Talking Therapies under the Victims Support Programme. To monitor and evaluate these services, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has worked with these organisations to adopt and implement the standardised measurement tools described below.

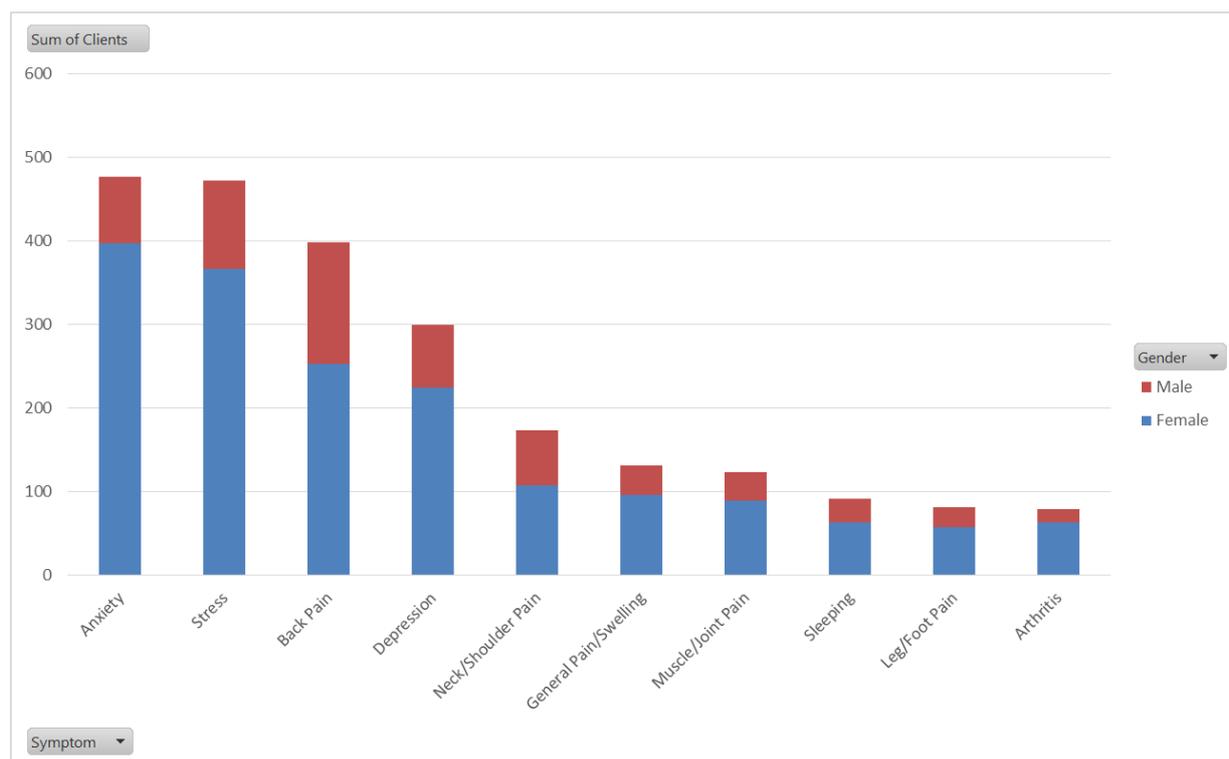
Complementary Therapies: MYMOP (Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile)

MYMOP is currently implemented by all funded organisations delivering Complementary Therapies. It is a client-generated outcome questionnaire that is problem-specific but includes measures of general wellbeing and is applicable to all clients, whether their presenting symptoms are physical, emotional, or social.

The monitoring data gathered using MYMOP provides the following key insights into this area of funded service delivery:

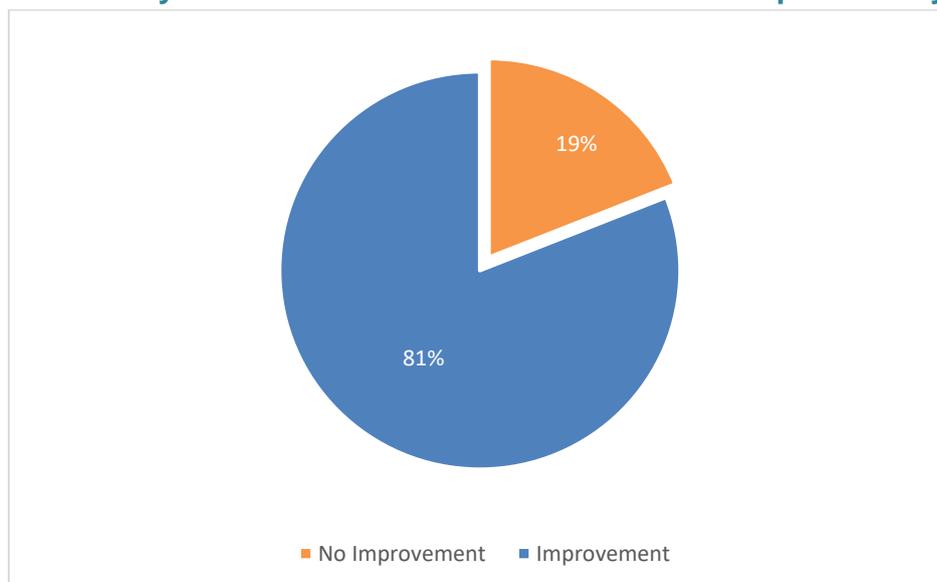
- In 2017-18, 25 funded organisations across Northern Ireland provided Complementary Therapies to a total of 3,227 individuals.
- 3,049 of these individuals completed their course, and 178 ended therapy early.
- This represents a 9% increase in the number of clients completing therapies by comparison to the previous year 2016-17.
- The ratio of females to males accessing support remains at approximately 3:1.
- Females are more likely to stop treatment early (6%) compared to males (3.7%).
- The most common symptoms reported by individuals accessing funded Complementary Therapies are anxiety, stress, back pain, and depression. This information, along with the detail of additional symptoms frequently reported, is shown in Diagram 5 below.

Diagram 5: Summary Monitoring Information – MYMOP: Complementary Therapies (Client Numbers, Client Gender Breakdown, and Symptoms Treated)



Overall, the outcomes data for individuals accessing Complementary Therapies in 2017-18 continued the pattern reported in the previous year 2016-17, indicating an overall improvement in symptoms reported by approximately 4 out of 5 individuals. This information is shown in Diagram 6 below.

Diagram 6: Summary Outcomes Information – MYMOP: Complementary Therapies



The information analysed above demonstrates that Complementary Therapies deliver overwhelmingly positive outcomes, making a significant contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors. Feedback as to why 1 in 5 individuals do not benefit from Complementary Therapies is anecdotal, but indicates that a more rigorous screening process should be used to identify clients for whom these types of therapies are inappropriate. This will be explored further in 2018 and beyond.

CORE Net - Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation Net

CORE Net is a web based system based around the CORE (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation) standard, that records outcome measures that track the progress and recovery of individuals accessing Talking Therapies. It is a client self-report questionnaire administered at each therapy session to measure outcomes across the following four domains:

- Wellbeing
- Risk
- Problems
- Functioning

The monitoring data gathered using CORE Net provides the following key insights into this area of funded service delivery:

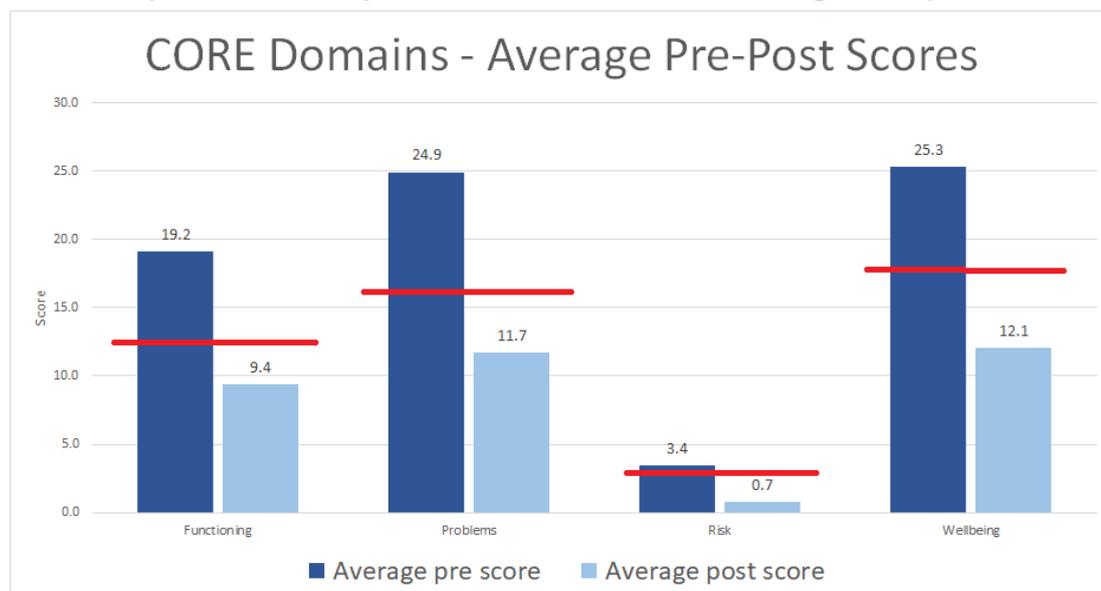
- In 2017-18, 22 funded organisations offered Talking Therapies to victims and survivors.
- 2,109 individuals attended talking therapy sessions during the year, with 1,610 individuals completing therapy during the period. 24 of these individuals were

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treated for more than one episode, resulting in 1,636 completed treatments. 1,050 treatments were completed as planned, while 586 ended early (unplanned).

- Overall 59% of individuals utilising this service experience a positive outcome and this improvement is demonstrated across all 4 domains.

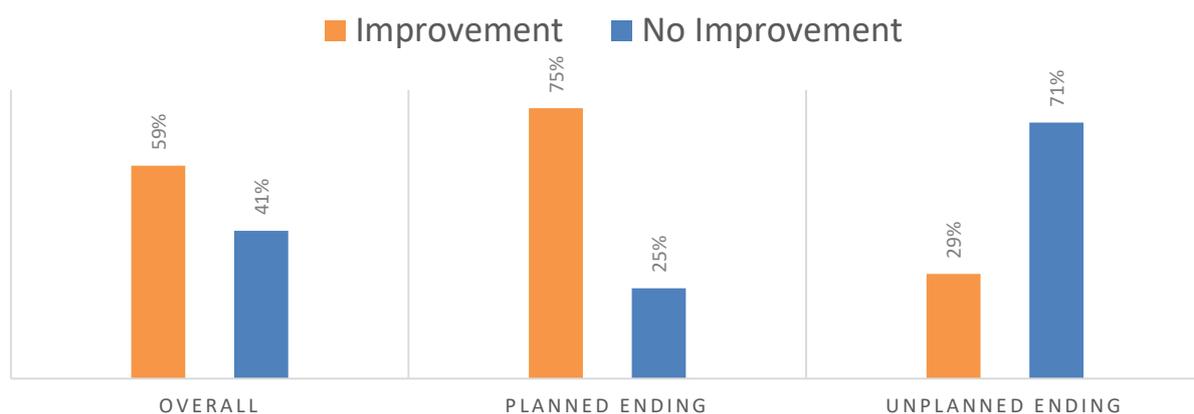
Diagram 7: Improvements By Domain – CORE Net: Talking Therapies



— The Clinical Cutoff Score refers to a score that is presumed to represent the boundary between "normal" and the "clinical range" on an outcome measure.

- Data shows that individuals who complete therapy as planned with their therapist, have a much greater likelihood of a positive outcome (75%). However it is noteworthy that a significant % of individuals who have an unplanned ending of therapy also experience a positive outcome (29%). This information is shown in Diagram 8 below.

Diagram 8: Summary Outcomes Information – CORE Net: Talking Therapies (showing variance between planned and unplanned endings)



The reasons as to why 36% of Talking Therapy clients do not complete their therapy as planned have been investigated, with the most common reasons listed as:

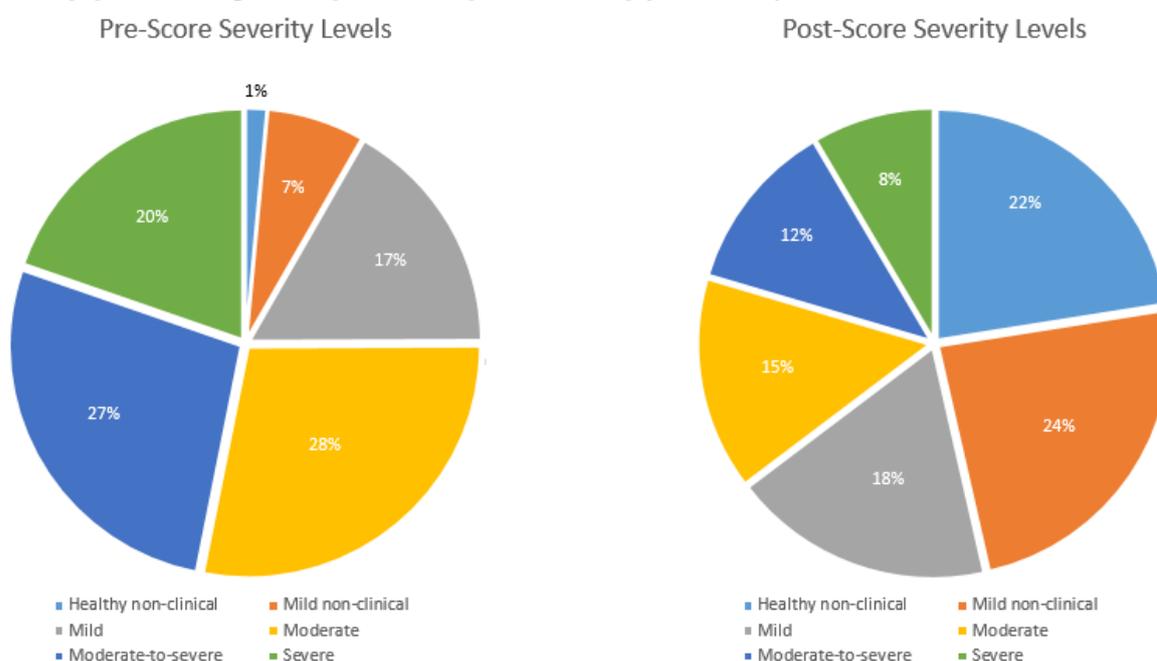
- Too many DNAs (DNA stands for 'Did Not Attend' session) (Organisation Policy)

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- Client moved
- Client DNA final session
- Client transferred to Community Mental Health Team

Although there is a wide range of pre- and post-scores at the individual level, 75% of client pre-therapy scores are in the **Moderate** to **Severe** ranges. The average overall pre-score is at the upper extreme of the **Moderate** range

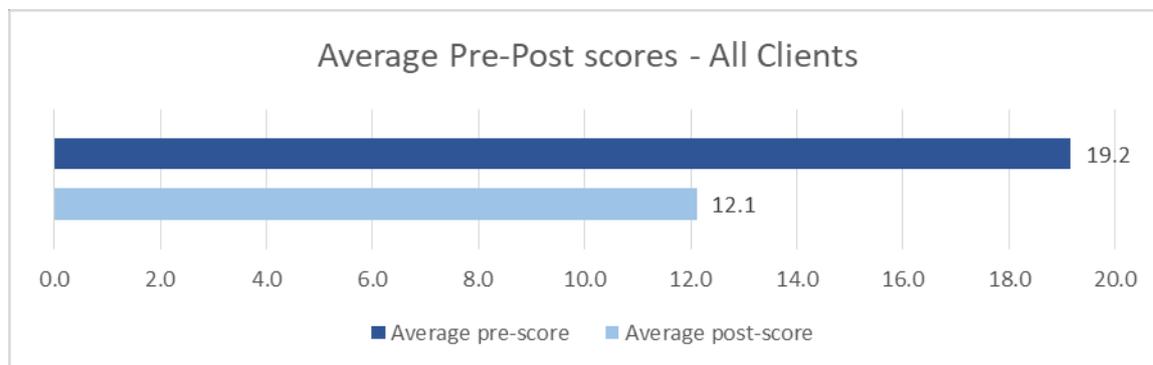
Diagram 9: Outcomes Information – CORE Net: Talking Therapies (showing severity percentages of pre- and post-therapy scores)



(n=1636)

By contrast, post-therapy 35% of client scores are in the **Moderate** to **Severe** ranges, the average score is at the lower end of the **mild** range, and on average there has been a **reliable** change. This information is shown in Diagram 10.

Diagram 10: Summary Outcomes Information – CORE Net: Talking Therapies
(showing difference between average pre- and post-therapy scores)



0-4 healthy non-clinical, 5-9 mild non-clinical, 10-14 mild, 15-19 moderate, 20-24 moderate-to-severe, 25-40 severe

The information analysed above demonstrates that, in just over half of all cases, Talking Therapies deliver positive outcomes. This confirms the service makes a positive contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors. Next steps for this area of work in 2018-19 will include establishing a sub group of the Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Group to examine these outcomes with a view to making CORE Net more relevant to trauma-focused therapies, and conducting analysis of the 41% of individuals who did not experience a positive outcome following treatment.

Additional Health and Wellbeing Activities and Services: Outcomes

Outcomes monitoring measures for additional health and wellbeing activities and services funded under the Victims Support Programme are still under development, in consultation with the sector.

In 2017-18 qualitative feedback was obtained in relation to each of these areas of work. The feedback from service users was overwhelmingly positive. Some of these areas of work and the associated outcomes are detailed below:

Befriending: The Befriending Programme is a professional outreach service delivered by volunteers. It offers support to vulnerable, isolated victims and survivors by either visiting them in their own home, providing transport to hospital appointments or accompanying befriendees to social activities.

Outcomes in this area include improved wellbeing, function, and independence, as evidenced by qualitative case studies.

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The following is a case study from an organisation which delivers Befriending support.

“You provide a fantastic service and it really is heartening to see a great community service that cares, supports and makes such a huge difference to people’s lives. Not only was it a practical help for Daddy, it was a social and psychological help as he was living alone with no independent means of transport. He always looked forward to seeing you on all his outings.”

Welfare Advice and Support. This support is delivered by 12 funded organisations. This vital service helps victims and survivors make sense of what they are entitled to as well as providing support and guidance during the many changes implemented through Welfare Reform.

Client presented in distress and with financial difficulties due to a debt of £7K owing the Inland Revenue

This debt had manifested over a period of 5 years due to PAYE overpayments.

It was quickly evident that the overpayments arose as she had two employers who each applied all of her personal allowance to her wages, resulting in insufficient income tax being collected for a number of years.

The client was not aware that this had happened.

Due to working with the client and the Inland Revenue, we established that she meets the criteria for an ESC A 19 which gives customer a reduction in tax liability reducing the debt to £2K and manageable for the client.

The Welfare system is complex. It is hard for people to understand the rules.

Other Social Support Activities: Respite activities are delivered by 35 funded organisations. They include day trips/social outings and overnight trips. These activities allow victims and survivors to connect and to enjoy the company of others who have had similar experiences and is valuable for many who are socially isolated.

"The trips have gained me so many new friends"

100% of participants on the Florence Court trip agreed that respite trips help to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation, help you to feel more positive and confident, help you to be more active in the community and meet new people, and help to improve your mood, relieve stress and relax. Member's comments pertaining to the respite trip include:

'I find the trips give me the opportunity to look forward. Always enjoy them as the company is very enjoyable.'

'I enjoy getting out and about and meeting new people'.

'Getting out of the house and talking to different people lifts my mind.'

'They help me to go out more and meet new people.'

Next steps for 2018-19 will include establishing a sub group of the Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Group to assist organisations to record outcomes in line with measures currently being developed as part of the broader Belfast Strategic Partnership initiative, Take 5 (see [Appendix 3](#)).

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS PROGRAMME (2017-18)

Background

As the first year of the new three-year service delivery model, the delivery of the Individual Needs Programme in 2017-18 involved significant changes by comparison to the processes and approaches described in previous Annual Reports. The details of the historic model are not repeated here: this section describes the new client-led and needs-based approach. Like the Victims Support Programme, the services and support provided under the Individual Needs Programme are modelled to reflect the four Strategic Outcomes in Table 4 above, and monitored in line with the framework at [Appendix 3](#).

New Service Delivery Model: Individual Needs Programme enhanced by PEACE IV

‘Existing Clients’: Self Directed Assistance Payments

Under the new model, limited grant funding now referred to as Self-Directed Assistance Payments is available to all individuals registered with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited as at 5pm on Friday 31 March 2017 and found to be eligible per the rules governing the Support Schemes and/or the Financial Assistance Scheme delivered in 2016-17. Table 5 below outlines the detail of this support.

Table 5: Self Directed Assistance Payments 2017-18

Description		Award Value	Eligible individuals	Anticipated Outcome(s) and measurement
1	Self Directed Assistance Payment	£500	Individuals confirmed eligible under Individual Needs Programme 2016-17 rules for the following Schemes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Bereaved • Support for the Injured 1 (Disability Living Allowance Middle Rate Care Component) (MRC) • Support for the Injured 2 (Disability Living Allowance High Rate Care Component) (HRC) • Support for Carers • Financial Assistance (FA) 	Improved financial support and a greater sense of responsibility and independence in addressing practical needs, measured via qualitative surveys / case studies and individual feedback.
2	Additional Needs Based Payment	£500	Individuals confirmed to meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereaved of a spouse/partner • Bereaved of both parents • Injured and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance High Rate Care Component (HRC) 	
3	Transition Payment	£200	Individuals confirmed eligible to receive Financial Assistance in 2016-17, <i>in addition to</i> another Support Schemes	

Access to Self Directed Assistance Payments

In principle, where an individual was found to be eligible for a Support Scheme and/or Financial Assistance Scheme payment according to the rules of the Individual Needs Programme in 2016-17, they will remain eligible for a Self Directed Assistance Payment in 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20. This is per the Commission for Victims and Survivors policy advice approved by Ministers in November 2016, and The Executive Office business case for funding (2017-20).

As explained in the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017, prior to opening the Individual Needs Programme 2017-18, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited conducted a spot check of individuals registered with the organisation and deemed eligible for Self Directed Assistance Payments.⁴ Following the demonstration in that process of minimal risk of ineligible expenditure under the new model, the new programme opened in May 2017.

Individuals whose eligibility for the relevant payments had already been determined according to Victims and Survivors Service Limited records were contacted directly and provided with their payments. Enclosed with the cheque in each case was a bespoke letter outlining the new service delivery model, user-friendly leaflets signposting them to community-based organisations, and an explanation of how to contact a Health and Wellbeing Caseworker in the event they required additional needs-based support.

Positive outcomes measured in relation to the delivery of Self Directed Assistance Payments

In February 2018, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited conducted a survey of 20% of the total 6,061 individuals in receipt of the new Self Directed Assistance Payments. Of the 1,236 individuals surveyed, 534 responded, representing a response rate of 43%.

Key findings of the survey included the following:

- When asked 'How do you feel about the support we offer?', 91% said 'Very Helpful', a further 7% said 'Helpful in some ways', and c.1% did not respond.

⁴ A further spot check was conducted at the request of The Executive Office prior to opening the 2018-19 programme. This is discussed in the Governance section on p. 75 below.

Diagram 11: Client satisfaction with support provided

How do you feel about the support we offer?

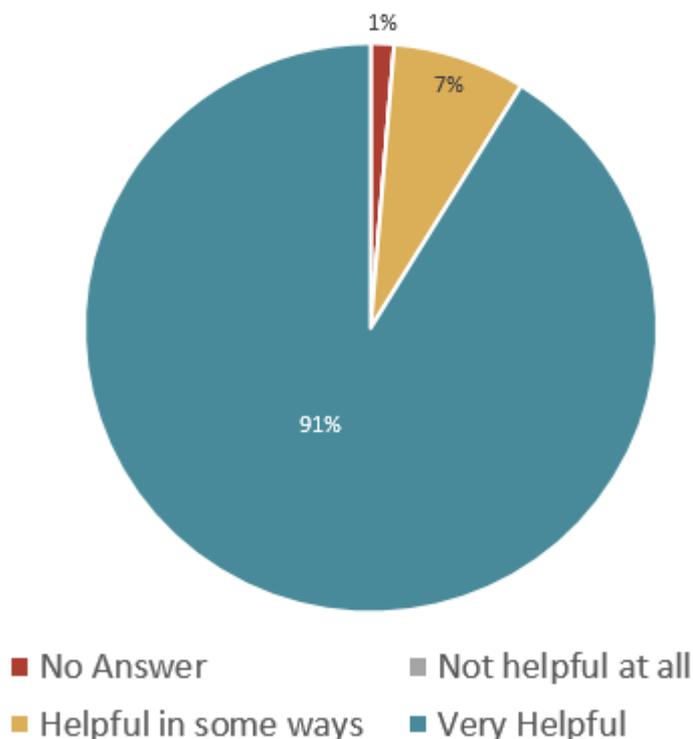
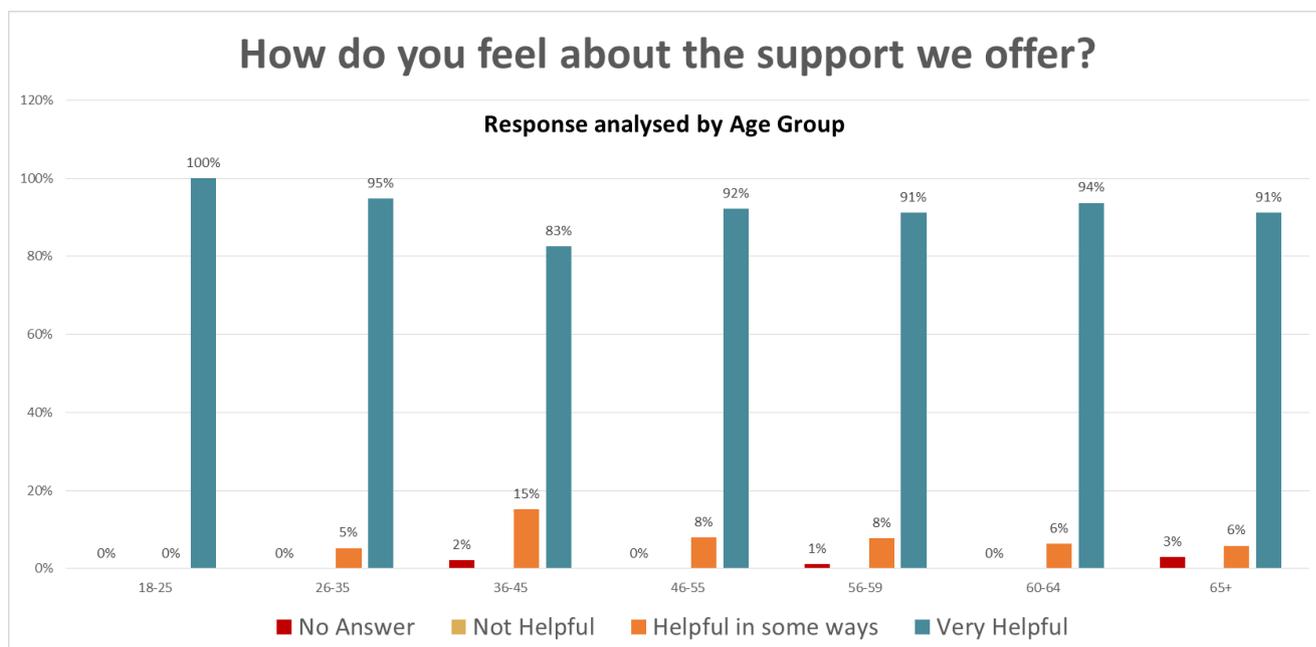


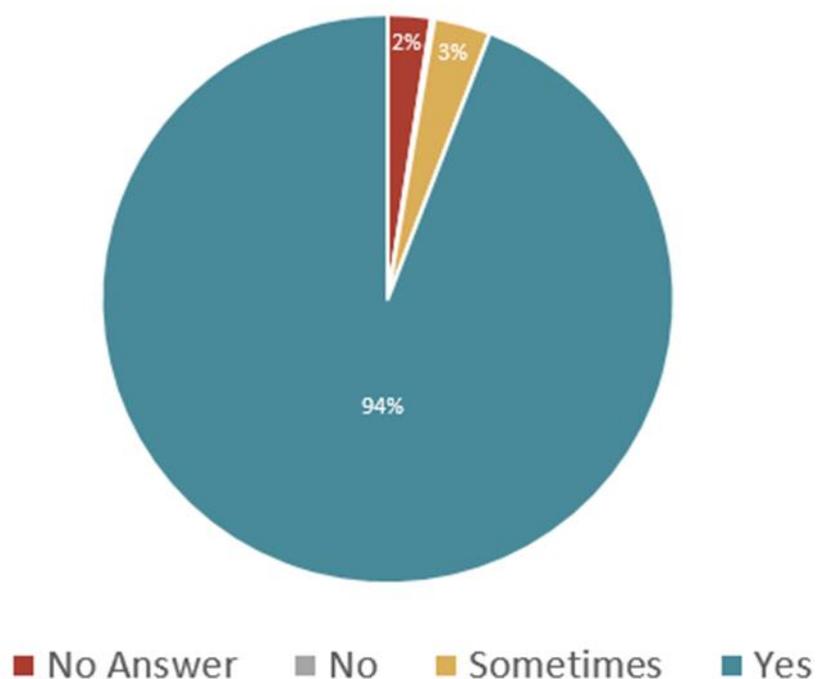
Diagram 12: Client satisfaction with support provided, analysed by Age Group



- When asked 'Do you feel that we treat you well when you contact us?', 94% stated 'Yes', a further 3% stated 'Sometimes', and c. 2% did not respond.

Diagram 13: Client satisfaction with treatment by VSS

Do you feel that we treat you well when you contact us?



- 1 in 4 respondents added qualitative responses that indicated the Self Directed Assistance Payments relieved worry and improved a sense of personal independence by easing financial pressure. Many emphasised the fact they were no longer required to submit claims reduced worry and stress.

“The financial assistance programme is very helpful as I struggle financially and helps me to do things with my children. Very helpful indeed”

“I feel that the financial help I received last year was a godsend. This help is invaluable. Most people I know who avail of the help are all on benefits and struggle to make ends meet. Any monies I have ever gotten from VSS has always went to good use and helped me out”

- Almost 1 in 5 respondents added qualitative responses that indicated the Self Directed Assistance Payments improved their quality of life, personal independence, and positive attitude by enabling them to do or purchase things they would not normally afford.

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The support while never compensating for the loss I suffered helps me largely with the cost of everyday living expenses mainly heat and energy costs. As I grow older my needs seem to increase.

The support I receive enables me to attend graveyard Sunday where I can truly return to Northern Ireland and attend mass at my fathers graveside, without this support I would be unable to do so. It also allows me to spend time with my family. I live in Scotland so travel is long and expensive

"I feel so downhearted at times with food and bills, etc. When I get your help with my cheque it lifts me so much"

These survey results demonstrate that the delivery of Self Directed Assistance Payments has had a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors in 2017-18. The organisation will continue to monitor this in 2018-19.

Existing and New Clients: Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks

Further to the Self Directed Assistance Payments, under the new service delivery model both previously registered and new individuals coming forward all have access to needs-led assistance through a range of measures, enabled specifically by the PEACE IV-funded Network of Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers and Regional Case Managers. This includes:

- New Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks under the Individual Needs Programme, that deliver bespoke assistance to meet individual needs. Some elements of these Frameworks, additional and complementary to the Individual Needs Programme, benefit from PEACE IV Resilience Programme funding.
- The full range of services and support delivered by community-based organisations funded under the Victims Support Programme.
- One-to-one Health and Wellbeing Caseworker support, and Advocacy Support to engage with legacy institutions and processes, funded by PEACE IV.

The eligibility criteria for accessing this additional support is confirmation the individual meets the definition of a victim/survivor per the Victims and Survivors (NI) Order (2006).

As outlined above, the Individual Needs Programme (funded by The Executive Office) intersects with and is enhanced by the PEACE IV Programme. For individuals accessing support, however, there is a seamless continuity to provision and access across these different funding streams. In 2017-18, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has worked both with our community-based partners and internally to ensure the necessary governance processes relative to these different funding streams are properly adhered to but do not impact on the individual's experience of accessing support.

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Table 6 below summarises the support made available in 2017-18 under the Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks, along with the anticipated health and wellbeing outcomes that the support will deliver for victims and survivors, and the monitoring and evaluation method that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is using in each case. The value of awards issued under each framework is variable, depending on the needs and relevant support identified.

Table 6: Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks 2017-18

Framework	Description	Anticipated Outcome(s) and measurement
1 Disability Aids	The provision of Disability Aids to individuals physically injured as a result of the Conflict/Troubles.	Improved wellbeing, function, and independence to be measured and reported using the Work & Social Adjustment Scale** and qualitative case studies.
2 Education & Training <i>(Includes 1:1 Literacy & Numeracy funded under PEACE IV Resilience Programme)</i>	The provision of assistance to access education and training for individuals whose opportunities have been limited by Conflict/Troubles-related trauma.	Improved wellbeing, function, and independence to be measured and reported using the Work & Social Adjustment Scale**, qualitative case studies, and Take 5 framework (currently under development – see p. 44 above).
3 Persistent Pain	The provision of support for individuals injured as a result of the Conflict/Troubles, who live with persistent pain. Support includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An <i>individual Holistic (Medical & Psychological) Assessment</i> by Pain Management Specialists • Support towards the cost of <i>Pain Management Therapies</i> • Assistance of up to £500 per year towards the cost of <i>Home Heating to Manage Persistent Pain</i> where this specific need is identified 	Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60% of individuals as a result of persistent pain interventions to be measured by a combination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clinical assessment and reporting by the Pain Management Specialists; • the Work & Social Adjustment Scale**; and • qualitative case studies.
4 Volunteering <i>(Funded under PEACE IV Resilience Programme)</i>	Delivery of assistance to access and support volunteering experience for individuals whose opportunities have been limited by the Conflict/Troubles.	Improved wellbeing, function, and independence to be measured and reported using the Work & Social Adjustment Scale**, qualitative case studies, and Take 5 Framework (currently under development – see p. 44 above).

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	Framework	Description	Anticipated Outcome(s) and measurement
5	Trauma-Focused Physical Activity <i>(Funded under PEACE IV Resilience Programme)</i>	The delivery of assistance to access physical activity that supports individuals engaged in a therapeutic process to address Conflict/Troubles-related trauma.	Improved wellbeing, function, and independence to be measured and reported using the Work & Social Adjustment Scale**, qualitative case studies, and Take 5 Framework (currently under development – see p. 44 above).
6	Psychological Support	The delivery of Psychological Therapies to individuals, in line with the Northern Ireland <i>Strategy for the Development of Psychological Therapy Services (2010)</i> and its equivalent within the HSE Ireland.	Improved psychological health and wellbeing, to be measured and reported on in line with the clinical reporting used by the individual’s provider along with the Work & Social Adjustment Scale**.

*** The Work and Social Adjustment Scale is a gentle, client-centred self-report scale of functional impairment attributable to an identified problem. It is typically completed twice: before and after an intervention, to measure the impact of the intervention on the client’s self-reported impairment.*

Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks

To access support under an Additional Needs Based Support Framework, individuals engage with a Health and Wellbeing Caseworker to discuss their needs in an Individual Needs Consultation. The Caseworkers are funded under PEACE IV and employed by a community-based organisation normally funded under the Victims Support Programme.⁵

The role of the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker is not only to administer assistance via the Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks, but to connect individuals to any relevant support they may need, as identified in the Individual Needs Consultation. This may include:

- Signposting or referral to existing services delivered in community-based organisations under the Victims Support Programme.
- Signposting or referral to existing services in the community/voluntary sector.
- Referral to a Regional Health and Wellbeing Case Manager at the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for escalation to statutory mental health or other service provision to address complex needs.
- Access to the Additional Needs Based Frameworks.

For more information refer back to Diagram 3 on p. 26 above, titled “*Stepped Care Model – intersection with wider provision of services and support by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited*”.

Positive outcomes measured in relation to delivery of assistance under the Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks

Qualitative feedback obtained from service users in relation to each of these areas of work was positive.

“I really appreciate the financial assistance your organisation has provided - it means that I can complete my course without any financial concerns.”

“The VSS award money has helped me to be more comfortable in my home. I have been able to get a recliner chair, new flooring that is non slip, a new comfortable bed. It has made a big difference and I really appreciate all the help I am getting.”

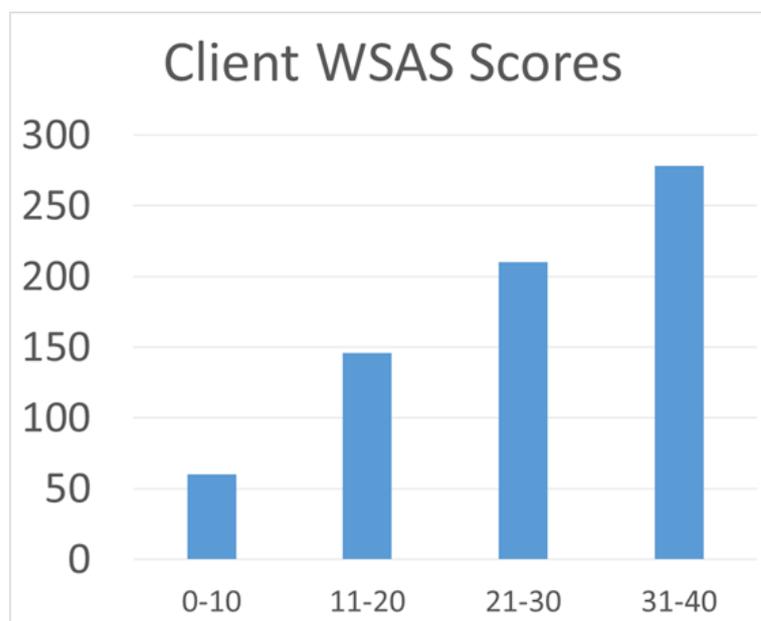
“I got counselling for the first time ever since the incidents I experienced PTSD from which was in 1972, then March some 26 years ago. I never get any help from GP's or anywhere else until this last year. I do appreciate it as I know it helped me.

⁵ There is one exception to this rule, whereby a Health and Wellbeing Caseworker is employed by an organisation based in Great Britain, enabling the delivery of outreach and support in that geographical area, as per the requirements and remit of the PEACE IV Programme.

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In addition, Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers across the Network were trained in the use of the Work and Social Adjustment Scale (WSAS) and how to report qualitative outcomes to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. Baseline (Time 1) scores have been obtained and recorded.

Diagram 14: Client Pre-intervention WSAS Scores



The maximum score of the WSAS is 40. A WSAS score above 20 appears to suggest moderately severe or worse psychopathology. Scores between 10 and 20 are associated with significant functional impairment but less severe clinical symptomatology. Scores below 10 appear to be associated with subclinical populations.

These will be supplemented by exit scores (Time 2) in 2018-19 and a meaningful picture can be established in relation to the impact of the service. This is therefore an area of ongoing work for 2018-19.

Individual Needs Programme: Outputs and Activity Levels

The final outturn of the Individual Needs Programme in 2017-18 was £4.49m. In total, 9,643 awards were issued to 6,070 individuals. Table 7 below outlines this information in more detail.

To deliver this support, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited continued to engage with, listen to, and provide support to individuals on a daily basis. During 2017-18, telephone calls averaged 1,015 per month, and on average 195 individuals called into the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in person per month. This represents a roughly consistent level of face to face front line service delivery activity compared with the previous year: during 2016-17, on average 139 individuals attended the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in person per week. However, the number of incoming

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telephone calls has dramatically reduced: during 2016-17, calls averaged 995 per week or almost four times as many as in 2017-18.

As noted above, the overall reduction in client traffic and telephone call volumes specifically is a positive indicator of the extent to which the new service delivery model has improved upon the previous programme in terms of its accessibility for individuals seeking support, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's successful handling of the changes, minimising their impact on victims and survivors.

Table 7: Awards and Payments made under the Individual Needs Programme and PEACE IV Resilience Programme in 2017-18

Award Description	Value of Individual Awards	Number of Awards Issued	Payments Made
Self Directed Assistance Payments			
Self Directed Assistance - 17/18 Bereaved	£500	2,868	£1,430,171
Self Directed Assistance - 17/18 Carer	£500	596	£295,000
Self Directed Assistance - 17/18 FA Only	£500	451	£224,500
Self Directed Assistance - 17/18 Injured (HRC)	£500	896	£450,000
Self Directed Assistance - 17/18 Injured (MRC)	£500	1,098	£548,500
Transition Payments - 17/18	£200	1,312	£261,600
Self Directed Assistance - Additional Needs Based Payments - 17/18 (Severely Injured)	£500	898	£449,000
Self Directed Assistance - Additional Needs Based Payments - 17/18 (Bereaved)	£500	600	£299,500
Individual Needs Programme Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks			
Disability Aids 17/18	variable	78	£107,648
Education & Training 17/18	variable	82	£78,177
Persistent Pain Complementary Therapies 17/18	variable	45	£18,187
Persistent Pain Home Heating Support 17/18	£500	550	£254,095
Persistent Pain Pain Relief 17/18	variable	2	£880
Persistent Pain Physiotherapy 17/18	variable	75	£25,497
Persistent Pain Management Support 17/18	variable	41	£25,224
Psychological Support 17/18	variable	6	£3,610
PEACE IV Resilience Programme			
PIV Resilience (1-1 Literacy & Numeracy) 17/18	variable	8	£6,257
PIV Resilience (Trauma-Focussed Physical Activity) 17/18	variable	29	£6,460
PIV Resilience (Volunteering) 17/18	variable	8	£248
TOTALS		9,643	£4,484,554

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Payments of £1,645 were made in 2017/18 for awards related to closed frameworks from prior years. These bring total payments under the Individual needs programme and Peace IV resilience programme in 2017-18 to £4,486,199.

PEACE IV PROGRAMME (2016-21)

Background

As noted above, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited as Lead Partner made a call for applications to the PEACE IV Programme in November 2016, in conjunction with the Victims Support Programme. The assessment of applications occurred within the same timeframe as the Victim Support Programme, and Letters of Offer were issued for activities commencing in April 2017 and concluding on 31 July 2021.

18 organisations were awarded PEACE IV funding totalling **£7.5m** to deliver the following range of activities:

- The delivery of **Advocacy Support** by 6 Advocacy Managers and 21.5 FTE Advocacy Workers, whose focus is to assist victims and survivors to engage with legacy institutions and processes. All of these posts are hosted within funded organisations. These staff were recruited from April 2017 onwards, with the majority in post by September 2017.
- The establishment of a **Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network** including 5 Regional Case Managers employed by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, and 25 Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers employed within funded organisations. These staff were recruited from April 2017 onwards, with the majority in post by September 2017.
- The delivery of a **Resilience Programme** including One-to-One Literacy and Numeracy support, Trauma-Focussed Physical Activity, Volunteering activities, and steps to address Social Isolation.

Further to the above, the following activities are also being funded under PEACE IV:

- Professional Training and Capacity Building (referred to as the **Workforce Training and Development Plan**): to build capacity to ensure all service providers are able to attain minimum standards set by the Commission for Victims and Survivors and in line with current National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has established a Partner arrangement with **WAVE Trauma Centre** in relation to the delivery of Trauma Training as part of the wider training plan.
- **Research**: The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has established a Partner arrangement with the **Commission for Victims and Survivors** with regard to this

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element: the Commission is responsible for commissioning and delivering three key research projects, described in more detail below.

The overarching theme for all of these areas of activity is health and wellbeing, aligning with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited corporate vision. Table 8 below outlines the key targets that underpin each of activity.

Table 8: PEACE IV Delivery Targets 2016-2021

Activity	Targets
Advocacy support to include practical support for victims and survivors engaging with institutions, historical process and enquiries	26.5 FTE workers 6,300 beneficiaries
Development of qualified assessors, health and well-being case workers to identify and address the needs of victims and survivors (Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network)	30 workers 11,350 beneficiaries
A resilience programme to address the individual needs of victims and survivors, including level one and level two mental health interventions	1,000 interventions
Development of the capacity of the sector through training and development (to meet national and regional standards), research and improved regulation	3 major research projects

In 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has established and embedded the structures, staff, and reporting to deliver on these objectives. The remainder of this section provides a summary overview of the key developments that have been achieved in each area.

Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network and Resilience Programme

The purpose and function of the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network and Resilience Programme, and figures for the delivery of support under the Resilience Programme, have been outlined above in the discussion of the Individual Needs Programme. Additional key information and developments in this area for the 2017-18 period include the following:

- All workers have been recruited, meeting the targets in Table 8 above.
- Regional training and induction sessions for the Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers was delivered over the period July to September 2017 as these staff came into post, and refresher training is conducted as required when new members join the team.

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- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited developed a detailed Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network Guidance Note.
- A regular meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network has been established, to convene all Caseworkers, Case Managers, and relevant staff from the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.
- In 2017-18 the Network met five times (on 10 October 2017, 21 November 2017, 9 January 2018, 20 February 2018, and 23 March 2018).
- The five Regional Case Managers have been paired with Caseworkers across the region, and communication established to enable mentoring and support, escalation and resolution of queries, and timely progression of individual cases.
- In 2017-18 the 21.5 (FTE) Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers engaged with a total of 1,306 individual victims and survivors.
- In 2017-18 the five Regional Case Managers engaged with a total of 882 individual Victims and survivors.

Advocacy Support

As noted in the discussion on 'Strategic Developments Impacting Programmes Delivery and Stakeholder Engagement' above (see p. 16), the Advocacy Support element of the PEACE IV Programme is affected by the strategic uncertainty and delays surrounding the implementation of the Stormont House Agreement (2014) proposals.

Despite this uncertainty, however, the reality on the ground is that, over decades to date, organisations and individuals have developed significant experience of advocacy working and case research for victims and survivors. This work involves engaging with the legacy institutions currently operating (including, for example, the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, the Legacy Investigations Branch of the PSNI, and the Coroner's Office) and preparing for the eventual establishment of new institutions as proposed under the Stormont House Agreement (2014).

In this context the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has proceeded to deliver the Advocacy Support element of the PEACE IV Programme, while continuing to monitor developments in this area (see discussion of 'Important events occurring after the year end - Northern Ireland Office Public Consultation: Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past' on p. 78 below). By its sensitive nature and in the wider context of political and strategic uncertainty, an important aspect of this area of work is relationship and trust building. This key aspect has been treated as a priority in 2017-18.

Further key information and developments in this area for the 2017-18 period include the following:

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- 5 Advocacy Managers and 19.5 Advocacy Workers are in post (24.5 workers total).
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited delivered regional induction sessions for Advocacy Managers and Support Workers took place in October 2017.
- An Advocacy Support Working Group has been established, convening all of the Advocacy Managers and Support Workers on a regular basis.
- The Advocacy Support Working Group met twice in 2017-18: on 13 December 2017 and 15 March 2018.
- These meetings have developed a Draft Advocacy Support Programme Framework or Guidance Note, which will complement the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network Guidance Note referred to above, and have agreed principles, key processes, and a monitoring and evaluation framework agreed.
- In 2017-18, 512 individuals accessed Advocacy Support.

Workforce Training and Development Plan

The PEACE IV Programme includes a budget of £1.53m for training and capacity development of workers in the sector over a 5 year period. Key information and developments in this area for the 2017-18 period include the following:

- A detailed Plan has been established based on extensive scoping and consultation with the sector and investigation of training and development opportunities relevant to the diverse and often specialised work delivered by our community-based partners and staff. All training identified complies with the *Standards for Services Provided to Victims and Survivors* published by the Commission for Victims and Survivors (21 November 2016).
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited established a partnership with WAVE Trauma Centre for the delivery of specialist trauma training. WAVE was identified as the only appropriate body to provide trauma and specifically Troubles/Conflict-related trauma training in Northern Ireland. WAVE will manage a Partner budget of £500,000 to deliver this training over the whole Programme period. Examples of courses offered include an Introduction to Psychological Trauma; Trauma and Addiction; Theories of Traumatic Grief and Loss; and Self Care and Resiliency.
- Examples of more general training courses delivered under the wider Plan include: Safeguarding; SafeTALK; ASIST Training; Mental Health First Aid; Community Resiliency Model® Training (including Train the Trainer); Grant/Project Management Training; Social Media Training; Fundraising; and more.
- In 2017-18, 311 participants accessed training under the Plan.

Key priorities for 2018-19 include continued review and scoping of training needs and skills gaps, and the ongoing identification and procurement of relevant training and development opportunities.

Research

The PEACE IV Programme includes a budget of £250,000 for research. Three key themes have been prioritised for investigation in support of the wider PEACE IV Programme, namely:

- A review of the impact/effectiveness of Mental Health Trauma Services;
- A review of the effects of the Trans-Generational Legacy of the Troubles/Conflict on Children and Young People; and
- A review of the impact/effectiveness of Advocacy Support Services.

The Commission for Victims and Survivors launched this research programme on 12 June 2017, and separate tenders to deliver the three projects were publicly advertised on 2 January 2018. Contracts totalling £180,375 were awarded in March 2018 for the delivery of the Trauma Services and Trans-Generational Legacy projects, and this research is now underway. Due to the fact that no tenders were received to deliver the Advocacy Research project, the Commission for Victims and Survivors re-tendered this opportunity in July 2018.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited will continue to communicate with the Commission for Victims and Survivors Service to maintain clear reporting and relevant information sharing in relation to these developing projects over the coming year.

OTHER KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Financial Performance

Summary Financial Performance

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is sponsored by The Executive Office. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited had grant in aid budget allocation of £13.445m.

As at year end 31 March 2018, there was an underspend of £192k, representing 1.43% of the budget allocated. This is within the tolerance target of 1.5%. The Statement of Financial Position on page 113 shows the company had net assets of £495k as at 31 March 2018, and cash at bank of £1.346m.

Long Term Expenditure Trends

During the year, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has provided the Department with a financial analysis of budget versus expenditure and cash on a month end basis, to identify any significant variances and take management action to address.

The budget was utilised within the tolerance level of 1.5% as outlined in the Overview section above. General Financial Management arrangements in addition to those outlined as part of the Departmental oversight are outlined in further detail below.

Table 3: Long Term Expenditure Spending

	Out-turn 2014-15	Out-turn 2015-16	Out-turn 2016-17*	Out-turn 2017-18*
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Total Resource DEL	12,483	13,489	14,100	14,918
Of Which				
Programme	10,363	11,567	11,983	12,788
Staff Costs	1,227	1,170	1,386	1,534
Administration	893	753	731	596
Total Capital DEL	30	17	237	95
Of Which				
Tangible Assets	30	8	11	0
Intangible Assets	0	9	226	95
Total AME	0	0	0	0
Total Spending	12,514	13,507	14,337	15,013

*2016-17 and 2017-18 Out-turn figures include PEACE IV funded expenditure.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Payments to Suppliers

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the British Standard for Achieving Good Payment Performance in Commercial Transactions (BS 7890), and with the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 as amended. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited follows the 2008 instruction to support businesses through every effort to make payments to suppliers within ten days.

Table 9 below shows the average number of days taken to pay invoices in each month over the year 2017-18.

Table 9: Payments 2017-18

Month	Percentage of invoices paid within 10 days	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days	Average Days taken to pay invoices per month
Apr-2017	13%	84%	19
May-2017	47%	82%	19
Jun-2017	78%	89%	11
Jul-2017	57%	93%	13
Aug-2017	73%	91%	14
Sep-2017	71%	95%	10
Oct-2017	76%	95%	10
Nov-2017	76%	94%	9
Dec-2017	57%	86%	16
Jan-2018	66%	86%	14
Feb-2018	95%	98%	6
Mar-2018	79%	96%	9

Overall for 2017-18, 68% of invoices were paid within 10 days and 91% within 30 days. On average 12 days were taken to pay invoices during 2017-18. This compares with 2016-17 figures of 63% were paid within 10 days, 87% within 30 days and an average of 15 days overall.

Financial Position and Resources

Core Funding

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is primarily funded by its sponsor Department, The Executive Office. This is financed by resources voted for annually by the Northern Ireland Assembly and is, therefore, not exposed to significant liquidity risks. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited does not access funds from commercial sources and so is not exposed to significant interest rate risks.

The Executive Office has indicated that it intends to continue to fund the organisation for the foreseeable future and has provided indicative budgets to the end of the financial year 2018-19. The organisation has the staff resources required to achieve its current strategic outcomes and the staffing structure has been aligned to facilitate the effective management of resources in the achievement of these outcomes.

The opening budget position for 2017-18 was communicated to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in June 2017 as £13.321m. Following the June 2016 Monitoring Round, this position was increased to £13.416m. This increase of £95k was allocated to meet the costs associated with Phase II of the Management Information System (MIS).

A further £29k was allocated following the December Monitoring Round, as a technical transfer from the Department for Communities, to support salary costs associated with Personal Independence Payment casework. This brought the final 2017-18 budget allocation to £13.445m.

PEACE IV Funding

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited also received PEACE IV funding during 2017-18 from the Special EU Programmes Body. A grant of £13.373m has been awarded under Promoting Peace and Reconciliation (Action 3.3: Victims and Survivors) for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 July 2021.

In 2017-18, expenditure commenced across all aspects of the project. The primary areas of expenditure related to:

- Recruitment and salary costs for 11 staff employed by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited;
- Recruitment and salary costs for Health and Wellbeing staff, and Advocacy Support staff employed within the funded organisations; and
- The provision of training within the sector through the Workforce Training and Development Plan.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Expenditure on the other aspects of the programme, such as the Resilience Programme and Research projects, commenced in this period, and have gained pace in the early stages of 2018-19.

The financial results for the period as set out on page 113 indicate that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited accrued grant funding of £1.531m at 31st March 2018.

In addition, VSS received advance funding totalling £2.14m from SEUPB to facilitate cashflow for the project. The majority of this funding is used to ensure that funded organisations can operate during the period from incurring expenditure, through to reimbursement from SEUPB (a process that will take 4 months from the end of each 3-month claim period)

Staffing Performance

Staff Composition

Senior Civil Service Staff

In 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had one senior civil service (or equivalent) staff member (the Chief Executive Officer).

Table 10 below illustrates the breakdown of employed staff by gender and grade:

Table 10: Breakdown of Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and staff by gender and grade as at 31 March 2018

Board		Grade 5		Grade 7		DP		SO		EO1, EO2 & AO	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
4	3	0	1	1	1	2	4	2	8	6	9

Overall breakdown: Staff - 23 female and 11 male; Board – 3 female and 4 male.

At 31 March 2018, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had 34 employees in post (31.30 Full Time Equivalent). An additional 6 agency staff were in place on 31 March 2018, filling key vacancies within the organisational structure. The average permanent staff number was 31.5 during this period as outlined on page 124.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Absence Data

Table 11 below shows the sick absence results for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Table 11: Sickness Absence

	Working days lost 2017-18	Average days lost per WTE member of staff
Including long-term absence	328	10.50*
Excluding long-term absence	209	6.69*

* Based on an average WTE of 28.64 permanent employees over the full year.

This compares to 252 days absence (including long term absence) in 2016-17, an average of 9.89 working days lost per member of staff during that period.

Excluding long term absence, this compares to 85 days absence in 2016-17, an average of 3.34 working days lost per member of staff during that period. As a small organisation, a small number of long term sickness absences has a disproportionate impact upon these metrics. There were no long term sickness absences ongoing as at 31 March 2018.

Employee Policies

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is committed to the development of its staff and to policies that enable them to contribute to the performance and long-term effectiveness of the organisation.

In particular the Victims and Survivors Service Limited:

- Follows the Northern Ireland Civil Service policy that all eligible persons have equal opportunity for employment and advancement on the basis of their ability, qualification and aptitude for work;
- Gives equality of opportunity when considering applications from disabled persons, in compliance with all existing legislation in regard to disabled employees;
- Recognises the benefit of keeping employees informed of the progress of the business and of involving them in the company's performance through regular Staff Planning days and briefings; and
- Regularly provides employees, through meetings and notices, with information regarding the external factors affecting the performance of the company and other matters of concern to them.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Specific staff policies which are in place include:

- **Disabled Persons:** The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Equal Opportunities policy applies to the employment of people with a disability. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is committed to ensuring that its policies and practices comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- **Equal Opportunities:** As an Equal Opportunity employer the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is fully committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. It has an obligation under Fair Employment legislation to ensure that it carries out its various functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.
- **Employee Involvement:** The Victims and Survivors Service Limited places considerable reliance on engagement and involvement of its employees. It makes every effort to ensure that staff are kept informed of plans and developments through a formal team briefing process, staff briefings, circulars, and involvement in the design and implementation of corporate and business plans.
- **Learning and Development:** During 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited continued to provide significant learning and development opportunities to staff throughout the organisation. This process is structured through the completion of personal development plans within the performance appraisal system.
- **Health and Safety:** The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is committed to applying all existing health and safety at work legislation and regulations to ensure that staff and visitors enjoy the benefits of a safe environment.

Expenditure on External Consultancy

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited spent £0 on external consultancy in 2017-18.

Off-Payroll Engagements

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited had one 'off-payroll' engagement exceeding a cost of £58,200 per annum during 2017-18.

The engagement was in relation to one temporary member of staff paid through a recruitment agency at a 2017-18 cost of £66,577. This has existed for more than three years at 31st March 2018.

Service Delivery Performance

Complaints Handling

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has a complaints procedure in place to ensure that individual victims and survivors, funded organisations and all other stakeholders can express any dissatisfaction that may arise, and make improvements and changes to services based on such feedback. The Complaints Policy and Procedure has been developed in consultation with the Commission for Victims and Survivors, and is available in a user-friendly leaflet format as well as on the Victims and Survivors Service Limited website.

The organisation takes all complaints and feedback very seriously and actively monitors themes and response times.

Complaints outstanding from 2015-16

At the time of preparing the *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017*, one complaint from 2015-16 remained unresolved. This related to a complaint referred to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman, concerning the implementation of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's *Policy on Handling Unacceptable Behaviour from Members of the Public* with regard to the complainant. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited was first notified of the formal investigation into this complaint on 1 October 2015. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited provided all information requested by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman within the stated timeframes. A further update was received from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman on 13 February 2017. The case was re-opened as a fresh record on the Complaints Register for 2016-17, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited cooperated fully with information requests from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman at that time. At 31 March 2017 the investigation remained ongoing.

On 26 May 2017 the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman wrote to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited advising that the investigation had concluded, identifying maladministration in the implementation of the *Policy on Handling Unacceptable Behaviour from Members of the Public*. It was recommended that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited make a payment of £750 for the injustice sustained by the individual and the Chief Executive provide a written apology for the failures identified in the handling of the case. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited implemented these recommendations fully and the complaint was closed on 1 June 2017.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Complaints Handled in 2016-17

At the time of preparing the *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017*, one complaint from 2016-17 remained unresolved.

On 20 September 2016 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was notified that the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman had commenced an investigation into another complaint. Following this investigation, the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman wrote to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited on 17 August 2017 with its findings and recommendations. On this basis, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited wrote to the complainant on 19 October 2017 to offer an apology and payment of £150, thus implementing the Ombudsman's recommendations in full. This matter is now closed.

Complaints Handled in 2017-18

In 2017-18, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited recorded 26 complaints, including two cases carried over from 2016-17 that were with the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman as outlined above. Both cases were closed in 2017-18 one on 1 June 2017 and the other on 19 October 2017.

There was slight increase in the number of complaints received in 2017-18 by comparison to the previous year. Analysis of this information shows that this increase was directly linked to the changes experienced by individual clients as a result of the implementation of the first year of the new service delivery model in 2017-18. Key examples of complaints made on this theme include clients' frustration at the reduction in the value of the financial awards available, and new clients' frustration at being unable to apply for Self-Directed Assistance Payments due to the fact they were not registered on or before 31 March 2017.

Four of the 26 complaints recorded in 2017-18 were made by a single individual, repeatedly complaining in relation to a single issue. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited was made aware that five of the 26 complaints recorded in 2017-18 were referred to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman. Of these five referrals, one was accepted by that office for investigation.

All except two of the 26 complaints recorded were resolved as at 31 March 2018. At that date, these two outstanding complaints were under the consideration of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman. The details of these complaints are as follows:

- i. Complaint concerns what the individual feels are false allegations made against him in relation to unacceptable behaviour recorded towards staff, which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has cited in a warning letter under the organisation's *Policy on Handling Unacceptable Behaviour from Members of the Public*. The case

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

remains open and is currently being investigated by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

- ii. The client was unhappy that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited did not award him support under the Financial Assistance Scheme in previous years, and referred his dissatisfaction to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman. The Ombudsman wrote to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited on 11 May 2018 to confirm that their office did not accept this complaint for investigation. The case was therefore closed on that date.

Table 12 below provides a summary of the complaints handled in 2017-18.

Table 12: Summary of Complaints 2017-18

Category	Number	Notes
Complaints upheld	5	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication Issues and Process Challenges</i> (i.e. issues that the organisation can resolve upon review) • <i>Individual Needs Programme Delivery Challenges</i> • <i>Policy and/or Budget</i> (i.e. issues beyond Victims and Survivors Service Limited control)
Complaints partially upheld	1	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Victims Support Programme Funding decision</i> • <i>Policy and/or Budget</i> (i.e. issues beyond the organisation's control)
Complaints not upheld	18	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Policy and/or Budget</i> (i.e. issues beyond the organisation's control) • <i>Victims Support Programme Funding decision</i> • <i>Other Concerns</i>
Complaints unresolved/still open at year end	2	Ongoing Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman investigations (see narrative above).
Total complaints received to year ended 31 March 2018	26	

Positive feedback and messages of thanks received during 2017-18

In 2017-18, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited continued to record positive feedback and messages of thanks received from individuals. These included emails, cards, and telephone calls made specifically to express thanks for the support offered under the Individual Needs Programme and the Individual Needs Programme/PEACE IV Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks. Recording this positive feedback provides a qualitative insight into the impact of the support provided for individuals who are injured, bereaved, and care for others living with injuries. Over the whole period, the organisation recorded **110** such messages.

Anti Bribery and Corruption

VSS's Anti-fraud policy sets out how VSS complies with the Bribery Act 2010 and DAO (DOF) 09/11 Bribery Act which clarifies how the Bribery Act 2010 applies to public servants in Northern Ireland. The standards of conduct required of all VSS staff are set out in the VSS staff code of conduct. This code requires all staff to conduct themselves with honesty and impartiality at all times. It is not acceptable for any staff member to receive any benefit that may be perceived as having the potential to compromise personal judgement on work related issues.

Sustainability Report

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is committed to The Executive Office's Sustainable Development Strategy. Policies and practices have been introduced within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited to encourage efficiency in the use of resources.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited have carried out a review of physical resources. This has resulted in the continued use of 100% recycled paper with multifunction printing/copying devices set to duplex printing by default.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited carried out a review of accommodation and as a result made the decision to relocate both the Belfast and Dungannon Outreach office.

The relocation of the Belfast office to Seatem House was successfully completed during 2015-16. The Seatem House office is located within Belfast City Centre close to public transport links, allowing staff and victims and survivors to travel to and from the office in a sustainable manner.

The relocation of the Dungannon office during 2016-17 provided a substantial reduction in square footage, heating and lighting usage. Designing the layout to NICS office standards has reduced the number of cellular offices and maximised utilisation of

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

available space. In addition utilities are restricted to control usage, for example both heating and light operate automatically within set parameters.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has also, in order to reduce its carbon footprint, pursued a policy of the facilitation, where possible, of staff flexibility in start and finish times allowing staff to travel to and from work at non-peak traffic times.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is aware of its responsibility to progress its work associated with sustainable development targets within the Implementation Plan emanating from the first Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy.

Social

While VSS does not have a dedicated policy, the principles of corporate and social responsibility are embedded within its key activities, demonstrating a commitment to social equality and human rights.

Going Concern

The accounts are prepared on a going concern basis as it is assumed that the parent Department, The Executive Office, will continue to fund the organisation's activities. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited three year Corporate Plan 2018-21 (including 2018-19 Delivery Plan) was submitted to The Executive Office in June 2018.



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer

Date: 5th December 2018

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Overview

The Accountability Report for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited comprises three key elements:

- Corporate Governance Report
 - *Director's Report*
 - *Statement of Accounting Officer's and Director's Responsibilities*
 - *Governance Statement*
- Remuneration Report
- Assembly Accountability Report

These are outlined below.

2.1 Corporate Governance Report

This section of the report outlined the compositions and organisation of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's governance structures and how they support the achievement of the organisation's objectives.

2.1.1 Director's Report

Introduction and Background

The Directors during 2017-18 were as follows:

Oliver Wilkinson – Chair appointed 1 April 2015 (previously Director appointed 13 December 2013, Interim Chair appointed 30 June 2014)

Bertha McDougall – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Richard Solomon – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Beverley Clarke – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Patricia Haren – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Stephen McIlveen – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Séamus Magee – Director appointed 1 April 2015, Resigned 9 July 2018

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited drafted its Corporate Plan 2018-21 in March 2018 and submitted to The Executive Office in June 2018, and was approved in July 2018.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

The Corporate Plan 2018-21 outlines the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's approach to Outcomes Based Accountability and grows upon the progress which has been made as part of the Co-Design Programme and the outcomes-led approach outlined in the Performance Analysis section above.

This approach is consistent with the Programme for Government 2016-21 outcomes focused plan for all citizens in Northern Ireland.

In developing these priorities the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has also listened closely to our stakeholders, who have emphasised the need for a victim-led service that is responsive to need, easy to understand and access, and that enables the development of networks of support.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited *Delivery Plan 2018-19* details the measurable actions and outputs that will be taken/monitored over the next financial year to work towards these outcomes. Progress against this Plan is monitored on an ongoing basis and reported on regularly to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board.

Share Capital

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

Data Protection and Freedom of Information

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is required to report on personal data related incidents and accordingly has a control system to meet these responsibilities under the recent General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the subsequent Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The GDPR came into force on 25th May 2018. In preparation, the Victims and Survivors Service formed a working group and addressed the 12-point action plan recommended by the Information Commissioner's Office. In addition, a GDPR compliance review was carried out by the VSS Internal Audit provider, Ernst & Young, and the resulting action points incorporated into the GDPR implementation plan. An Information Asset Register was created, detailing all data sources held, and all policies and procedures were reviewed in light of the new regulation. All staff and Board members completed basic GDPR awareness training and a Data Protection Officer was appointed to oversee compliance with the Regulation.

The control system established to ensure the appropriate handling of personal data and information used for operational and reporting purposes through the development of appropriate strategy and policy, includes a Publication Scheme, which is publicly available on the Victims and Survivors Service Limited website at www.victimsservice.org.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

In 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited received and responded to 5 Freedom of Information requests.

In addition, over this period, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited proactively published new information relevant to its activities on its website at www.victimsservice.org. This information included:

- Details of services and support available to individual victims and survivors, both under the Individual Needs Programme and via regional organisations funded under the Victims Support Programme and PEACE IV project, and how to access this assistance.
- Details of funding available to organisations under the Victims Support Programme, and how to access the same.
- Minutes of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and Audit and Risk Committee meetings.

There were no instances of personal data loss during the year under review.

Senior Management Team

The permanent head of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. This position was held during 2017-18 by Margaret Bateson.

Table 13 below provides detail of the composition of the Senior Management Team in 2017-18.

Table 13: Senior Management Team

Name	Grade	Post Title	Date Appointed	Date Resigned
Margaret Bateson	G5	Chief Executive and Accounting Officer	11 July 2016	-
Brendan Smith	G7	Head of Corporate Services	21 September 2015	30 April 2017
Andrew Walker	G7	Head of Corporate Services	1 October 2017	-
Geraldine Hamilton	G7	Head of Health and Well-Being	1 February 2016	21 December 2017
Damien Kavanagh	G7	Temporary Head of Health and Well-Being	1 January 2018	28 February 2018*
Caroline King	G7	Temporary Head of Health and Well-Being	1 March 2018	30 September 2018*

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

*Returned to substantive roles on these dates.

The above team was supported by nine Managers during the 2017-18 year.

The organisation structure at [Appendix 1](#) shows the key teams within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, including Programmes, Health and Wellbeing Services, Corporate Services and their respective functions.

Related Parties

Details of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited related parties are set out in Note 19 to the financial statements.

Register of Interests

The Chair, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board, the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, and all staff are required to register all interests, direct or indirect, which members of the public might reasonably think could influence their judgment.

The register of interests is available for public inspection by contacting the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, 1st Floor, Seatem House, 28-32 Alfred Street, Belfast, BT2 8EN.

Charitable Donations

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited made no charitable or political donations during this period.

Important Events occurring after the year-end

Northern Ireland Office Public Consultation: Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past (11 May 2018 – 5 October 2018)

On 11 May 2018 the Northern Ireland Office launched a Public Consultation on draft legislation and other elements arising from the Stormont House Agreement (2014).

The Stormont House Agreement outlines initiatives that were developed collectively by the Northern Ireland political parties to deal with the legacy of the Conflict/Troubles. The Consultation presents these initiatives in greater detail for wider society to consider, including the detail of proposed new Legacy Institutions to facilitate investigations, and truth and information recovery. It is important that this Consultation gathers the fullest

possible range of views from the public, including and in particular from victims and survivors and their representatives.

Immediately following the launch of the Consultation, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited put in place a communications plan to reach out to victims and survivors, share information with them, and seek to minimise any distress or anxiety that the process may cause. This assistance will continue throughout the duration of the consultation.

2.1.2 Statement of Accounting Officer's and Directors' Responsibilities

Under the Companies Act 2006, the Directors are required to prepare for each financial period, a statement of accounts detailing the resources acquired, held, or disposed of during the year and the use of resources by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited during the year. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and of its Net Comprehensive Expenditure, application of resources, changes in taxpayer's equity, and cash flows for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- Observe the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.

The Accounting Officer and Directors are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Accounting Officer has a general responsibility for taking steps as are reasonably available to safeguard the assets of the company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

The Accounting Officer and Directors are required to confirm that, as far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the entity's auditors are unaware, and the Accounting Officer and Directors have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the entity's auditors are aware of that information.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

The Accounting Officer and Directors' are required to confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced, and understandable. The Accounting Officer is also required to confirm that she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced, and understandable.

The Executive Office has appointed the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including the responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records, and for safeguarding the Victims and Survivors Service Limited assets are set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

2.1.3 Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2018

Introduction

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is a company limited by guarantee, owned by The Executive Office and functioning as an Arm's Length Body. It is financed through The Executive Office's Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL). The Board of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited reports directly to The Executive Office.

This statement is given in respect of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's accounts for 2017-18. The Governance Statement comprises two broad elements. First, the Statement describes the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's governance framework, identifying responsibilities and explaining the functions of its constituent elements. Second, the Statement reports my assessment as Accounting Officer of the effectiveness of the framework during the reporting period. The report identifies any significant governance issues and concludes with a review of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited conformance with the Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013.

The Purpose of the Governance Statement

The purpose of the Governance Statement is to report publicly on the extent to which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited complies with the Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013. The process of preparing the Governance Statement itself adds value to the effectiveness of the corporate governance and internal control framework.

Overview of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is directed and controlled.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

The system of internal control is a significant part of this framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve the organisation's aims and objectives and can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The governance framework within which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited operated for the year ended 31 March 2018 comprises:

- The Accounting Officer;
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board;
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Audit and Risk Committee; and
- The Internal Audit function.

These structures, together with an overview of their responsibilities and performance in year, are set out in the relevant sections below.

The governance framework also includes a number of additional elements that contribute to the effective governance of the organisation. These comprise:

- The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum;
- The Executive Office Oversight Arrangements;
- The Corporate Plan 2017-20 and Delivery Plan 2017-18 (agreed by TEO in March 2018);
- The Performance Appraisal Framework ;
- The Risk Management Framework ;
- Financial Policies and Procedures ;
- Whistle-blowing Policy; and
- Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan.

These elements, together with an assessment of their effectiveness in the period, are described in the relevant sections below.

Review of Effectiveness

The Accounting Officer

I was appointed Accounting Officer on 11 July 2016.

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal governance that supports the achievement of the aims and objectives of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. I also have responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances allocated to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and for

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safeguarding public funds and assets, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in the Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013 and Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

In my role as Accounting Officer, I function with the support of the Board of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited (the Board). This includes highlighting to the Board specific business risks and, where appropriate, the measures that could be employed to manage these risks.

The Board

The Board is chaired by a non-executive Director. It supports the delivery of effective Corporate Governance in keeping with the Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013.

The Board takes an objective long-term view of the business of the organisation, leading its strategic planning process and assisting the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer in setting and meeting its corporate aims and objectives.

Under the general guidance and direction of the Ministers of The Executive Office, key aspects of the Board's role include:

- Setting the strategic direction for the organisation, including its vision, values, and strategic objectives;
- Overseeing the implementation of its corporate and business plans, monitoring performance against objectives, and supervising its budget;
- Leading and overseeing the process of change and encouraging innovation, to enhance the organisation's capability to deliver;
- Overseeing the strategic management of staff, finance, information, and physical resources, including setting training and health and safety priorities;
- Establishing and overseeing the implementation of the corporate governance arrangements of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, including risk management; and
- Overseeing and monitoring progress against all of its equality of opportunity and good relations obligations.

Table 14 below lists the Board members.

Table 14: Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board Membership

Name	Position
Oliver Wilkinson	Director appointed 13 December 2013 Appointed Interim Chair 30 June 2014; appointed Chair 1 April 2015
Bertha McDougall	Director appointed 4 December 2013

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Richard Solomon	Director appointed 5 December 2013
Beverley Clarke	Director appointed 1 April 2015
Patricia Haren	Director appointed 1 April 2015
Séamus Magee	Director appointed 1 April 2015; resigned 9 July 2018
Stephen McIlveen	Director appointed 1 April 2015

The Board met 11 times in 2017-18. Table 15 below details the attendance of Board members at the meetings.

Table 15: Board Meeting Attendance

Date	Oliver Wilkinson	Bertha McDougall	Richard Solomon	Séamus Magee	Stephen McIlveen	Beverley Clarke	Patricia Haren
11 Apr 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16 May 2017	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
13 Jun 2017	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
15 Aug 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12 Sept 2017	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
17 Oct 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14 Nov 2017	✓	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓
12 Dec 2017	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓
13 Jan 2018	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
20 Feb 2018	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
13 Mar 2018	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓

On a quarterly basis, the Board considers a range of issues, including the following standing items:

- Minutes of Previous Meeting;
- Chairman's Update;
- Chief Executive and Accounting Officer Update;
- Reposts from Sub Committees (Audit and Risk, and Health and Wellbeing);
- Progress against Budget;
- Progress against Corporate and Delivery Plans and risks to achieving stated outcomes; and
- Compliance Update.

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In addition to the quarterly meetings, the remaining Board meetings follow a strategic format, devoting time to the consideration of key strategic issues. Such issues considered in 2017-18 included:

- Clinical Governance;
- The Mental Health Trauma Service;
- Stakeholder Perspectives;
- Victims outside Northern Ireland; and
- The Health and Wellbeing Casework Model.

The Board operates as a collegiate forum under the leadership of the Chair. It ensures that the appropriate strategic planning processes are in place and that there is effective operational management of their implementation. Day-to-day operational matters are my responsibility and that of senior staff.

Each Non-Executive Board Member participates in the high-level corporate decision-making process as a member of the Board, contributes to the operation of corporate governance arrangements within the organisation, and supports me in my role of Chief Executive and Accounting Officer.

As Chief Executive, I am responsible for organising the agenda for monthly Board meetings and ensuring the Chair and Board members are provided with timely information to support full discussion at each meeting.

I report to the Board by exception, drawing attention and focus to any areas of concern, including significant strategic risks, and areas of delivery against planned outcomes which are at risk.

I provide reports including on areas such as the status of delivery against delivery plan outcomes; expenditure against budget; requests made under the Freedom of Information Act; press reporting of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited; Assembly Questions relevant to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited; and absence management.

The Board maintains a Register of Interests. This lists, for each Director, all commercial and other relevant interests. A similar register is maintained by senior management and staff within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. Significant changes are reported as they occur. Each Board and committee meeting begins with those present declaring any conflicts of interest that may arise from agenda items. In the event of a conflict of interest arising, the Director or committee member concerned is required to withdraw from any discussion of the relevant matter and to abstain from any associated vote.

The Board reviewed its own effectiveness by carrying out a self assessment in March 2018. The overall conclusion was that the Board performed well in 2017-18, and that a

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range of actions identified at the 2016-17 review had been implemented. The actions of the 2017-18 review will be taken forward in 2018-19, and include:

- Benchmarking to be explored, through the review of the Victim's Choice Quality Mark Report completed in late 2017-18 and to be finalised in early 2018-19;
- A post-evaluation review of the first year of the new service delivery model will be provided to Board; and
- A review of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited risk appetite.

The Health and Wellbeing Committee

The Health and Wellbeing Committee are appointed by the Board. The Chair is rotated amongst the appointed members of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Board.

The Health and Wellbeing Committee's terms of reference (finalised in October 2017) sets out its purpose as being responsible for clinical governance, risk management, staff health and wellbeing, and in ensuring best practise and evidence based service delivery.

Table 16 below lists the Health and Wellbeing Committee members.

Table 16: Health and Wellbeing Committee Membership

Name	Position
Beverley Clarke	Committee Member from April 2017
Patricia Haren	Committee Member from April 2017
Stephen Mclveen	Committee Member from April 2017

In addition to its members, the following officers normally attend the Committee:

- The Accounting Officer of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited;
- The Head of Corporate Services;
- The Health and Wellbeing Services Programme Manager;

The Health and Wellbeing Committee met three times in 2017-18. Table 17 below shows dates of and attendance at each of these meetings.

Table 17: Health & wellbeing Committee Meeting Dates and Attendance

Committee Members	21.06.17	11.10.17	15.02.18
Beverley Clarke	✓	x	✓
Patricia Haren	✓	✓	✓
Stephen Mclveen	x	✓	x

The Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee and its Chair are appointed by the Board. The Chair is independent and is not a member of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Board.

The Audit and Risk Committee's terms of reference (updated in November 2017) sets out its purpose as being to support me as Accounting Officer in monitoring risk, control and governance systems, including financial reporting. Additionally the Committee will advise the Board and the Accounting Officer on the adequacy of internal and external audit arrangements and on the implications of assurances provided in respect of risk and control. The Audit and Risk Committee does not have executive powers.

Table 18 below lists the Audit and Risk Committee members.

Table 18: Audit and Risk Committee Membership

Name	Position
Colm Doran	Committee Member - Chair from October 2013
Bertha McDougall	Committee Member from 13 December 2013
Richard Solomon	Committee Member from 13 December 2013
Séamus Magee	Committee Member from 15 June 2015, resigned 9 July 2018

In addition to its members, the following officers normally attend the Committee:

- The Accounting Officer of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited;
- The Head of Corporate Services;
- The Finance and Governance Manager (Secretary of the Committee);
- Representative(s) from the Northern Ireland Audit Office;
- Representative(s) from the Victims Unit in The Executive Office; and
- Representative(s) from the Internal Audit service provider.

The Audit and Risk Committee met four times in 2017-18. Table 19 below shows dates of and attendance at each of these meetings.

Table 19: Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Dates and Attendance

Committee Members	20.06.17	07.11.17	12.12.17	23.1.18
Colm Doran	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bertha McDougall	✓	✓	✓	✓
Richard Solomon	✓	✓	✓	✓

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(Seamus Magee stood aside as Board Member in December 2017, and resigned on 9th July 2018).

In line with best practice set out in the Department of Finance's Audit and Risk Assurance Handbook, the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee has approved an agreed agenda of work for its meetings, which include standing agenda items and annual agenda items including:

- The review of the strategic risk register;
- Scrutiny of the annual accounts;
- Consideration of internal and external audit strategy;
- Review of internal and external audit findings;
- Consideration of compliance/fraud;
- Consideration of any Directly Awarded Contracts;
- The annual self-assessment of the Audit and Risk Committee; and
- The monitoring of residual audit recommendations.

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed its own effectiveness by carrying out a self assessment in April 2018. The overall conclusion was that the Audit and Risk Committee was performing well. The actions of this will be taken forward in 2018-19, and include:

- The appointment of a finance specialist (Accountant) to the Committee; and
- Consideration of Victims and Survivors Service Limited arrangements in respect of fraud and whistleblowing.

Risk Management Strategy

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Risk Management Strategy have been approved by the Audit and Risk Committee with the most recent update made in September 2016. This strategy sets out the process whereby the Victims and Survivors Service Limited methodically identifies, assesses, and responds to the risks attaching to its activities. It assigns responsibility and accountability for risk management; defines the processes for risk review and reporting; describes a format for the organisation's corporate risk register; and explains the organisation's approach to training in risk management.

A risk register has been in operation and updated on a monthly basis throughout 2017-18. Key risks identified and managed during the reporting period included:

- The uncertain political environment resulting in a delay in budget allocation and a possible reduction in budget allocation.

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- Risk of non-delivery of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited element of the Regional Trauma Network due to lack of effective partnership working; and demotivation among stakeholders if the statutory services model does not change at the same pace.
- Lack of political agreement on the Stormont House Agreement legacy institutions, diluting the strategic impact of the Advocacy Support Programme from April 2017.
- Negative impact on staff health and wellbeing and resilience, resulting in absenteeism, burn out, and stress due to persistent unacceptable client behaviour.
- Risk of underspend on the Individual Needs Programme and PEACE IV Additional Needs Based Frameworks, due to the fact that the Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network only became embedded in the third quarter of 2017-18.

In 2017-18 there were no instances where the committee determined that risk(s) lay outside the organisation's risk appetite and were thus unacceptable. A revised approach to the monitoring and escalation of risks in line with the risk appetite is scheduled for completion in early 2018-19.

It should be further noted that no 'ministerial directions' have been issued to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and there have been no reported lapses of protective security.

The Audit and Risk Committee has reviewed all instances of suspected fraud and irregularities. Further details are outlined in the Fraud and Counter-Fraud Section on page 94.

Internal Audit

The primary role of Internal Audit is to provide the Accounting Officer and the Board with an independent and objective opinion on risk management, control and governance by measuring and evaluating their effectiveness in achieving the organisation's agreed objectives.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited appointed an independent Internal Audit Service, Capita Consulting in February 2016, for a 4-year period (2016-17 to 2019-20).

Capita Consulting developed an internal audit charter which meets the requirements of Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. This was reviewed and confirmed by the Head of Internal Audit of The Executive Office and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee in December 2016.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited were notified in July 2017 by Capita, that the organisation had made the decision to wind up the Assurance, Risk, and Governance Team which provided internal audit services.

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Capita completed all field work and reports in relation to 2016-17 and all outstanding reports.

The internal audit contract had been procured by the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) within the Department of Finance. CPD managed a novation of the contract from Capita to Ernst & Young in November 2017

The remaining years of the contract have therefore been transferred to Ernst & Young, who have conducted the audit activity for 2017-18 in full.

Table 20 below outlines the internal audit programme that was carried out relating to 2017-2018.

Table 20: Internal Audit 2017-18

Report Date	Scope	Audit Rating	Status
March 2018	VSP Compliance (Closing)	Satisfactory	Final Report
April 2018	VSP Compliance (Opening)	Satisfactory	Final Report
April 2018	Follow Up	Satisfactory	Final Report
May 2018	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Preparations	n/a*	Final Report
August 2018	Budget Management & INP payments	Satisfactory	Final Report
August 2018	PEACE IV	Satisfactory	Final Report

** The GDPR Preparations report was an advisory piece, not an assurance report. The outcome was therefore a series of observations and recommendations rather than an assurance level.*

The internal auditor's overall assurance rating for 2017-18 was Satisfactory, in line with the previous financial year.

A Satisfactory assurance level denotes that overall there is a satisfactory system of governance, risk management, and control. While there may be some residual risk identified, this should not significantly impact on the achievement of system objectives.

8 recommendations were made across four areas. There were no priority one recommendations, 4 were identified as priority two, and 4 as priority three.

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In addition, the Follow Up report confirmed that of the 18 open recommendations reviewed, only one remained partially implemented, with all others either fully implemented or superseded.

External Audit

The Comptroller and Auditor General has statutory responsibility for the audit of Victims and Survivors Service Limited under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office is independent of Government and is tasked by the Assembly to hold the Northern Ireland Departments and their Agencies to account for their use of public money.

The Comptroller and Auditor General works closely with the Assembly's Public Accounts Committee which can require Accounting Officers and senior officials to account for their actions in relation to the management of public funds.

A representative from the Northern Ireland Audit Office attends the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Audit and Risk Committee meetings.

The Executive Office Oversight Arrangements

Within The Executive Office, the Victims and Survivors Unit is the sponsoring Division for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. The Victims and Survivors Unit, in consultation as necessary with the Accounting Officer of The Executive Office, is the primary source of advice to Ministers on the discharge of their responsibilities in respect of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, and the primary point of contact for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in dealing with the Department.

In order to discharge its duties on behalf of the sponsor Department, the Victims and Survivors Unit administers the following oversight controls:

- Regular Tri-Lateral Meetings between the Commission for Victims and Survivors Limited, the Department, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited (attended by Victims and Survivors Service Limited management staff members); see Table 2 on page 17.
- Accountability and Oversight Meetings (attended by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer and Head of Corporate Services); see Table 21 on page 91.
- Quarterly Assurance Statements; see Table 22 on page 92.
- The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, updated April 2018.

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- Ongoing Performance Monitoring against the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Delivery Plan, and preparation of its Corporate Plan 2018-21, which was submitted to the Department in June 2018.

Accountability Meetings

The Accounting Officer and senior staff attended four Accountability Meetings during the year with senior staff from the Department. The dates of each of these meetings are provided in Table 21.

Table 21: Accountability Meetings 2017-18

Meeting	Date
1	26 April 2017
2	26 July 2017
3	25 October 2017
4	24 January 2018

A review of the items discussed including the Assurance Statement, performance management, financial monitoring and progress against business plan targets are outlined in detail below.

Senior Victims and Survivors Service Limited staff and the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer have operated a 'no surprises' policy in respect of ensuring that officials in the Department are aware of all material events, transactions, and other issues that could be considered contentious or attract public comment, whether positive or negative. Month end management reporting is shared as standard, in addition to further reporting outlined below.

Assurance Statements

The Quarterly Assurance statement, prepared under the direction of and signed by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, provides information and assurance in the following areas:

- Risk management
- Business Planning;
- Legislative authorities;
- Budget cover, business cases, and post project evaluations;
- Monitoring of expenditure;
- Procurement;

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- Consultancy;
- Information/data management and assurance;
- Staff management;
- Internal and external audit and Public Accounts Committee reports/recommendations; and
- Other significant issues.

The Accounting Officer submitted four Assurance Statements to The Executive Office as requested by the Department, as shown in Table 22 below.

Table 22: Assurance Statements

Effective Date	Duration
1 April 2017 – 30 June 2017	3 months
1 July 2017 – 30 September 2017	3 months
1 October 2017 – 31 December 2017	3 months
1 January 2018 – 31 March 2018	3 months

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum is a key control document setting out the broad framework within which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited will operate. This document defines:

- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited's overall aims, objectives and targets;
- The rules and guidelines relevant to the exercise of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited functions, duties, and powers;
- The conditions under which any public funds are paid to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited; and
- How the organisation is to be held to account for its performance.

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum was reviewed and updated in March 2018, and is available on the VSS website.

Corporate Plan 2017-20 and Delivery Plan 2017-18

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited three year Corporate Plan 2017-20 was submitted to the Department on 28 June 2017. In the absence of a Northern Ireland Executive, the approval process was delayed, however the plan was agreed by The Executive Office in March 2018. The 2018-21 Corporate Plan (and 2018-19 Delivery

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Plan) was prepared in March 2018 and submitted to The Executive Office for final approval in June 2018.

The Chief Executive has monitored the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's performance against the targets set out in its 2017-18 Delivery Plan, included at [Appendix 2](#).

Key achievements and emerging activities carried out in 2017-18 are further outlined under Performance against Objectives on page 30.

The Board is satisfied as to the quality of data and information provided by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, who gained assurance through detailed reporting provided by senior staff in 2017-18.

Financial Management

Responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated rests with the Accounting Officer. The systems of internal financial control provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, that transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or will be detected within a timely period. Internal financial control is based on a framework of management information, financial regulations and administrative procedures, which include the segregation of duties, management supervision, and a system of delegation and accountability.

The implementation of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited financial management process in 2017-18 included:

- The setting of annual Grant in Aid;
- Monitoring of actual income and expenditure against the annual budget;
- Setting and management of expenditure profiles;
- Monthly reporting of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited financial position to the Board;
- A clearly defined system of expenditure authority delegations;
- Clear processes for the authorisation of expenditure and the payment of invoices; and
- Participation in the in-year monitoring rounds via The Executive Office.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has established Financial Policies and Procedures that address areas of risk as well as operational efficiency and effectiveness. These documents act as a reference point detailing all Financial Policies and Procedures that have been approved by the Board.

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The Victims and Survivors Service Limited operates a suite of other policies, processes, and procedures that cover the full range of its activities. All staff are briefed on these policies during their induction and at regular staff meetings. Any needs identified are addressed through the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's annual training and development plan.

Fraud and Counter-Fraud

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Policy and Procedures on fraud sets out the responsibilities of staff with regard to fraud prevention, what staff should do if they suspect fraud, and the action that will be taken by management in such circumstances in line with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited continued to work with the Group Internal Audit and Fraud Investigation Services unit within the Department of Finance, and where appropriate with the PSNI, to fully investigate a number of cases – which primarily relate to earlier years. 7 new cases were opened within 2017-18, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited anticipates closure of all open cases during early 2018-19.

Whistle-blowing

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Whistleblowing Policy provides staff with a procedure for reporting concerns about unlawful conduct, fraud, dangers to the public or the environment, or other malpractice. The aim of this policy is to reassure staff that they can feel confident in exposing wrongdoing without any risk to themselves.

There were three instances of whistle-blowing within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in the year to 31 March 2018. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has investigated these cases and taken the appropriate action in each case.

Training

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Training and Development policy is set in the context of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited recognising the need for well-motivated and highly skilled staff. This is reinforced through the implementation of the Victim and Survivors Service Limited competency framework.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is committed to ensuring that all staff have access to learning, development, and training opportunities which enable them to be suitably knowledgeable and skilled to carry out their role and to develop in ways that fit with the strategic framework.

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The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has made a significant investment in staff training and development through commissioning training in line with employee Personal Development Plans.

The wide range of training delivered to the sector delivered through the PEACE IV funded Workforce Training and Development Plan has also resulted in significant additional training opportunities for Victims and Survivors Service Limited staff to engage in skills and capacity development in a range of relevant areas.

Significant Governance Issues

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited continues to embed processes and procedures through the timely implementation of Internal and External Audit Recommendations. The overall Internal Audit assurance rating was Satisfactory.

I have outlined below a number of governance issues which emerged throughout the year.

Qualified Finance Professional – Victims and Survivors Service Limited Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee does not currently have a member with a specific finance qualification. This is an outstanding Commission for Victims and Survivors review recommendation. During 2016-17, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited publicly advertised this position on two occasions but was unsuccessful in filling this vacancy. During 2017-18, one further public recruitment competition was undertaken, which was again unsuccessful. An NICS co-opt exercise was also completed, however no applicants came forward.

The Audit and Risk Committee and the Board are both satisfied that whilst the appointment of a qualified accountant is preferable and should be pursued, the Audit and Risk Committee had sufficient financial experience and expertise to effectively manage the organisation's annual budget during 2017-18. It should be noted that a qualified accountant was appointed to the VSS Audit & Risk Committee on 1 September 2018.

Direct Award Contracts

During 2017-18, two Direct Award Contracts were awarded as follows:

Contract for continuing support and maintenance of an existing client records database (£17,400 + VAT). This contract allowed for the maintenance of this database during the final stages of transition to the new VIM database.

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Contract for the engagement of a pain management specialist (£15,750 + VAT) to assess a cohort of clients experiencing Persistent (Chronic) Pain, in order to ascertain and support the appropriate medical and psychological interventions.

I am content that expenditure in each of these areas is regular and eligible, having sought and received CPD advice in each case.

Special Severance Payment

In April 2017, a procurement competition was carried out by VSS to appoint a supplier to provide Media Handling and Public Affairs Monitoring Support. An evaluation panel assessed the tender responses and the contract was awarded. At a later point, an error was identified in the scoring matrix, and with the support of legal advice, an independent review and re-assessment of the tenders was carried out. This review concluded that the contract had been awarded to the incorrect provider.

The outcome of the review was communicated to the provider originally awarded the contract, and the contract was cancelled and re-awarded to the successful tenderer. A Special Severance Payment amounting to £3,920 (+ VAT) was made to the provider to which the contract had initially been awarded in order to negate future legal risks and costs.

TEO, the VSS Audit & Risk Committee, and the VSS Board were kept informed of the situation and proposed recourse throughout, and the payment has been approved by TEO.

Governance Checks for Existing Clients

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017* provided detail of a 10% spot check of existing clients carried out prior to opening the new Programme for 2017-18, specifically with regard to issuing Self Directed Assistance Payments to individuals previously deemed eligible to receive assistance under a *Support Scheme*.

Once the spot check was fully completed, and as reported in the *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017*, the maximum extrapolated error identified in the pre-2017-18 spot check was, at the end of the process, 1.4%, representing a maximum potential error value of £49,972.

Having demonstrated this low financial risk associated with the delivery of the Self Directed Assistance Payments, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited found it reasonable to conclude that conducting a further spot check of an additional 10% sample

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of “existing clients” prior to opening the 2018-19 programme could be a disproportionately intensive approach going forward.

However, recognising that a small risk of ineligible expenditure might remain if no actions were taken to verify client eligibility, in January 2018 the organisation submitted a proposed methodology for conducting sensitive checks on a further 10% (n=540) client records to verify their eligibility for payments.

Table 23: Maximum Potential Value of Error – as at 13 September 2018

Client cohort	Value of Award	Awards Issued	Total Value of Awards	Sample	Number in sample CONFIRMED INELIGIBLE	Number of POTENTIALLY INELIGIBLE	Value of Maximum Potential Extrapolated Error
1	£1,000	766	£766,000	79	0	0	£0
2	£1,000	123	£123,000	15	1	0	£8,200
3	£700	646	£452,200	65	1	0	£6,957
4	£500	444	£222,000	45	0	0	£0
5	£1,000	200	£200,000	20	0	0	£0
6	£1,000	379	£379,000	37	0	0	£0
7	£1,000	3	£3,000	1	0	0	£0
8	£1,000	16	£16,000	2	0	0	£0
9	£700	590	£413,000	64	0	0	£0
10	£500	1696	£848,000	168	0	0	£0
13	£500	458	£229,000	44	0	0	£0
TOTAL		5,321	£3,651,200	540	2	0	£15,157

* ‘Client Cohort’ refers to the Self Directed Assistance Payment award category

On 18 April 2018, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited reported its findings to The Executive Office. In doing so, the organisation outlined its concerns that conducting repeated checks on the same client population – which includes vulnerable individuals, with mental and physical health problems, who are significantly affected by both the wider context of political uncertainty and the problems associated with the welfare reform process – is a disproportionate measure that is contrary to the policy advice provided by the Commission for Victims and Survivors, the new business case for funding, and most importantly, the ethical and moral duty of care that the Victims and Survivors Service has

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to its clients. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited contends that on the basis of the sensitively conducted checks completed on an additional 10% sample, it has demonstrated that there is a very low financial risk associated with making the Self Directed Assistance Payments under the 2018-19 programme.

Conformance with Code of Conduct

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited, like other public bodies, has a duty to conduct affairs in a responsible and transparent way, and to take into account the standards in public life set out by the Nolan Committee and the Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013. Where appropriate, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has taken account of additional good practice documented in the 2013 edition of the Code.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is not a Central Government Department and cannot, therefore, comply with those parts of the code that are only applicable to such Departments. However, the corporate governance arrangements of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited have been established in such a way as to conform broadly to these standards. In doing so, these arrangements reflect the Code's recommendation that for bodies such as the Victims and Survivors Service Limited "the code should be applied with adjustments to suit their scale, responsibilities and accountability chains".

Throughout the year to 31 March 2018, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has complied with all relevant 2013 Code provision, apart from the requirement to have a qualified finance professional on the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Audit and Risk Committee.

Conclusion

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control.

My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal governance is informed by the work of the Internal Auditors and senior staff within the organisation who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

I also consider the comments made by the Northern Ireland Audit Office in its management letter and other reports.

I understand the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal governance.

The system of accountability on which I rely as Accounting Officer to form an opinion on the probity and use of public funds, as detailed in Managing Public Money NI is now well

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embedded within the organisation. The structure of the organisation is appropriate to meet the organisation's corporate and delivery plans. Monitoring and evaluation systems have matured, allowing the capture and analysis of timely and accurate information to support internal decision making, resulting in well evidenced, outcomes-based accountability.

Internal and external audit activity in respect of 2017-18 has reflected the sound system of internal control in place within VSS, with only a small number of broadly low priority recommendations arising. Any weaknesses identified internally by management, the Board, the Audit and Risk Committee, and Internal and External Audit have been considered and immediate action undertaken on priority findings and an implementation plan in place for longer term developments.

2.2 Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Remuneration Policy

Remuneration of all staff members, including the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer and senior staff are set out in their contracts of employment and is subject to review under Northern Ireland Civil Service pay remit guidelines. Such a review requires the approval of the Department of Finance.

The appointment and remuneration of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Board is determined by The Executive Office.

Service Contracts

Victims and Survivors Service Limited appointments are made in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, which requires appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition but also includes the circumstances when appointments may otherwise be made. Further information can be found in the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org.

Salary and Pension Entitlements

The following sections provide details of remuneration and pension interests of the Directors and the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer in the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Remuneration (including salary) and Pension Entitlements (Audited Information)

Officials	2017-18				2016-17			
	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits* (to nearest £1000)	Total £'000	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to the nearest £100)	Pension Benefits (to nearest £1000)	Total £'000
Mrs Margaret Bateson, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer	70-75		26	95-100	65-70		23	85-90
Mr Oliver Wilkinson, Board Member and Chair	5-10			5-10	5-10			5-10
Mrs Bertha McDougall, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Mr Richard Solomon, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Mr Séamus Magee, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Ms Patricia Haren, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Ms Beverley Clarke, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Mr Stephen McIlveen, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Band of Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration	70-75			70-75	65-70			65-70
Median Total Remuneration	30,149			30,149	28,500			28,500
Range of Staff Remuneration				15-20 – 70-75				20-25 – 65-70
Ratio	2.4			2.4	2.3			2.3

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

* The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases include increases due to inflation and any increase or decrease due to a transfer of pension rights.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; recruitment and retention allowances; and any other relevant allowances to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation and any gratia payments.

Exit Packages (Audited Information)

There were no redundancies or ill health retirements costs in the year to 31 March 2018.

Benefits in Kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

No Benefits in Kind were paid during the year.

Bonuses

Bonuses are not payable to Victims and Survivors Service Limited Directors or employees. There were no ex-gratia payments made to current Directors or employees.

Pension Benefits (Audited)

	Accrued Pension as at March 2018 & related sum	Real at increase in pension & lump sum at pension age	CETV at 31 March 2018	CETV at 31 March 2017	Real increase in CETV	Employer contribution to partnership pension account
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	Nearest £100
Mrs Margaret Bateson, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer	5-10 (£0 lump sum)	2	81	66	8	0

Victims and Survivors Service Limited Pension Arrangements

Pension benefits are provided through the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension schemes which are administered by Civil Service Pensions (CSP).

The Alpha pension scheme was introduced for new entrants from 1 April 2015. The Alpha scheme and all previous scheme arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted each year. The majority of existing members of the classic, premium, classic plus and Nuvos pension arrangements also moved to Alpha from that date. Members who on 1 April 2012 were within 10 years of their normal pension age did not move to Alpha and those who were within 13.5 years and 10 years of their normal pension age were given a choice between moving to Alpha on 1 April 2015 or at a later date determined by their age. Alpha is a 'Career Average Revalued Earnings' (CARE) arrangement in which members accrue pension benefits at a percentage rate of annual pensionable earnings throughout the period of scheme membership. The rate is 2.32%.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

New entrants joining can choose between membership of Alpha or joining a good quality ‘money purchase’ stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account).

New entrants joining on or after 30 July 2007 were eligible for membership of the Nuvos arrangement or they could have opted for a partnership pension account. Nuvos is also a CARE arrangement in which members accrue pension benefits at a percentage rate of annual pensionable earnings throughout the period of scheme membership. The current rate is 2.3%.

Staff in post prior to 30 July 2007 may be in one of three statutory based ‘final salary’ defined benefit arrangements (classic, premium and classic plus). From April 2011, pensions payable under classic, premium, and classic plus are reviewed annually in line with changes in the cost of living. New entrants joining on or after 1 October 2002 and before 30 July 2007 could choose between membership of premium or joining the partnership pension account.

All pension benefits are reviewed annually in line with changes in the cost of living. Any applicable increases are applied from April and are determined by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) figure for the preceding September. The CPI in September 2017 was 3% and HM Treasury has announced that public service pensions will be increased accordingly from April 2018.

Employee contribution rates for all members for the period covering 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 are as follows:

Scheme Year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

Annualised Rate of Pensionable Earnings (Salary Bands)		Contribution rates – Classic members or classic members who have moved to Alpha	Contribution rates – All other members
From	To	From 01 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	From 01 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
£0	£15,000.99	4.6%	4.6%
£15,001.00	£21,636.99	4.6%	4.6%
£21,637.00	£51,515.99	5.45%	5.45%
£51,516.00	£150,000.99	7.35%	7.35%
£150,001.00 and above		8.05%	8.05%

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may give up (commute) some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic plus is essentially a variation of premium, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per classic.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach their scheme pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age. Scheme Pension age is 60 for members of **classic**, **premium**, and **classic plus** and 65 for members of **Nuvos**. The normal scheme pension age in Alpha is linked to the member's State Pension Age but cannot be before age 65. Further details about the NICS pension schemes can be found at the website <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni>.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the NICS pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effect of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

Compensation on early retirement or for Loss of Office (audited)

No Directors or Officers were compensated for early retirement or loss of office in 2017-18.

Fees to Third Parties

Only remuneration and expenses were paid to Directors of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in 2017-18. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board of Directors remuneration details are on page 101.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Expenses reimbursed to/incurred in respect of non-executive Directors were as follows:

	Year end 31 March 2018 (£)	Year end 31 March 2017 (£)
O. Wilkinson, Member/Board Chair	1,077	929
B. McDougall, Board Member	319	289
R. Solomon, Board Member	129	0
P. Haren, Board Member	39	55
S. Magee, Board Member	534	502
S. McIlveen, Board Member	0	0
B. Clarke, Board Member	379	681
Total	2,477	2,456

No further remuneration or expenses were paid to Non-Executive Directors in 2017-18.

2.3 Assembly Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

Fees and Charges (audited)

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited incurred no fees or charges during 2017-18.

Remote Contingent Liabilities (audited)

There are no remote contingent liabilities.

Losses and Special Payments (audited)

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited made the following requests (to The Executive Office) for write-offs/special payments during 2017-18:

- Unvouched irrecoverable funding in respect of a funded organisation (£789.82):
 - In January 2018, VSS sought (and subsequently received) approval from TEO to write off this small debt owed by a funded organisation, relating to expenditure incurred in the 2014-15 financial year.
 - VSS took all appropriate actions to recover the debt, however the funds could not be recovered.
 - The cost of further action to recover was prohibitive, and the chance of success considered low.

- Unvouched irrecoverable funding in respect of a funded organisation (£22,355.41):
 - In February 2018, VSS sought (and subsequently received) approval from TEO to write off debt owed by a funded organisation in liquidation, relating to expenditure incurred in the 2015-16 financial year.
 - VSS took all appropriate actions to recover the debt, however the funds could not be recovered, and the Insolvency Practitioner had indicated that unsecured creditors would not receive any funds from the liquidation.

- Special severance payment in respect of a contract awarded in error (£4,704):
 - In October 2017, VSS made a special severance payment to a service provider, to facilitate the termination of a contract awarded in error. Further details, including the lessons learned and subsequent controls adjusted, are included at p107 above.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

In addition to the above, a number of payment recoveries may be required in respect of ongoing suspected fraud cases. These are expected to be finalised during 2018-19.



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer

Date: 5th December 2018

The Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the members of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited

Victims and Survivors Service Limited

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE MEMBERS OF THE VICTIM AND SURVIVORS SERVICE LIMITED

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the year ended 31 March 2018 under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. The financial statements comprise: the Statements of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Financial Position, Cash Flows, Changes in Taxpayers' Equity; and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report and the Assembly Accountability Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of Victim and Survivors Service Limited's affairs as at 31 March 2018 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis of opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this certificate. My staff and I are independent of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, and have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

Other Information

The directors and Accounting Officer are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements, the parts of the Remuneration Report and Assembly Accountability Report described in the report as having been audited, and my

The Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the members of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited

audit certificate and report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

- the parts of the Remuneration Report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance the Government Financial Reporting Manual; and
- the information given in the Strategic Report and Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Responsibilities of the directors and Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' and Accounting Officer Responsibilities, the directors' and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013.

I am required to obtain evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

The Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the members of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited

Matters on which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Remuneration Report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with the Department of Finance's guidance.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



KJ Donnelly
Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1EU

12th December 2018

Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

Financial Statements

4.1 Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

For the year ended 31 March 2018

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-18 £	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £
Other Operating Income			
Grant from EU	4	1,759,791	61,048
		1,759,791	61,048
Expenditure			
Staff Costs	2	1,533,535	1,385,741
Programme Costs	3a	12,787,693	11,983,200
Operating Costs	3c	540,381	519,289
Depreciation	3c	73,205	20,670
Loss on Fixed Asset Disposal	3c	(0)	1,307
Provision provided for in period	3c	(17,177)	189,881
Total Expenditure		14,917,637	14,100,088
Net Operating Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2018		(13,157,846)	(14,039,040)
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure		(13,157,846)	(14,039,040)
Amount Transferred to General Fund		(13,157,846)	(14,039,040)

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 118-136 form part of these financial statements.

Financial Statements

4.2 Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2018

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-18 £	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £
Non Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	5	16,548	19,733
Intangible Assets	6	241,389	216,416
Total Non-Current Assets		257,937	236,149
Current Assets			
Trade and Other Receivables	10	1,875,021	86,616
Cash and Cash Equivalents	11	1,346,482	1,181,384
Total Current Assets		3,221,503	1,268,000
Total Assets		3,479,440	1,504,149
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	12	831,462	1,452,325
Provision for Liabilities and Charges	13	12,900	208,900
Total current Liabilities		844,362	1,661,225
Total assets less Current Liabilities		2,635,078	(157,076)
Non Current Liabilities			
Other Payables	12	2,140,000	0
Total non current Liabilities		2,140,000	0
Total assets less total liabilities		495,078	(157,076)
Taxpayers Equity			
General Fund		495,078	(157,076)

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 118-136 form part of these financial statements

Financial Statements

In the view of the Board of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited an exemption from the audit requirements of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 is available under section 482 of that Act, since the company is a non-profit making company and is subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland which is performed under Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited therefore claims this exemption.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and the Accounting Officer acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and preparation of accounts.

The financial statements were reviewed by the Accounting Officer on 5th December 2018.



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 5th December 2018

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 5th December 2018 and were signed on its behalf by:



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman

Date: 5th December 2018

Financial Statements

4.3 Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 March 2018

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-18 £	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
(Deficit) / Surplus for the period		(13,157,846)	(14,039,040)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions			
Depreciation	3c	3,584	2,954
Amortisation	3c	69,621	17,716
Loss on Fixed Asset Disposal	3c	(0)	1,307
Provision written back	3c	(17,177)	189,881
(Increase) / Decrease in trade receivables and other current assets	10	(1,788,405)	(54,971)
Increase / (Decrease) in trade payables and other current liabilities	12	1,519,137	704,174
Provision utilised	13	(178,822)	(22,981)
Net cash outflow from operating activities		<u>(13,549,908)</u>	<u>(13,200,960)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	5	(400)	(11,051)
Purchase of intangible assets	6	(94,594)	(225,714)
Net cash outflow from investing activities		<u>(94,994)</u>	<u>(236,765)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department		13,810,000	13,778,000
Increase / (Decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period		<u>165,098</u>	<u>340,275</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	11	<u>1,181,384</u>	<u>841,109</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period		<u><u>1,346,482</u></u>	<u><u>1,181,384</u></u>

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 118-136 form part of these financial statements

4.4 Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

For the year ended 31 March 2018

	General Fund £	Taxpayers' Equity £
Opening Balance at 1 April 2016	103,964	103,964
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for 2016-17		
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year	(14,039,040)	(14,039,040)
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	13,778,000	13,778,000
Balance at 31 March 2017	(157,076)	(157,076)
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for 2017-18		
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year	(13,157,846)	(13,157,846)
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	13,810,000	13,810,000
Balance at 31 March 2018	495,078	495,078

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 118-136 form part of these financial statements.

4.5 Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting and disclosure requirements of Companies Act 2006, the 2017-18 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and the Accounts Direction issued by The Executive Office. Where FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited are described below. These have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.1 Accounting Convention

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention. The Directors do not consider the current costs of any of the transactions or closing balances to be materially different from the historical cost.

Modifications to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets and inventories are not considered to be material.

1.2 Basis of Accounting

Income and expenditure are treated on the accruals basis of accounting. Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting Standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board and accounting and disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance.

1.3 Income and Financing

Income comprises grant receivable from the Special EU Programmes Body and other operating income.

FReM requires Arms-Length Bodies to regard Grant in Aid received as contributions from controlling parties giving rise to a financial interest in the residual interest of the body, and hence accounted for as financing. Grant in Aid from the Sponsor Department (The Executive Office) is credited to the General Reserve in line with the FReM requirement.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.4 Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised as if they are capable of being used for a period which exceeds one year and they:

- Individually have a cost of at least £1,000; or
- Satisfy the criteria of a grouped asset, i.e. collectively they have a cost of at least £1,000, are functionally interdependent, have broadly simultaneous purchase dates, and are anticipated to have simultaneous disposal dates.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at historical cost and are not re-valued under IAS 16 because of the immateriality of the balances involved.

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated at rates calculated to write them down to estimated residual value on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives as:

- Furniture and Fittings 10 years
- Leasehold Improvements 10 years
- IT Equipment 4 years

A full month's depreciation is charged in the month of acquisition and in the month of disposal.

1.5 Foreign Currency

The accounts are maintained and reported in Sterling. There are no foreign currency transactions in the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.

1.6 Intangible Assets

Intangible non-current assets are capitalised when they are capable of being used in the Victims and Survivors Service Limited activities for more than one year, they can be valued, and they have a cost of at least £1,000 (either individually or as a grouped asset).

Intangible assets are amortised at rates calculated to write them down to estimated residual value on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives as:

- Website Development 4 years
- IT Software/Licences 4 years

Purchased computer software licences will be capitalised as an intangible non-current asset where expenditure of at least £1,000 is incurred (either individually or as a grouped asset). They will be amortised over the shorter of the term of the licence and their useful economic life, typically 4 years.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.7 Impairment

Non-current assets held for operational use will be valued at historical cost and are amortised over the estimated life of the asset on a straight-line basis. Where there is an indication that the carrying value of items of property, plant and equipment or intangibles may have been impaired through events or changes in circumstances, a review will be undertaken of the recoverable amount of that asset.

1.8 Taxation

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is a registered company limited by guarantee and is engaged in non-profit making activities in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with The Executive Office and the memorandum and articles of association and accordingly its activities are not liable to Income and Corporation Taxes.

All of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's incoming resources are through grant in aid and grant funding which is outside the scope of taxation. Accordingly the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is not VAT registered and amounts in these accounts are inclusive of Value Added Tax where charged.

1.9 Pension Arrangements

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited participates in a pension scheme administered by the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) (PCSPS[NI]) is for all permanent and fixed term members of staff. The defined benefit schemes are unfunded.

The company makes pension contributions at the rates outlined in the Remuneration Report on page 100 above to the approved pension scheme. The cost of contributions for providing pensions for employees is charged to the statement of comprehensive net expenditure account as they are earned, in accordance with IAS 19 *Employee Benefits*. Seconded staff members remain members of their respective pension schemes.

1.10 Provisions

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited makes provisions for liabilities and charges where, at the date of the Statement of Financial Position, a legal or constructive liability exists (i.e., a present obligation from past events exists), where the transfer of economic benefits is probable and a reasonable estimate can be made. Where the time value of money is material, Victims and Survivors Service Limited discounts the provision to its present value using a standard Government discount rate.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.11 Grants Payable

Grants are treated as paid if they have been authorised for payment by officers at the appropriate level. Grants payable include amounts paid in the period and amounts accrued and still to be paid at the Statement of Financial Position date.

1.12 Employee Benefits

Under the requirements of IAS 19: *Employee Benefits*, staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as the organisation is obliged to pay them. This includes the cost of any untaken leave at the year end. This cost has been calculated using the untaken leave per staff member and applying this to their annual salary to calculate the leave balance as at 31 March 2018.

1.13 Resources Expended

Support costs include all expenditure directly relating to the objectives of the company. Administration and Management costs comprise the costs involved in complying with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Costs incurred for meetings, seminars and other specific expenditure relating to the individual programmes are classified as Programme Costs.

1.14 Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight line basis in the period in which they arise.

1.15 Funds

All income received by the company must be used for specific purposes which are within the overall aims of the company.

1.16 Segmental Reporting

The principal aim of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and sole activity is the provision of services to victims and survivors as defined in the Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is therefore considered to have only one operating segment. All income, expenditure, assets and liabilities relate to this sole activity and are disclosed within these financial statements in the manner reported to the chief operating decision maker, which is considered to be the Board of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.17 Changes in Accounting Policy and Disclosure

None in year.

1.18. Changes in Accounting standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards not yet effective

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has reviewed the following additional or revised accounting standards and new (or amendments to) interpretations contained within FReM 2017-18:

- Financial Instruments (IFRS9)
- Revenue from Contracts with Customers (IFRS15)
- Leases (IFRS 16)

These changes will be mandatory for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 April 2018 or later periods, but which Victims and Survivors Service Limited has not adopted early. Victims and Survivors Service Limited considers that these changes are not relevant to or will have minimal impact on its operations.

In addition, certain new standards, interpretations and amendments to existing standards have been drafted but not yet issued and will come into effect in accounting periods beginning on or after 1 April 2018. It is not practicable to provide a reasonable estimate of the effect of these standards until a detailed review has been completed.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is compliant with all International Financial Reporting Standards.

1.19 Contingent Liabilities

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the accounting statements; they are disclosed by way of a note if:

- There is a possible obligation arising from past events, the existence of which will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one of more uncertain events not wholly within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's control; or
- A present obligation arises from past events but is not recognised because it is not probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation or because the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

For each class of contingent liability, the nature of the contingency, a brief description, an estimate of its financial effect, an indication of the uncertainties relating to the amount or timing of any outflow and the possibility of any reimbursement has, if applicable, been disclosed. If there is a present obligation and the transfer of economic benefit in respect

Notes to the Financial Statements

of a contingent liability has become probable and a reliable estimate is available, a provision will be recognised in the financial statements.

1.20 Going Concern

The Financial Statements have been prepared on the assumption that Victims and Survivors Service Limited is a going concern and will continue in operation for the foreseeable future.

2. Staff Numbers and Related Costs

Staff costs comprise:

	Permanently Employed Staff	Others (Agency & Seconded)	Year ended 31-Mar- 18 Total	Year ended 31-Mar- 17 Total
Wages and salaries	936,136	323,809	1,259,945	1,164,662
Social security costs	91,927	0	91,927	68,831
Pension costs	187,860	0	187,860	124,421
Board costs	25,458	0	25,458	27,827
Sub Total	1,241,381	323,809	1,565,190	1,385,741
Less: Recoveries in respect to outward secondments	31,655	0	31,655	0
Total Net Costs	1,209,726	323,809	1,533,535	0
Funded through Core Funds	825,247	304,378	1,129,625	1,350,382
Funded through PEACE IV Funds	384,479	19,431	403,910	35,359
	1,209,726	323,809	1,533,535	1,385,741

*Of the total, £0 has been charged to capital.

Pension

The Northern Ireland Civil Service pension schemes are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes but the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The most up to date actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2012. This valuation is then reviewed by the Scheme Actuary and updated to reflect current conditions and rolled forward to the reporting date of the

Notes to the Financial Statements

DoF Superannuation and Other Allowances Annual Report and Accounts as at 31 March 2018.

For 2017-18, employers' contributions of £187,860 were payable to the NICS pension arrangements (2016-17 £124,421) at one of three rates in the range 20.8% to 26.3% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. A new scheme funding valuation based on data as at 31 March 2012 was completed by the Actuary during 2014-15. This valuation was used to determine employer contribution rates for the introduction of Alpha from April 2015. For 2018-19, the rates will also range from 20.8% to 26.3% however the salary bands differ. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2018-19 to be paid when the member retires, and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £0 (2016-17 £0) were paid to one or more of the panel of three appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age-related and range from 8% to 14.75% (2016-17 8% to 14.75%) of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3% of pensionable pay. In addition, employer contributions of £0, 0.5% (2016-17 £0, 0.5%) of pensionable pay, were payable to the NICS Pension schemes to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees.

Contributions due to the **partnership** pension providers at the reporting period date were £0. Contributions prepaid at that date were £0.

No persons (2016-17: 0 persons) retired early on ill-health grounds; the total additional accrued pension liabilities in the year amounted to £0 (2016-17: £0).

Average Number of Persons Employed

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed was as follows.

	Permanently employed staff	Others (Agency & Seconded)	Year ended 31-Mar-18 Total	Year ended 31-Mar-17 Total
Administrators	13.36	3.25	16.61	20.43
Management	16.39	3.33	19.72	12.93
Senior Management	1.75	0.75	2.50	3.00
Total	31.50	7.33	38.83	36.36

Notes to the Financial Statements

3. Expenditure

a. Programme Expenditure

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-18 Core Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-18 PEACE IV Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-18 Total	Year ended 31-Mar-17 Total
Grants to Funded Organisations	3b	11,388,606	1,244,779	12,633,385	11,635,273
Provision of Client Support Services		51,556	0	51,556	105,240
Workforce Training Plan		0	74,411	74,411	126,879
Monitoring and Evaluation		5,094	0	5,094	21,134
Advertising		23,290	3,738	27,028	25,211
Seminars and events		15,561	12,935	28,496	13,905
Increase in Bad Debt Provision		(32,277)	0	(32,277)	55,558
Total		11,451,830	1,335,863	12,787,693	11,983,200

b. Grants to Funded Organisations

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-18 Core Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-18 PEACE IV Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-18 Total	Year ended 31-Mar-17 Total
Grants to Groups		6,915,371	1,231,815	8,147,186	6,259,608
Grants to Individuals		4,473,235	12,964	4,486,199	5,375,665
Total		11,388,606	1,244,779	12,633,385	11,635,273

c. Operating Costs

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-18 Core Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-18 PEACE IV Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-18 Total	Year ended 31-Mar-17 Total
Rents & Service Charges		78,487	0	78,487	79,960
Rates		10,232	0	10,232	36,643
IT Services		163,132	0	163,132	90,800
Staff Recruitment		24,911	533	25,444	33,275

Notes to the Financial Statements

Telephones		14,154	0	14,154	11,026
Heat, Light & Power		6,087	0	6,087	6,798
Office Expenses		31,435	0	31,435	50,766
NIAO Audit		32,504	0	32,504	28,000
Premises Expenses		21,502	0	21,502	24,976
Professional Fees		59,829	0	59,829	51,715
Staff Training		14,188	0	14,188	6,878
Travel & Expenses		17,810	14,501	32,311	18,388
Hospitality		1,032	0	1,032	2,314
Postage & Carriage		20,726	0	20,726	18,988
Bad Debt Write Off		23,145	0	23,145	0
Managed Services		2,676	0	2,676	55,082
Board Expenses		3,497	0	3,497	3,680
Total Operating Costs		525,347	15,034	540,381	519,289
Non-Cash Items					
Depreciation	5	3,584	0	3,584	2,954
Amortisation	6	69,621	0	69,621	17,716
Loss on FA Disposal	5	0	0	0	1,307
Provision provided for in period	13	(17,177)	0	(17,177)	189,881
Total Non-Cash Items		56,028	0	56,028	211,858
Overall Total		581,375	15,034	596,409	731,147

* 2016/17 figures includes £1,261 paid to NIAO in respect of non-audit fees for participation in the National Fraud Initiative.

4. Income

	Year ended 31-Mar-18	Year ended 31-Mar-17
Grant from EU	1,759,791	61,048
	<u>1,759,791</u>	<u>61,048</u>

Income is receivable as a grant from The Special EU Programmes Body.

The Special EU Programme Body resource budget for the project led by The Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 July 2021 is £13.373m.

There was no other operating income in 2017-18.

Notes to the Financial Statements

5. Property, Plant and Equipment

				Year ended 31-Mar-18
	Fixtures & Fittings	Leasehold Improvements	IT Equipment	Total
Cost:				
At 1 April 2017	18,994	0	7,161	26,155
Additions in year	400	0	0	400
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2018	19,394	0	7,161	26,555
Accumulated Depreciation:				
At 1 April 2017	2,378	0	4,045	6,423
Charge in year	1,936	0	1,648	3,584
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2018	4,314	0	5,693	10,007
Carrying amount at 31 March 2018	15,080	0	1,468	16,548
Asset Financing:				
Owned:	15,080	0	1,468	16,548
Financed Leased:				
On-balance sheet (SOFP) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:				
Carrying amount at 31 March 2018	15,080	0	1,468	16,548

Notes to the Financial Statements

				Year ended 31-Mar- 17
	Fixtures & Fittings	Leasehold Improvements	IT Equipment	Total
Cost:				
At 1 April 2016	9,550	26,308	6,754	42,612
Additions in year	10,643	0	408	11,051
Disposals	(1,199)	(26,308)	0	(27,507)
At 31 March 2017	18,994	0	7,161	26,155
Accumulated Depreciation:				
At 1 April 2016	1,532	25,740	2,397	29,669
Charge in year	1,285	21	1,648	2,954
Disposals	(439)	(25,761)	0	(26,200)
At 31 March 2017	2,378	0	4,045	6,423
Carrying Value at 31 March 2017	16,616	0	3,117	19,733

				Year ended 31-Mar- 17
Asset Financing:				
Owned:	16,616	0	3,117	19,733
Financed Leased:				
On-balance sheet (SOFP) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:				
Carrying amount at 31 March 2017	16,616	0	3,117	19,733

6. Intangible Assets

	Year ended 31-Mar-18		
	Website Development £	IT Software/ Licences £	Total £
Cost:			
At 1 April 2017	8,940	225,714	234,654
Additions in year	0	94,594	94,594
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2018	8,940	320,308	329,248
Amortisation:			
At 1 April 2017	2,757	15,481	18,238
Charge in year	2,235	67,386	69,621
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2018	4,992	82,867	87,859
Carrying amount at 31 March 2018	3,948	237,441	241,389
Asset Financing:			
Owned	3,948	237,441	241,389
Finance Leased:			
On-balance sheet (SOF) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:			
Carrying amount at 31 March 2018	3,948	237,441	241,389

Notes to the Financial Statements

	Year ended 31-Mar-17		
	Website Development £	IT Software/ Licences £	Total £
Cost:			
At 1 April 2016	8,940	0	8,940
Additions in year	0	225,714	225,714
Disposals		0	0
At 31 March 2017	<u>8,940</u>	<u>225,714</u>	<u>234,654</u>
Amortisation:			
At 1 April 2016	522	0	522
Charge in year	2,235	15,481	17,716
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2017	<u>2,757</u>	<u>15,481</u>	<u>18,238</u>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2017	<u>6,183</u>	<u>210,233</u>	<u>216,416</u>
Asset Financing:			
Owned	6,183	210,233	216,416
Finance Leased:			
On-balance sheet (SOF) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:			
Carrying amount at 31 March 2017	<u>6,183</u>	<u>210,233</u>	<u>216,416</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

7. Financial Instruments

As the cash requirements of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited are met through Grant-in-Aid provided by The Executive Office, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited expected purchase and usage requirements and the Non Departmental Public Body is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

8. Impairments

There have been no impairment charges for the year.

9. Inventories

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has no inventories.

10. Trade Receivables, Financial and other Other Assets

	Year ended 31-Mar-18	Year ended 31-Mar-17
Amounts falling due within one year from VSS operations		
Programme receivables	117,367	66,712
Prepayments & accrued income	20,432	14,414*
Income Accrued in respect of EU Funds	1,748,481	61,048*
Other Debtors	12,022	0
Bad debt provision	(23,281)	(55,558)
	<u>1,875,021</u>	<u>86,616</u>

*Prior year did not show balance separately for Income accrued in respect of EU funds, instead showing Prepayments and accrued income of £75,462.

Notes to the Financial Statements

11. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	Year ended 31-Mar-18	Year ended 31-Mar-17
Balance at 1 April	1,181,384	841,109
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	165,098	340,275
Balance at 31 March 2018	<u>1,346,482</u>	<u>1,181,384</u>

The above balance comprises £830,453 at the TEO account Danske Bank Belfast in a non-interest bearing current account, £515,925 at the PEACE IV account, and £104 in petty cash held on-site.

12. Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities

	Year ended 31-Mar-18	Year ended 31-Mar-17
Amounts falling due within one year		
Programme Payables	612,863	1,199,563
Trade Payables	39,496	106,192
Accruals and Deferred Income	179,103	146,570
	<u>831,462</u>	<u>1,452,325</u>
Amounts falling due after more than one year		
Advanced Monies received from EU Funds	2,140,000	0
	<u>2,140,000</u>	<u>0</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

13. Provisions for Liabilities and Charges

				Year ended 31-Mar-18	Year ended 31-Mar-17
	Bulk Transfer	Actuarial Services	The Disappeared	Total	Total
Balance at 1 April 2017	170,000	26,000	12,900	208,900	42,000
Provided for in the period	0	0	0	0	193,881
Utilisation in year	(162,234)	(16,589)	0	(178,823)	(22,981)
Provisions written back	(7,766)	(9,411)	0	(17,177)	(4,000)
Balance at 1 April 2018	0	0	12,900	12,900	208,900

The provision for liabilities and charges relates to Victims and Survivors Service Limited estimate for:

1 *Pensions Bulk Transfer Value*

- On 11 November 2012, the functions and staff of the victims unit of the Community Relations Council (CRC) were transferred to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. 8 staff from the Community Relations Council were transferred under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment Regulations) 2006.
- There was a liability to be met by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in respect of the difference between the amount of money which has been paid from NILGOSC (CRC's pension scheme) to PCSPS (Victims and Survivors Service Limited's pension scheme) in respect of the transferred employees and the amount required by the PCSPS(NI) in order to accept the transfer of liabilities.
- The Government Actuaries Division (GAD) were appointed in November 2013 as the actuarial provider. Bulk transfer terms were agreed during 2017/18 and option packs were issued to the 8 staff members in August 2017. A deadline of 10 November 2017 was established for the 8 staff members to respond. 6 members opted to transfer their pension benefits. Final calculations were agreed and payment of the bulk transfer value was made on 9th February 2018.

2 *GAD and NILGOSC Pension Actuarial Services*

- This provision represented an estimation of costs incurred by GAD and NILGOSC through the calculation of transfer values, provision of actuarial services, agreement of terms, etc. These services have been completed and all final costs have been included in accounts to 31st March 2018.

3 *The Disappeared Funeral Costs*

Notes to the Financial Statements

- At 31 March 2018, the remains of three of the Disappeared were still to be located. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited have provided for a contribution in respect of funeral costs for three Disappeared.

The provisions are not discounted as the Victims and Survivors Service Limited do not, at this time, expect the provision to be held for more than three years.

14. Capital Commitments

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited had no capital commitments in the financial year (2016-17: Nil).

15. Commitments under Leases

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are set out below for each of the following periods.

	Year ended 31-Mar-18	Year ended 31-Mar-17
Buildings:		
Not later than one year	53,292	21,910
Greater than one year, and less than five years	9,958	14,375
Greater than five years	0	0
Total	<u>63,250</u>	<u>36,285</u>
Other:		
Not later than one year	2,592	2,592
Greater than one year, and less than five years	108	2,700
Greater than five years	0	0
Total	<u>2,700</u>	<u>5,292</u>

16. Commitments under PFI Contracts and Other Services Concession Arrangements Contracts

None.

Notes to the Financial Statements

17. Other Financial Commitments

None.

18. Contingent Liabilities

None.

19. Related-Party Transactions

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is an Arm's Length Body sponsored by The Executive Office. The Executive Office is regarded as a Related Party. During the period the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had various material transactions with The Executive Office (Grant in Aid £13,810,000).

During 2017-18 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was also in receipt of PEACE IV grant funding from the Special EU Programmes Body. During the period the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had various material transactions with the Special EU Programmes Body (£1,542,347).

During the year no members of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board, Audit and Risk Committee, Senior Management Team nor other related parties have directly undertaken any material transactions with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has had a small number of transactions with other government departments and other central government bodies.

Compensation for Directors and Chief Executive and Accounting Officer has been disclosed in the Remuneration Report.

20. Third Party Assets

None.

21. Guarantee

The Executive Office, undertake to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of the same being wound up while such party is a member, or within one year after such party ceases to be a member, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before such party ceases to be a member, and of the costs, charges and

Notes to the Financial Statements

expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights of its contributories among themselves, such amount as may be required not exceeding one pound.

22. Events after the Reporting Period

There were no events after the reporting period.

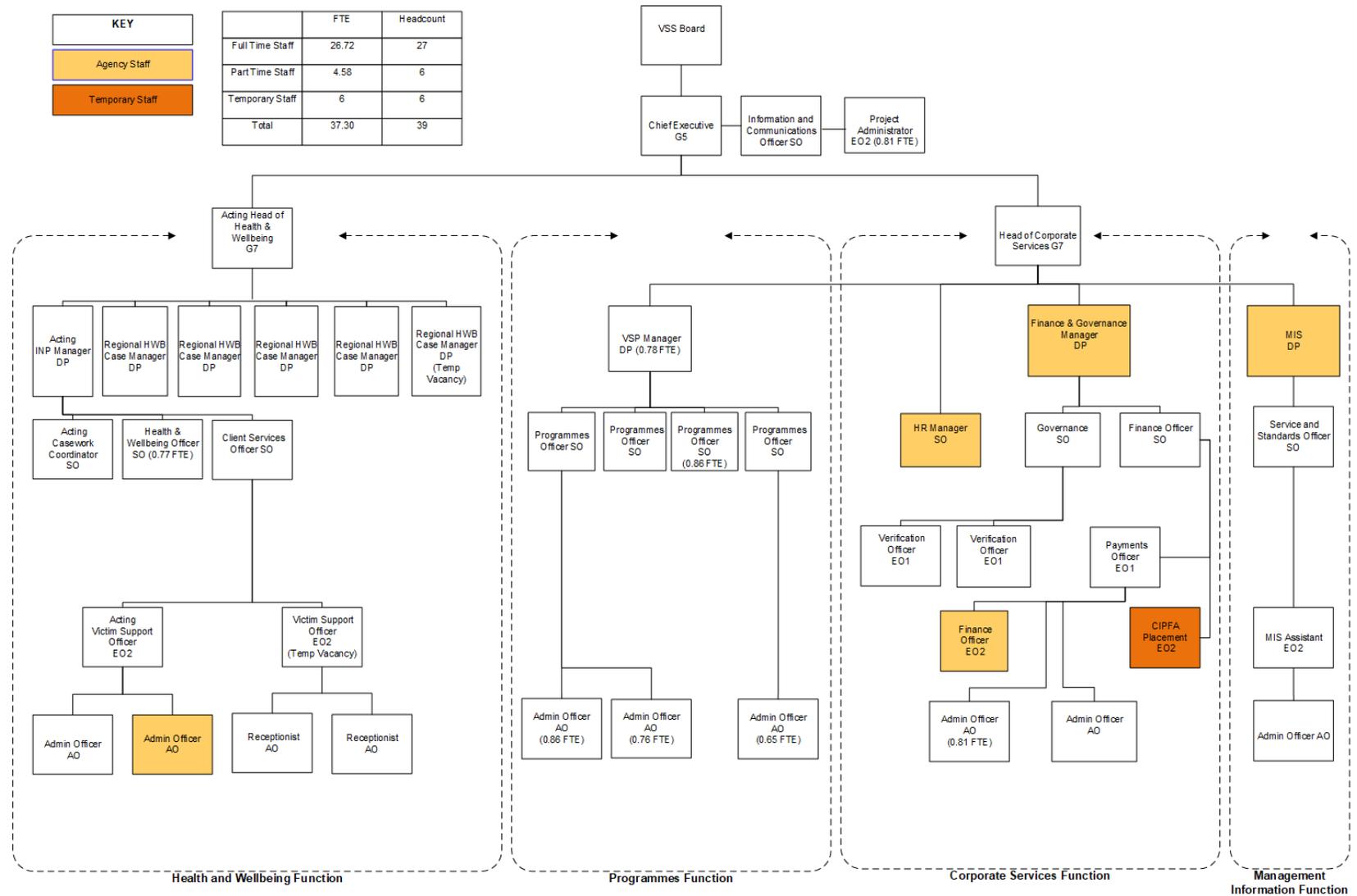
Date of authorisation for issue

The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 12th December 2018.

APPENDIX 1

Appendix 1: Organisation Chart as at 31 March 2018

Victims and Survivors Service Organisational Structure as at 31 March 2018



APPENDIX 2

Appendix 2: Business Plan Extract 2017-18

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 – IMPROVED HEALTH & WELLBEING OF VICTIMS & SURVIVORS

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
1	Ensure access and availability of Psychological Therapies to 2,100 individuals, in line with the Northern Ireland Strategy for the <i>Development of Psychological Therapy Services (2010)</i>	- 22 organisations deliver talking therapies that assist victims and survivors in improving their health and wellbeing.	- 60% of individuals report positive outcomes and this improvement is across all 4 domains.	Achieved
2	Ensure access and availability of Complementary Therapies to 3,000 individuals in line with best practise and minimum standards.	- 24 organisations deliver complementary therapies that assist victims and survivors in improving their health and wellbeing.	- 80% of individuals report an improvement in their health and wellbeing.	Achieved
3	Ensure access and availability of Disability Aids to 110 individuals physically injured as a result of the Conflict/Troubles.	- Cross-organisational relationships and referral pathways developed and formalised between statutory and community services.	- Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 80% of individuals as a result of disability aid provided.	Partially Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
4	Ensure access and availability of Trauma-focused Physical Activity to that supports 50 individuals engage in a therapeutic process to address Conflict/Troubles-related trauma.	- Trauma Focused Physical Activity PEACE IV framework established.	- Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 80% of individuals as a result of trauma focused-physical activity.	Partially Achieved
5	Ensure access and availability of support towards managing Persistent Pain to 500 individuals	- Persistent Pain framework designed and development. - Cross-organisational relationships and referral pathways developed and formalised between statutory and community services.	- Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60% of individuals as a result of persistent pain interventions.	Achieved
6	Provision of Social Support activities to 9,800 through VSS funded organisations including befriending, respite, and other	- Engagement with community and statutory partners to develop Take 5 outcomes based	- Baseline data to be established throughout 17/18 to establish outcome for 18/19 and	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
	activities in line with the Take 5 framework. www.makinglifebettertogether.com	monitoring and evaluation tools.	beyond to measure improved wellbeing, function and independence from 2018/19	
7	Carry out a review of Transgenerational Activities through VSS funded organisations.	- Work with the CVS in order to understand transgenerational issues and establish required services.	- Baseline data to be established throughout 17/18 to establish outcome for 18/19 and beyond.	Achieved
8	Establish a strong regional network of 25 Caseworker and 5 Case Managers with agreed processes, procedures and referral pathways .	- HWB Case Manger to develop a relationship with Department of Health in order to develop a comprehensive bio psychosocial assessment. - Established communication networks	Baselines established in 17/18 to monitor improvement in: - communication across victims/survivors sector - responsiveness to individual needs. - pathways of referral and	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
			<p>communication with statutory sector.</p> <p>60% of individuals engaged with a Health and Wellbeing Caseworker report an improvement in functioning</p>	
9	<p>Support communication and engagement through the Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Groups (VSPWG) meetings, including sub committees and Co-Design Programme engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuation of 2 sub-groups to look at focussed pieces of work. - 6 meetings per year covering the North East and South West areas 	<p>Baselines established in 17/18 to monitor improvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communication between agencies and organisations involved in delivery services to victims and survivors. - partnership and collaboration between organisations. 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 – IMPROVED ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
10	Ensure access and availability of Personal and Professional Development to 2,400 individuals through the VSP and more specific needs for 50 individuals through the INP Education and Training framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework for INP Education and Training established - 23 organisations deliver a broad range of personal and professional development (PPD) activities. - Cross-organisational relationships and referral pathways developed and formalised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased employment opportunities or courses to provide opportunities to develop hobbies and interests and time to connect with other people. - Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing of 80% of individuals who engage in numeracy and literacy tuition. 	Achieved
11	Ensure access and availability of 1:1 Literacy and Numeracy tuition for 25 individuals whose educational attainment has been significantly impacted by Conflict/Trouble-related trauma or events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework for PEACE IV Numeracy and Literacy established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing of 80% of individuals who engage in numeracy and literacy tuition. 	Partially Achieved

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REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
			- 80% of individuals who engage in numeracy and literacy tuition demonstrate improved numeracy and literacy skills	
12	Development of a Volunteering Programme to support 20 individuals who have been limited by the Conflict/Troubles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework for PEACE IV Volunteering Programme established - Cross-organisational relationships and referral pathways developed and formalised. 	- Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing for 80% of individuals engaged in Volunteering Programme.	Achieved
13	Design, develop and implement Workforce Training and Development Plan - 2017/2018 in line with the CVS Minimum Standards published in November 2016.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suite of high quality vocational and non-vocational training and development opportunities for staff /volunteers and committee members. - Consistent high standards of delivery in line with the CVS Minimum Standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase capacity and confidence within VSS funded organisations leading to a higher quality of service delivery for victims and survivors. - Increase capacity and confidence within VSS leading to a higher quality 	Achieved

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REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		- Capacity plan in line with the changing service delivery model.	of service delivery for victims and survivors. - Baseline to be established 17/18	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 – VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS, AND THOSE MOST IN NEED, ARE HELPED AND CARED FOR

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
14	Ensure access and availability of Welfare Advice to 2,400 individuals and monitor the impact of Welfare Reform on victims and survivors.	- Engagement with the Department for Communities (DfC) assistance for individual victims and survivors transitioning to Personal Independence Payment (PIP). - 12 organisations deliver services to assist victims and survivors make sense of what they are entitled to as well as provide support	- Greater sense of responsibility and independence in addressing practical needs. - Increased access to benefits and support. - Improved Financial Support.	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

		and guidance during changes implemented through welfare reform.	- Baseline to be established 17/18.	
15	Provide Self Directed Assistance Payments to 6,125 individuals.	- Payments Made	-Improved Financial Support. - Greater sense of responsibility and independence in addressing practical needs. - Increased access to benefits and support. - Baseline to be established 17/18	Achieved
16	Provide Additional Needs Payments to 1,358 individuals.			
17	Provide Transition Payments to 1,836 individuals.			

APPENDIX 2

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4 – VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS, AND THEIR FAMILIES, ARE SUPPORTED TO ENGAGE IN LEGACY ISSUES

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
18	Establish a strong Advocacy Support Network with agreed processes, procedures and referral pathways to provide support and assistance to 1,500 individuals.	- A regional network of 21.5 Advocacy Support Caseworkers and 6 Case Managers established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased confidence and reduced isolation due to being acknowledged and supported. - Renewed relationships and trust within families and communities. - Improved mental health and social networks. - Agreed narrative with families and agencies around the incident. -Baseline to be established in 17/18 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5 – AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
19	Maintain a robust VSS Board and ARC to oversee the strategic direction and governance arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly Board meeting and minutes published on website and forwarded to TEO within 5 working days. - Quarterly ARC meeting and minutes published on website. - Review of Modus Operandi - Appointment of a trained and experienced ARC. - Review of key governance policies. - Review performance of SMT, ARC and Board. 		Achieved
20	Review and update Policies and Procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliance with legal, statutory and departmental requirements. - Confident staff teams. 		Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		- Consistency of practice.		
21	Meet Department Requirements in line with Good Governance Checklist and MSFM at TEO Accountability Meetings.	- Quarterly reporting to Accountability Meeting. - Quarterly ALB Performance Reports.		Achieved
22	Ensure a robust risk management process is in place and followed.	- Monthly Strategic Risk Register. - Monthly Operational Risk Logs. - Quarterly Assurance Statements.		Achieved
23	Ensure robust financial processes and procedures are being developed and followed.	- Regular review of Financial Policies and Procedures. - Annual review of MSFM by VSS Board to ensure VSS compliance. - Draft financial statements 2016/2017: JUNE 2017.	-Unqualified accounts for 2016/17 -Satisfactory Internal Audit Assurance -Decrease in NIAO audit findings	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final financial statements 2016/2017: SEPT 2017. - Implementation of Internal Audit Plan. - Implementation of NIAO recommendations. 		
24	By year end operate within allocated budget avoiding overspend and managing underspend within a tolerance of 1.5%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly monitoring or expenditure and cash - Month end closure within 3 working days of month end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -98.5% of the budget utilised -100% of invoices paid within the statutory time frame of 30 days - 90% of invoices paid within 10 days 	Achieved
25	Ensure eligibility of expenditure across all programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roll out of a risk based approach to vouching of VSP expenditure in line with TEO guidance. -100% vouching and verification of PEACE IV and Corporate Expenditure - Debt recovery in line with VSS Debt Recovery Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - error rate less than 2% - Consistency in implementation of Programme rules. 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		- Management of irregularities in line with VSS Irregularity Procedures.		
26	Embed and develop the new VSP 2017-2020 with a focus on 4 strategic outcomes above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 55 Letters of Offer issued. - Up to 55 budgets and delivery plans agreed. - Monitoring and evaluation framework agreed with each funded organisation. - Consistent and up to date monitoring of progress towards meeting VSS outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement in quality of services provided by VSS and funded organisations. -Improved partnership working and relationships between VSS and funded organisations. 	Achieved
27	Programme Management of PEACE IV in line with EU Programme Rule and national rules and legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 20 Letters of Offer issued. - Up to 20 budget and work plans agreed. - Monitoring and evaluation framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improves the quality of services and care -Baselines to be established in 17/18 (first year of programme) 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		<p>agreed with each funded organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent and up to date monitoring of progress towards meeting VSS outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Error rate of less than 2% 	
28	<p>Carry out a review of Management Information Systems across the VSS with a view to integration and consolidation with outcomes based monitoring and evaluation strategy and GDPR requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in office storage requirement by allowing records to be stored off-site/archived. - Increased digitisation of paper records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved access and quality of information. - Improved quality control and consistency of records. 	Achieved
29	<p>Review stakeholder analysis and communication and engagement plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current and accurate framework of stakeholders. - Strong communication with relevant agencies & sectors. - Strong and relevant key messages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved communication and engagement with key stakeholders - Informed and dynamic engagement with key stakeholders that is responsive to changing 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		- Updated publicity and communications information.	views and emerging concerns.	
30	Agree and embed the VSS Clinical governance Framework with VSS staff and VSS funded organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All interventions delivered in line with best practice guidelines. - A transparent and consistent approach to addressing the needs of victims and survivors. - Robust policies and procedures in place to ensure safety of victims and survivors and the staff who are engaged with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased staff confidence and competence - 80% of VSS staff feel supported in their work - 80% of staff across the sector report an increased understanding or trauma and evidence based practise 	Achieved

** In a small number of areas, due to the delay in reaching full capacity of Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers during the year, the number of individuals supported were below the levels anticipated, however for those in receipt of support the outcomes achieved were fully in line with those set within the Delivery Plan.*

APPENDIX 3

Appendix 3: Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

Measuring the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Strategic Outcomes for Victims and Survivors 2017-2020.

Thematic Area per Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CVS, 2012)	Strategic Outcome	Potential Indicators	How will this be measured?
Health & Wellbeing Social Support	Improved health and wellbeing of Victims and Survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved mental health Reduced risk Improved physical and social function Reduction of symptoms Positive Attitude Improved Integration Improved quality of life Reduced Isolation and improved social networks Improved family relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CORENET (Talking Therapies) <i>Collects client reported outcome measures and uses this to manage therapeutic outcomes.</i> http://www.coreims.co.uk/About_Core_Tools.html MYMOP (Complementary Therapies) <i>Client centered and individualised outcome questionnaire focusing on specific problems but also general wellbeing</i> http://www.bris.ac.uk/primaryhealthcare/resources/mymop/ Work & Social Adjustment Scale (WSAS) <i>A Client-centered self-report scale of functional impairment attributable to an identified problem</i> TAKE 5 Monitoring Framework under development by Victims Practitioners Working Group and Belfast Strategic Partnership.



APPENDIX 3

Thematic Area per Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CVS, 2012)	Strategic Outcome	Potential Indicators	How will this be measured?
Personal Development	Improved access to opportunities for learning and personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced self esteem and self worth • Enhanced opportunities to contribute to wellbeing of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Studies • Surveys (pre and post training) • Other measurement tools
Financial & Welfare Support	Victims and Survivors, and those most in need, are helped and cared for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Financial Support • Greater sense of responsibility and independence in addressing practical needs • Increased access to benefits and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Welfare Changes and Support reporting • Other measurement tools
Truth, Justice & Acknowledgement	Victims and Survivors, and their families, are supported to engage in legacy issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewed relationships and trust within families and communities • Improved mental health and social networks • Agreed narrative with families and agencies around the incident • Increased confidence and reduced isolation due to being acknowledged and supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Studies • 1 to 1 interviews • External and Internal periodic evaluations • Other measurement tools