

Victims and Survivors Service Limited

Annual Report and Accounts For the year ended 31 March 2020

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

10th March 2021

COMPANY NUMBER: NI 611922

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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 2 December 2013, Chair appointed 1 April 2015

Bertha McDougall – Director appointed 2 December 2013

Richard Solomon – Director appointed 2 December 2013

Beverley Clarke – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Patricia Haren – Director appointed 1 April 2015

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Foreword

I am pleased to present the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Annual Report and Accounts for the 2019-20 financial year.

2019-20 marked the final year of the initial 3-year cycle in which the revised service delivery model was introduced and implemented. The completion of this phase allows us to review and reflect on the approach and to move forward with the model into a two-year extension period, pending the preparation and publication of a new TEO Strategy for Victims and Survivors. VSS is actively engaged in supporting TEO in the evaluation of the 2009-2019 Strategy and in the development of the new Strategy.

Learning and successful delivery to date

Having fully embedded the service delivery model and caseworker network within the previous years, 2019-20 saw a significant increase in Individual Needs Consultations (INCs), leading to increased provision of support and services tailored to individual needs. Feedback continues to be positive, with 94% of respondents to our survey confirming that they felt they were treated well when they contact us and 91% feeling that the support VSS offered was very helpful to them.

In 2019-20, VSS provided support and services directly to more than 6,000 victims and survivors. Through our network of 53 community partners more than 2,100 individuals availed of talking therapies, more than 3,000 of complementary therapies and more than 30,000 social support activities were delivered.

Over 1,500 individuals have availed of an Individual Needs Consultation (INC) with a Health and Wellbeing Caseworker which has resulted in a bespoke package of care based on unique and individual needs.

With an outcomes focus and a constantly evolving and improving system for capturing, recording and analysing outcomes in key areas, we know these services are having a very real impact on the lives of victims and survivors.

Partnership and Collaboration

The support we deliver is not possible without the close working relationships with our community and voluntary partners and other statutory bodies outlined in the Victims and Survivors Strategy 2019, namely The Executive Office (TEO) and the Commission for Victims and Survivors (CVS). We have continued to maintain relationships with the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Department of Health (DoH) in relation to areas such as Welfare Reform and the Regional Trauma Network (RTN).

The necessity to work across sectors and collaboratively with a range of partners is evidence that the needs of victims and survivors today in Northern Ireland, and further

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

afield, are complex, wide ranging and cannot be addressed with a 'one size fits all' approach. We welcome the support, understanding and best practice from our partners to improve how we deliver services to victims and survivors.

Victims Payment Scheme

An important milestone in 2019-20 was the progress made in relation to the proposals for the provision of a scheme of payments for those living with injuries sustained in conflict/troubles-related incidents. With legislation for a scheme published on 31 January 2020, and having effect by 31 May 2020, this is a significant development and a testament to the work undertaken by the WAVE injured group and others over a sustained period of time. VSS recognises that the delay in the opening of the scheme has been frustrating for Victims and Survivors. The design and implementation of a scheme will bring significant challenges and VSS is engaged with TEO, Department of Justice (DoJ) and others in seeking arrangements (both in terms of application/assessment and in associated health and wellbeing support) which are victim-centred and can deliver positive outcomes for victims and survivors.

Looking ahead

The Coronavirus pandemic presents an unprecedented challenge to all of society and the responses necessary to protect life (such as social distancing, staying at home etc.) has had a significant impact on the most vulnerable, including many victims and survivors. VSS' primary and immediate concern has been for the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors and a number of immediate steps were taken, alongside our community partners, to meet changing needs in an effective way at this extremely difficult time.

Our priority for 2020-2021 is to maintain a focus on outcomes, to keep learning and improving from our experience to date and to consider additional areas of support to meet individual need. We also look forward to continuing to explore new areas of support/service to meet the needs of victims and survivors, particularly where gaps in provision are identified, and to continuing to meet needs arising during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Finally, the significant commitment and dedication of VSS Staff and Board Members should be acknowledged. In the context of Covid-19, the revised delivery model, a changing political context and ongoing developments in areas such as legacy and trauma services, the staff and organisational culture of ensuring a victim-centred approach to service delivery has been of critical importance.



Oliver Wilkinson

Chairperson

Date: 23rd February 2021

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1.1 Overview

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 delivery 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.

2019-20 was the third year of the new needs-based service delivery model and we have continued to build on learning from the two prior years. Within this context, I am pleased to report the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has achieved 30 out of 33 of its targets for the year (with partial achievement in a further two). 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 is now embedded across the organisation, with data on outcomes now captured across an increasing range of activities. Along with the service delivery model, this approach is making significant improvements to the quality of services provided and to the health and wellbeing of victims and 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*

In the absence of Ministers and a functioning Northern Ireland Executive, a new Victims and Survivors Strategy for the post 2019 period was not developed before the end of 2019. With the return of the Assembly and Executive in early 2020, work has commenced on the evaluation of the 2009-19 strategy and preparation for the design of a new strategy. In the interim, the existing strategy has been extended and VSS programmes also extended for a further two years (2020-21 and 2021-22). The Victims and Survivors Service Limited will continue to deliver services and support in line with the existing Strategy and will continue to assist with the development of the subsequent strategy through a process of co-design with The Executive Office and The Commission for Victims and Survivors.

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.

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

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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; and
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 (INP), the Victims Support Programme (VSP) 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; and
- In certain circumstances: support for individuals to access education, training and other opportunities.

Funding for Organisations: the Victims Support Programme

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited provides support and funding to community partner organisations to 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.

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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;
- Support and activities for young people affected by the impact of trauma in families and communities; and
- 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, 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.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited, as Lead Partner in this project, received a Letter of Offer on 15 December 2016 for a project running initially from 1 November 2016 to 31 July 2021. A further extension was awarded in July 2020, increasing the value of the project and extending the end date to 31 December 2022.

The PEACE IV Programme has added value to the existing Victims Support Programme by investing in cross-border advocacy and health and well-being services. 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 caseworkers which connects victims and survivors to services and the delivery of additional services and support.

Specifically, the PEACE IV Programme includes provision for:

- 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 based in organisations across Northern Ireland and Great Britain (1) to identify and address the needs of victims and survivors (5 Case Managers, 26 Health and Wellbeing Case Workers);
- A Resilience Programme to address existing gaps and meet the individual needs of victims and survivors based on the Take 5 Framework for Health and Wellbeing (<http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/take-5-steps-wellbeing>); and

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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 2019-20 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

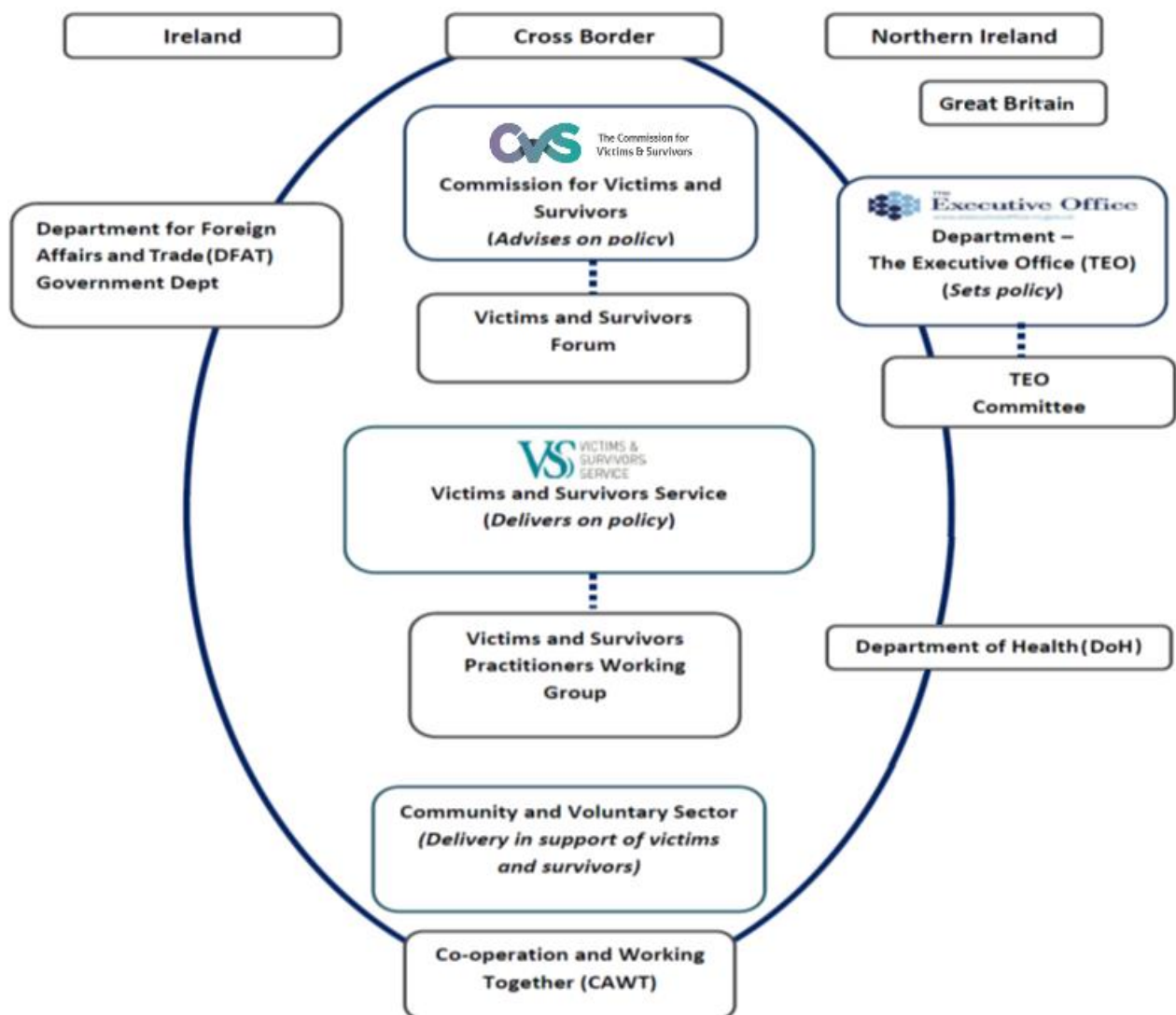
The Victims and Survivors Service Limited aims to support victims and survivors as they engage with the diverse services, agencies and other parts of society that contribute to the full and healthy life of the individual.

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 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 Victims and Survivors 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.

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 and **changing needs** of victims and survivors, specifically the needs of the bereaved. (See Page 49);
- **Welfare Reform**, specifically the transition from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). A second Independent Review of the PIP assessment process been commissioned by the Department for Communities. A call for evidence was opened on 4 March 2020 and will close on 16 October 2020. VSS will use this as an opportunity to voice the concerns and articulate the experience of the victims and survivors sector regarding PIP. Concerns also exist regarding the roll out of Universal Credit to replace a number of existing benefits, which will need to be further explored in the year ahead;

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- The work being undertaken by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in collaboration with other key stakeholders to develop the proposed Mental Trauma Service², currently referred to as the **Regional Trauma Network**;
- **Broader strategic and political uncertainty** with particular reference to the implementation of the Stormont House Agreement (2014) proposals on addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past, the 2018 NIO Consultation on Legacy and the NIO Written Statement of 18 March 2020;
- The delay in delivery in respect of the **Victims Payment Scheme** for the severely injured (see Page 48 for further detail); and
- The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on victims and survivors, the sector and wider society.

Needs-based Service Delivery Model (2017-20 – extended to 2022)

The revised three-year service delivery model (2017-20) is 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. Moving away from a grant-led approach towards a needs-based and outcomes-focused model of integrated services and support, the model works in partnership with funded organisations across the region.

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. Both previously registered and new individuals coming forward will all have access to needs-led assistance enabled through a range of measures, including:

- Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks under the Individual Needs Programme that deliver bespoke assistance to meet individual needs;
- The full range of services and support delivered by community-based organisations funded under the Victims Support Programme; and
- 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.

² 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>)

Regional Trauma Network

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited involvement in work which is underway to establish a Regional Trauma Network is a significant strategic development that both complements our service delivery model and acknowledges the future and changing needs of victims and survivors.

Background

The Northern Ireland Executive made a commitment in the Stormont House Agreement (2014) to take steps to ensure that Victims and Survivors have access to high quality services, respecting the principles of choice and need by establishing 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. This network would deliver a comprehensive regional trauma service drawing on existing resources and expertise from the statutory, community and voluntary sector.

Current position

The progression of the design of the Regional Trauma Network has been detailed in previous Annual Reports. During the 2019-20 year, steps have been taken to address some of the key remaining concerns within the victims sector in respect to the proposed implementation of the Network.

Crucially, the role of community organisations has been clarified, enabling qualified practitioners within VSS-funded community partners to assess need and make referrals within the Network to access higher level care. This approach preserves the victim-focused ethos of client-choice, which has always been central to the VSS approach to supporting victims and survivors. Specific staffing and support structures have been implemented within a small number of our community partners during 2019-20 to accommodate this approach.

There remains a requirement for significant engagement and co-design to develop the Network and one significant concern remains to be addressed; to bring the compatibility of the proposed approach in line with the expectations of victims and survivors based on the Stormont House Agreement. Whilst an exclusive service for victims and survivors of the troubles/conflict is not expected, it is important that there are prioritised and protected pathways for victims and survivors to access care within the network. This is the minimum expectation for victims and survivors, in line with Stormont House. VSS continues to highlight this position to the Department of Health.

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Strategic and Political Uncertainty

A wider context of political uncertainty remains due to the delay in implementing measures discussed in the Stormont House Agreement (2014). Following the Ministerial Statement of March 2020, the uncertainty around the approach to dealing with the past has increased, resulting in further difficulty for victims and survivors.

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

On this basis, as part of the organisation's Risk Management Strategy (see page 58) 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 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 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 page 58), this risk did not materialise in 2019-20 and is not envisaged for 2020-21 (based on agreed opening budget allocations).

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 **33** Key Actions (with associated outputs and outcomes), agreed with The Executive Office.

The 5 Strategic Outcomes for 2019-20 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;

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3. Victims and Survivors, and their families, are supported to engage in legacy issues;
4. Improved access to opportunities for learning and development; and
5. An efficient and effective organisation.

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

At year end, two targets were partially achieved and one target was not achieved. These relate to:

- Social Isolation (Partially Achieved)
- Volunteering (Partially Achieved)
- Regional Trauma Network (Not Achieved)

The two partially achieved targets relate to the Additional Needs Based Frameworks supporting Volunteering and Social Isolation (both PEACE IV-funded measures). The activity within these two specific Frameworks was less than expected during the 2019-20 year due to the following specific reasons:

Social Isolation: The targets (outputs) for this framework were not met as a funding call was delayed until the 2020-21 financial year due to other competing demands for VSS staff resources as well a general capacity constraint in the sector caused by the number of other competing priorities, not least the ongoing RTN issues.

Volunteering: The targets in this area were not met in the year. Again this was due to the delay in a call to funded organisations until 2020-21 but also a general lack in uptake of this framework. VSS will review the Volunteering Framework in light of the learnings of this year. An alternative approach was implemented involving support for funded organisations to engage in a process of accreditation ('Investing in Volunteers'). This process is continuing into 2020-21.

It is also important to note that the needs-based approach provides bespoke care in response to individual and changing circumstances and aims to deliver largely qualitative

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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.

Regional Trauma Network: The delivery plan target in respect of the Regional Trauma Network was not achieved. Whilst VSS were proactive in engagement to resolve the issues which have hindered progress (as detailed on page 15) they have resulted in the delay in Phase 1 delivery.

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

Summary Programme Performance

Victims Support Programme (2019-20)

- 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 1](#) on page 21).
- 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 three year period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020. 53 organisations provided services to victims and survivors in the course of the 2019-20 year.
- During 2019-20 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited continued to focus on embedding and improving monitoring and evaluation of outcomes, using a number of methods including the implementation of standardised measurement tools. Through these tools the Victims and Survivors Service Limited can demonstrate the outcomes of the services delivered through the Victims Support Programme and measure the impact on the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors.
- In March 2020, the NI Assembly introduced a range of measures and restrictions on movement in a bid to curb the spread of Coronavirus. The VSP funded organisations, in line with VSS guidance, quickly adapted service provision to meet the needs of vulnerable victims and survivors. Changes in services included a move to telephone or video based for talking therapies, welfare support and complementary therapies. New services to meet emerging needs were quickly established which included the provision of food parcels, online self-care courses, facebook reading groups, zoom coffee morning and travelling libraries.

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Individual Needs Programme (2019-20)

- 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 page 8).
- 2019-20 was the third 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 the PEACE IV funded Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network and Advocacy Support Network.
- Over 2019-20, targets for the delivery of support under the Individual Needs Programme were exceeded: a total of **6,483** individuals accessed assistance.
- Overall, this third year of implementation has been a success, with low numbers of complaints, positive feedback from individuals recorded and no major issues in relation to operational delivery to report. Learning has been incorporated and reflected in improvements in processes and procedures to enhance the client experience towards achieving better health and wellbeing outcomes.
- As with the Victims Support Programme, the introduction of measures to tackle Coronavirus required a significant change in the way Health and Wellbeing services and support were delivered in the final weeks of operation. The immediate change was for all Health and Wellbeing caseworker assessments to be carried out by telephone or video calling. Framework changes included provisions to make awards for online fitness/relaxation classes, video/telephony based physiotherapy sessions and assessments, online learning/training courses, equipment and aids to creatively build social connection and/or improve accessibility around the house.

PEACE IV Programme (2016-22)

- The PEACE IV Programme complements and enhances the existing services and support delivered under the Victims Support Programme and Individual Needs Programme. 2019-20 was the third full year of implementation of this Programme as an integrated and value-adding element of the revised service delivery model.
- In January 2020, the SEUPB steering committee approved a bid from VSS for additional funding and an extension to the programme timeframe to 31 December 2022. A revised Letter of Offer followed in July 2020. The programme total funding is now **£14.9m**.

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- **18** organisations were awarded PEACE IV funding totalling **£7.5m** to deliver services under this Programme.
- The structures for the implementation of the PEACE IV Programme are well embedded. Staff have been recruited and have undertaken induction training. Networks have been established and continue to meet regularly for both the Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers and the Advocacy Support Programme.
- Activity and expenditure has continued to increase during 2019-20 in line with the agreed project work plan, setting the Programme on course to meet its objectives for the remainder of the Programme period.

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

1.2 Performance Analysis

As summarised above, during 2019-20 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was responsible for delivering funding and resources for victims and survivors through three key programmes: the Victims Support Programme (2017-20), the Individual Needs Programme (2019-20) and the PEACE IV Programme (2016-22).

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 1](#) below.

Table 1: Programme Delivery: Strategic Outcomes

Thematic Area per Comprehensive Needs Assessment <i>(Commission for Victims and Survivors, 2012)</i>	Strategic Outcomes	
Health and Wellbeing, Social Support	1	We improve the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors and their families
Financial and Welfare Support	2	We care for victims and survivors and help those most in need
Truth, Justice and 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 2019-20 have been modelled to reflect these key strategic outcomes. Reporting on 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 within each Victims and Survivors Service Limited Corporate Plan and is attached at [Appendix 3](#). This framework shapes and informs the below discussion of performance and outcomes measurement.

VICTIMS SUPPORT PROGRAMME (2017-20)

Background

With an indicative budget of over £6 million per annum, the Victims Support Programme 2017-2020 opened for applications in November 2016. At that time 55 organisations were successful in securing funding. In the 2019-20 year, 53 organisations delivered services to victims and survivors. These services 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.

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

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Funding delivered under the Victims Support Programme

The services and activities delivered under the Victims Support Programme in 2019-20 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
- Other Social Support Activities

As noted throughout, Covid-19 and the restrictions on movement mandated by the NI Assembly required an immediate, flexible and victim centred change to the services delivered under the Victims Support Programme. Many of the existing services listed above continued to be delivered but in a different way e.g. face to face services replaced with telephony/video services.

Working together with colleagues in the community and voluntary organisations funded under this programme, additional services to meet the basic physiological needs of vulnerable victims and survivors were provided.

These included:

- Food and essential household items which were provided to over 800 individuals³;
- Mobile Phone/Device bills top ups to support over 40 individuals; and
- Electricity/Gas/Coal/Oil top ups to support over 160 individuals.

Further support in these areas continued into 2020-21.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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.

³ Individual support detailed related to March 2020 only.

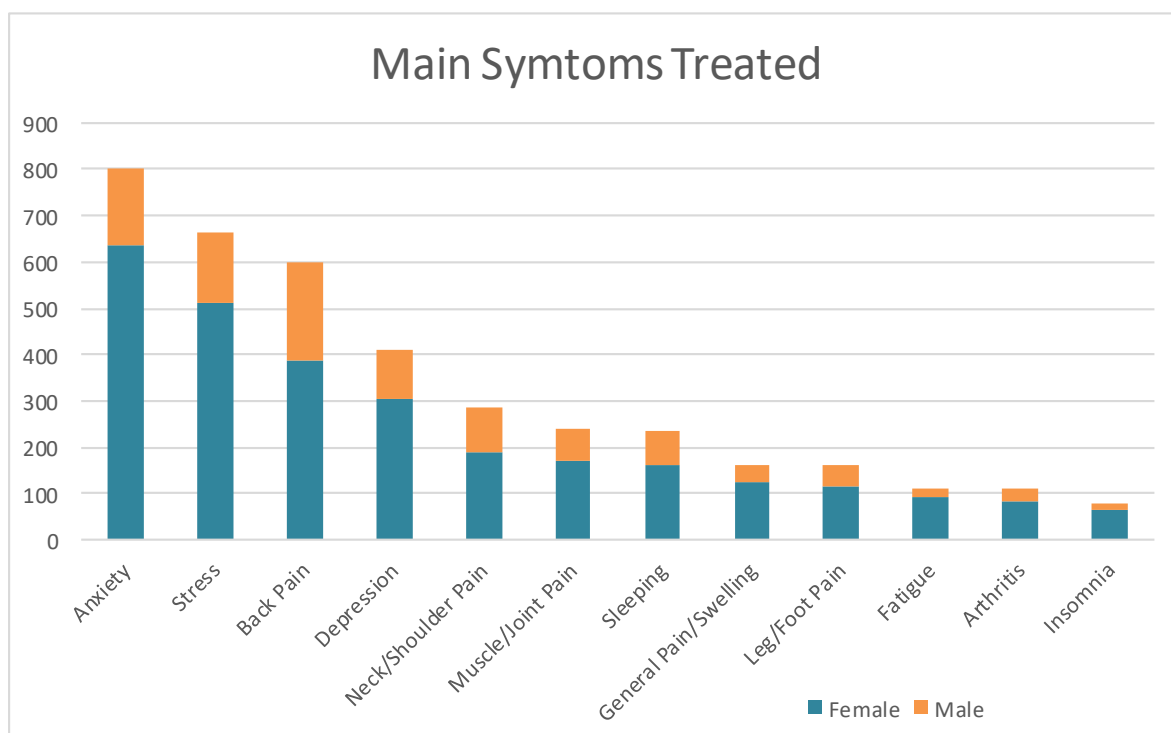
Complementary Therapies: MYMOP (Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile)

MYMOP is a client-generated outcome questionnaire which 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 2019-20, 25 funded organisations across Northern Ireland provided Complementary Therapies to a total of 3,004 individuals.
- 2,831 of these individuals completed their course and 173 ended therapy early (5.76% comparable to 4.1% in 2018-19).
- The ratio of females to males accessing support remains at just under 3:1.
- The most common symptoms reported by individuals accessing funded Complementary Therapies continue to be anxiety, stress, back pain and depression. This information, along with the detail of additional symptoms frequently reported, is shown in **Diagram 2** below.

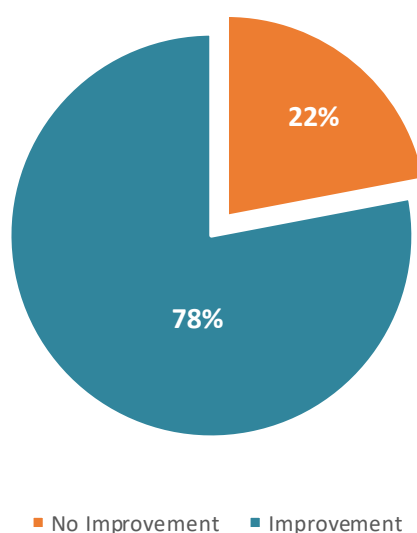
Diagram 2: Summary Monitoring Information – MYMOP: Complementary Therapies (Client Numbers, Client Gender Breakdown and Symptoms Treated)



Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Overall, the outcomes data for individuals accessing Complementary Therapies in 2019-20 continued the pattern reported in previous years, indicating an overall improvement in symptoms reported by approximately 4 out of 5 individuals. This information is shown in **Diagram 3** below.

Diagram 3: 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 often points to external factors. A process to capture this information in more detail has been implemented.

Talking Therapies - 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 which 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

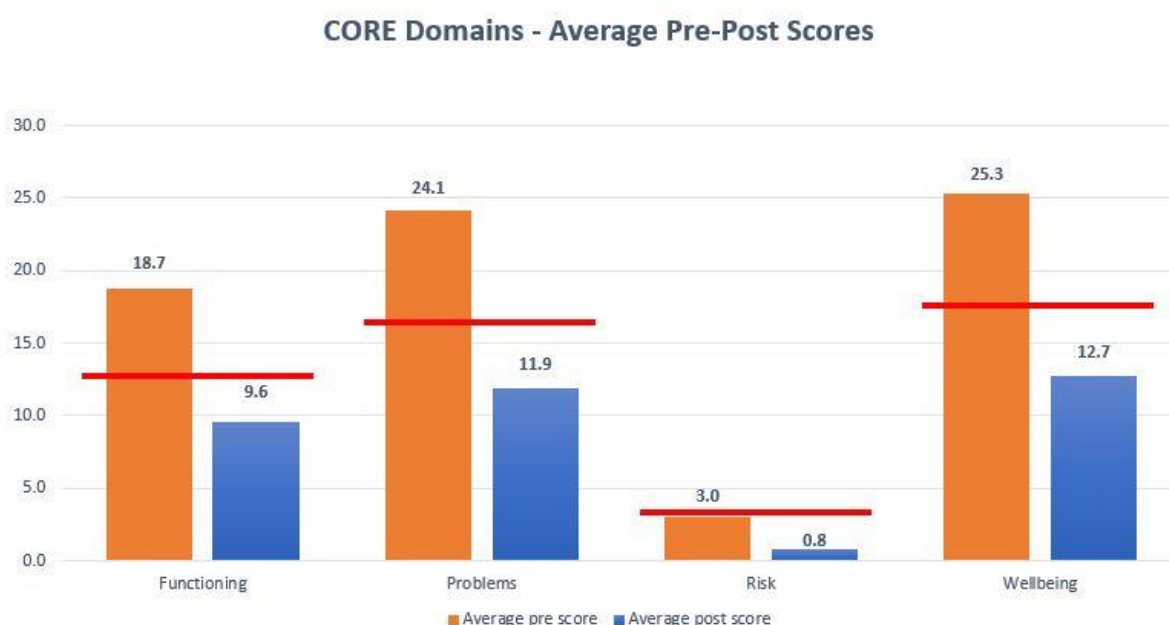
The monitoring data gathered using CORE Net provides the following key insights into this area of funded service delivery:

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

- In 2019-20 21 funded organisations offered Talking Therapies to victims and survivors; and
- 2,770 individuals attended talking therapy sessions during the year, with 1,469 courses of therapy completed during the period. 972 of these were completed as planned while 497 ended early (unplanned).

Overall 57% of individuals accessing this service reported a positive improvement which is demonstrated across all four domains in [Diagram 4](#) below.

Diagram 4: Improvements By Domain – CORE Net: Talking Therapies

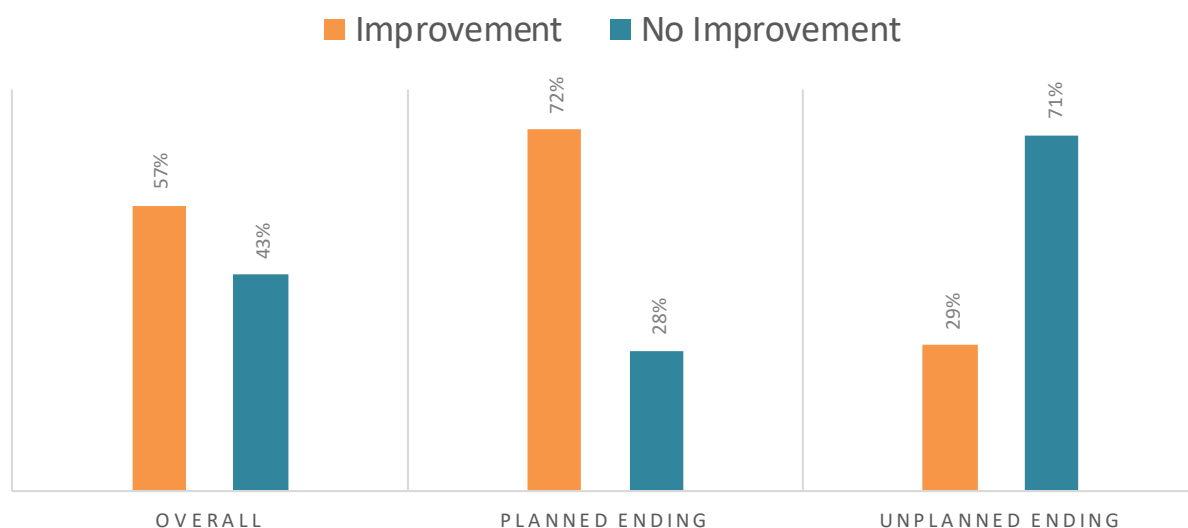


— The Clinical Cut-off Score refers to a score that is presumed to represent the boundary between "normal" and the "clinical range" on an outcome measure.

Data shows that individuals who complete therapy with their therapist, as planned, have a much greater likelihood of a positive outcome (71%). However, it is noteworthy that a significant percentage of individuals who have an unplanned ending of therapy also experience a positive outcome (29%). This information is shown in [Diagram 5](#) below.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Diagram 5: Summary Outcomes Information – CORE Net: Talking Therapies
(showing variance between planned and unplanned endings)

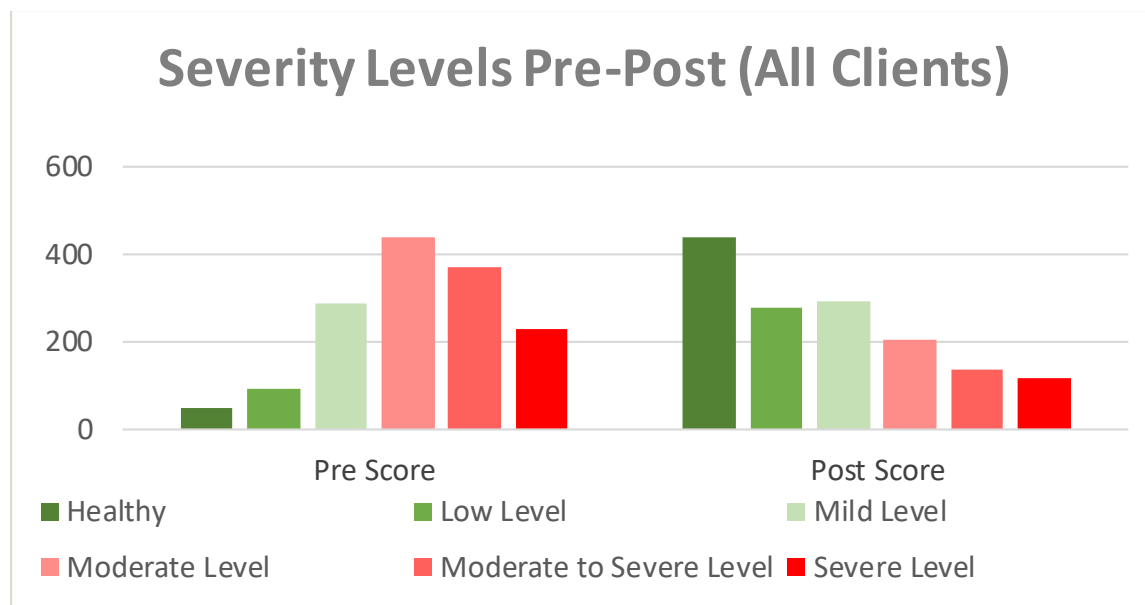


The reasons as to why 34% of Talking Therapy clients do not complete their therapy as planned have been investigated, with the most common reasons listed as:

- Too many DNAs ('Did Not Attend' session). Organisations may apply a policy to discontinue therapy based on repeated failure to attend;
- Client moved;
- Client crisis; and
- Client DNA final session.

Although there is a wide range of pre and post-scores at the individual level, 71% 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, as presented in [Diagram 6](#) below.

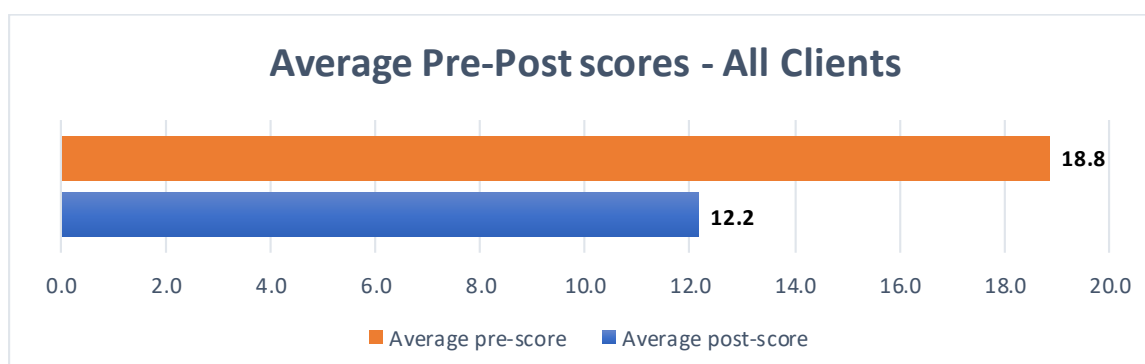
Diagram 6: Outcomes Information – CORE Net: Talking Therapies (showing severity of pre- and post-therapy scores)



(n=1857)

By contrast, post-therapy only 31% 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 7](#) below.

Diagram 7: 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 3 out of 5 cases, Talking Therapies deliver positive outcomes. This confirms that the service makes a positive contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors.

Changes to our monitoring system, CORE Net, have been made this year with measures more relevant to post-conflict trauma. This will be key in understanding how we can improve services for those where outcomes have not been positive.

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 qualitative in nature collected through organisational Case Studies and quotes from direct beneficiaries. Feedback from service users was overwhelmingly positive.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS PROGRAMME (2019-20)

Background

As the third year of the revised service delivery model, the delivery of the Individual Needs Programme in 2019-20 involved reinforcing significant changes rolled out in year one and year two. 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 1** (see page 21) and monitored in line with the framework at **Appendix 3**.

‘Existing Clients’: Self-Directed Assistance Payments

Under the revised model, limited grant funding (now referred to as Self-Directed Assistance) 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.

Existing and New Clients: Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks

Further to the Self-Directed Assistance Payments, under the revised 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:

- Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks under the Individual Needs Programme, delivering bespoke assistance to meet individual needs. Some elements of these Frameworks 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; and
- One-to-one Health and Wellbeing Caseworker support and Advocacy Support to engage with legacy institutions and processes, funded by PEACE IV.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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).

Table 2 on the next page summarises the support made available in 2019-20 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 outcomes achieved in each case. The value of awards issued under each framework is variable, depending on the needs and relevant support identified.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Table 2: Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks 2019-20

Framework	Description	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Outcome achieved
1 Disability Aids	The provision of Disability Aids to individuals physically injured as a result of the Conflict/Troubles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 80% of individuals as a result of disability aid provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 73% of individuals in receipt of a Disability Aid reported improvement. 11% showed no improvement and 16% reported a dis-improvement demonstrating that while a significant proportion of individuals supported have been positively impacted, there is a percentage for whom this support has a limited benefit. This reflects the complexity of issues that they face and that there are a range of additional factors that mitigate against the benefits of the support provided.
2 Education and Training <i>(Includes 1:1 Literacy and 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities for employment progression and/or career development. Increased opportunities to develop 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 64% of individuals in receipt of an Education and Training award reported improvement. 17% showed no improvement and 19% reported a dis-improvement. The data fluctuates significantly between individual cases due to small data samples and we expect a more accurate overall long term trend as more data becomes available. It's also a snapshot of how the client feels at a particular point in time.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Framework	Description	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Outcome achieved
3	<p>Persistent Pain</p> <p>The provision of support for individuals injured as a result of the Conflict/Troubles, who live with persistent pain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An <i>individual Holistic Assessment</i> by Pain Management Specialists • Support towards the cost of <i>Pain Management</i> • Assistance of up to £500 towards the cost of <i>Home Heating – Persistent Pain</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60% of individuals as a result of persistent pain interventions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% of individuals in receipt of a Persistent Pain award reported improvement. 12% showed no improvement and 16% reported a dis-improvement in their condition.
4	<p>Volunteering</p> <p>(Funded under PEACE IV Resilience Programme)</p> <p>Delivery of assistance to access and support volunteering experience for individuals whose opportunities have been limited by the Conflict/Troubles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing for 80% of individuals engaged in Volunteering Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the sample size remains too low for a meaningful analysis, 88% of the responses have reported an improvement
5	<p>Trauma-Focused Physical Activity</p> <p>(Funded under PEACE IV Resilience Programme)</p> <p>The delivery of assistance to access physical activity that supports individuals engaged in a therapeutic process to address Conflict/Troubles-related trauma.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 80% of individuals as a result of trauma focused-physical activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68% of individuals in receipt of a TFPA award reported an improvement in their circumstances. 16% reported no improvement and 16% reported a dis-improvement. This demonstrates that while this intervention has significant benefits for the majority of individuals, there is still around a third of individuals for whom this may not be having a positive impact.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Framework	Description	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Outcome achieved	
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60% of individuals as a result of psychological support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of individuals in receipt of Psychological Support from the Victims and Survivors Service Limited reported an improvement. 15% showed no improvement and 20% reported a dis-improvement.
7	Social Isolation Framework	This Social Isolation Framework provides a personalised approach to addressing an individual's needs in supporting activity and / or aids to facilitate social engagement and interaction to improve and/or maintain health and wellbeing and reduce the barriers that restrict individuals from participating fully in society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing for 80% of individuals engaged in Social Isolation programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 53% of individuals in receipt of Social isolation Support from the Victims and Survivors Service Limited reported an improvement. 30% showed no improvement and 17% reported a dis-improvement. This is the first year that this intervention has been available, and the longer outcomes are therefore not reliable at this point.

Client reports are from The Work and Social Adjustment Scale (WSAS) which 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. The outcomes above are indicative and based on one full year of implementation but should be monitored long term over a number of years before any accurate conclusions can be made.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Satisfaction Survey and Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks

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

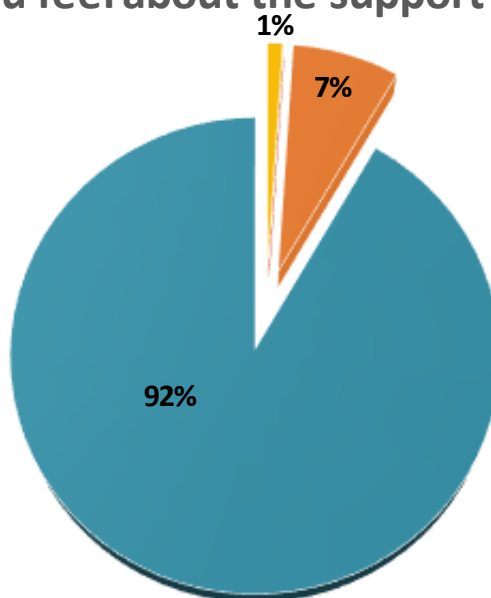
In March 2020, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited conducted a survey of just over 10% of the total 5,737 individuals in receipt of the Self Directed Assistance Payments. Of the 595 individuals surveyed, 191 responded, representing a response rate of 32%.

Key findings of the survey included the following:

1. When asked 'How do you feel about the support we offer?', 92% said 'Very Helpful', a further 7% said 'Helpful in some ways' and c.1% said 'Not helpful at all' or did not respond. This is comparable to last year where 91% said 'Very Helpful', a further 8% said 'Helpful in some ways', and c.1% did not respond.

Diagram 8: Client satisfaction with support provided

How do you feel about the support we offer?



■ Did not respond ■ Not Helpful At All ■ Helpful In Some Ways ■ Very Helpful

	Very Helpful	Helpful in some ways	Not helpful at all
2019-20	92%	7%	1%
2018-19	91%	8%	<1%
2017-18	91%	7%	1%

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Diagram 9: Client satisfaction with support provided, analysed by Age Group

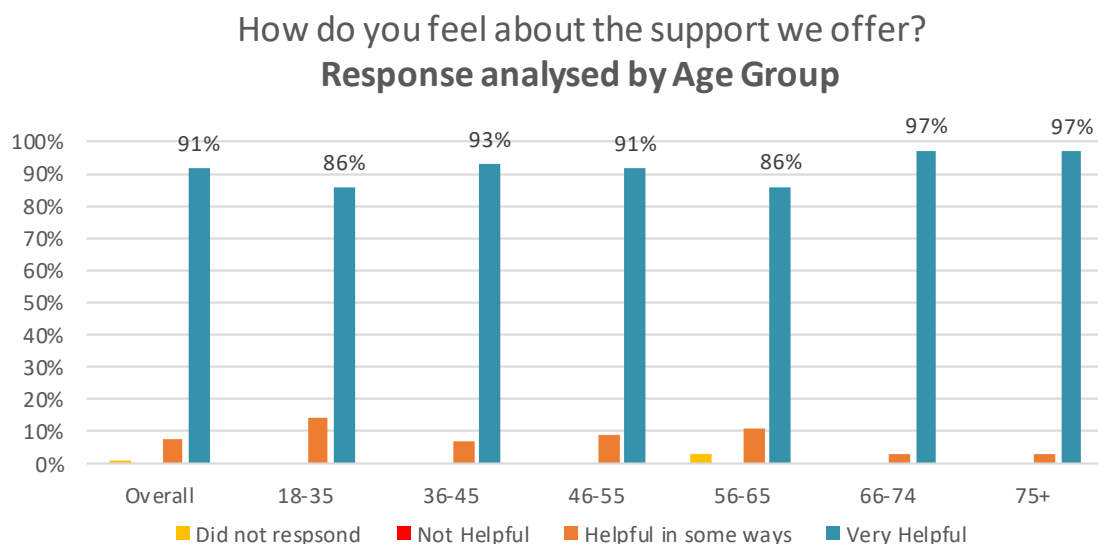
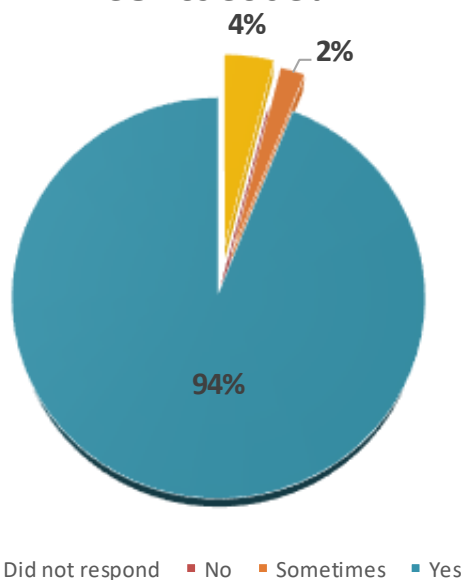


Diagram 10: Client satisfaction with treatment by VSS

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



	Yes	No	Sometimes	No Answer
2019-20	94%	0%	2%	4%
2018-19	94%	0%	2%	4%
2017-18	94%	0%	3%	3%

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

2. 37% of the respondents who added qualitative responses indicated the Self-Directed Assistance Payments relieved worry and improved a sense of personal independence by easing financial pressure. Many emphasised that they feel very comfortable and at ease speaking with VSS staff despite not usually enjoying engaging with staff at public bodies and agencies.

“Feel that they understand that even after 40 years I still feel the pain like it was yesterday”

“Whenever I have went to your office I have always been well treated and the staff were very pleasant and nice”

3. 80% of the respondents who added qualitative responses indicated the Self-Directed Assistance Payments improved their quality of life, personal independence, or positive attitude by enabling them to do or purchase things they could not normally afford. Only 44% of respondents made similar comments last year.

“I look forward to May when I get this money, I sometimes go to a caravan holiday with my daughter and 2 sons in Portrush. Feel the money is great to have for me to buy what I need. Thank you”

“It helps with the day to day living costs”

“The VSS payment allows me to purchase things I would struggle to buy without it”

“Provided me with the opportunity of taking a break”

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 2019-20.

The organisation will continue to monitor this in 2020-21.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Included below are two condensed case examples that illustrate the types of outcomes achieved for clients through Additional Needs Based Framework support.

Client presented with a number of physical health complaints having sustained severe injuries as a result of a bomb explosion. As a result the client suffers longstanding chronic pain issues in her lower back and hip due to embedded metal shrapnel from the blast.

Following consultation with a Health and Wellbeing caseworker to determine her needs, she was referred for independent OT assessment under the VSS Disability Aids Framework.

Following assessment the client was supported with a riser recliner and an electric profiling bed to promote her comfort and postural needs and her ability to transfer independently on and off the chair and bed.

“I can’t believe the support I have received. I can now get out bed much easier with less pain and difficulty. The chair is also great it means I can relax without worrying about how I will get up out of it on my own. I feel more independent”.

VSS Disability Aids Framework

“All support has been excellent and I finally feel like I am starting to fit in. I have really loved the 1:1 Numeracy and Literacy support. I was afraid of going to the hospital as I couldn’t read and understand what was on the iPad to check in for my appointment. So I had to pretend that it wasn’t working and ask someone to help me. I have also started reading the highway code as I never really understood what all the signs meant and was too embarrassed to ask anyone. I now have the confidence to go to the library and not be afraid that they would ask me to complete a form which I couldn’t read.”

VSS Adult Numeracy & Literacy Framework client

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Table 3: Awards and Payments made under the Individual Needs Programme and PEACE IV Resilience Programme in 2019-20

Award Description	Value of Individual Awards	Number of Awards Issued	Payments Made
Self-Directed Assistance Payments			
Self-Directed Assistance – 19-20 Bereaved	£500	2,851	£1,422,495
Self-Directed Assistance – 19-20 Carer	£500	550	£273,500
Self-Directed Assistance – 19-20 FA Only	£500	439	£219,500
Self-Directed Assistance – 19-20 Injured (HRC)	£500	875	£438,650
Self-Directed Assistance – 19-20 Injured (MRC)	£500	1,082	£540,500
Transition Payments – 19-20	£100	1,261	£127,050
Self-Directed Assistance – Additional Needs Based Payments – 19-20 (Severely Injured)	£500	877	£437,410
Self-Directed Assistance – Additional Needs Based Payments – 19-20 (Bereaved)	£500	606	£302,150
Individual Needs Programme Additional Needs Based Support Frameworks			
Disability Aids 19-20	variable	150	£272,906
Education and Training 19-20	variable	170	£212,429
Persistent Pain - Complementary Therapies 19-20	variable	108	£52,848
Persistent Pain - Home Heating Support 19-20	£500	762	£349,630
Persistent Pain - Pain Relief 19-20	variable	10	£4,130
Persistent Pain - Physiotherapy 19-20	variable	208	£88,046
Psychological Support 19-20	variable	271	£108,151
PEACE IV Resilience Programme			
PIV Resilience (1-1 Literacy and Numeracy) 19-20	variable	25	£43,966
PIV Resilience (Trauma-Focused Physical Activity) 19-20	variable	419	£97,393
PIV Resilience (Volunteering) 19-20	variable	21	£6,970
PIV - Resilience (Social Isolation) 19-20	variable	133	£34,783
TOTALS		10,818	£5,032,507

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There were a number of awards with unspent balances during 2019-20, which explains the variance between the awards issued and the actual payments made. Included in the total 'Payments Made' column in the table above are £2,953 of payments not yet paid but where all documentation has been presented to VSS and approved for payment.

Payments of **£21,148** were made in 2019-20 for awards related to closed frameworks from prior years. These bring total payments under the Individual Needs Programme and Peace IV resilience programme in 2019-20 to £5,053,655.

PEACE IV PROGRAMME (2016-2022)

Background

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited was named as lead partner for the victims and survivors element of the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE IV).

The original total value of the project was **£13,372,518** to be delivered from 1 November 2016 until 31 July 2021. An **additional bid** was submitted to SEUPB and **approved in January 2020**, with a revised Letter of Offer issued in July 2020. As a result an **additional £1.57 million** has been made available for project delivery and the **timeframe extended to 31 December 2022**.

Through the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and its Project Partners, the PEACE IV project provides funding for cross-border Health and Wellbeing services by increasing the quality of care in the sector for victims and survivors and their families.

The project aims to enhance the capacity for the delivery of comprehensive shared services for victims and survivors in Northern Ireland and the border region, for the first time, in an inclusive and co-ordinated way. This includes a primary focus on improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors through the development, implementation and co-ordination of a number of new and innovative initiatives.

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 Support 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.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

- 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.
- 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.

At 31 March 2020, **16** organisations were in receipt of PEACE IV funding.

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 element. The Commission is responsible for commissioning and delivering three key research projects:
 - A review of the impact/effectiveness of 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.

As a result of the recently approved bid additional resilience activities which involve victims and survivors in storytelling projects, gender specific interventions and community peace building and dialogue will be delivered. There will also be an increased focus on the transgenerational impact of the conflict/troubles with training opportunities in family therapy and the establishment of best practice in this area.

Additional research will be delivered through our Project Partner with The Commission for Victims and Survivors in relation to analysing the needs of victims and survivors in the border region of NI and ROI and GB as well as updating the 2012 Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

Table 4 below outlines the key targets that underpin each activity.

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Table 4: PEACE IV Delivery Targets 2016-2022

Activity	Targets
Advocacy support to include practical support for victims and survivors engaging with institutions, historical process and enquiries	27.5 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)	31 workers 11,500 beneficiaries
A resilience programme to address the individual needs of victims and survivors, including level one and level two mental health interventions	2,100 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 Needs Analysis of the Border Region. Update of the CVS <i>Comprehensive Needs Assessment (2012)</i>

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 a grant in aid budget allocation of £13.561m.

As at year end 31 March 2020, there was an underspend of £192,677, representing 1.42% of the budget allocated. This is within the tolerance target of 1.5%. The underspend is based on the core budget allocation of £13,561,000 and core expenditure within the accounts. The Statement of Financial Position on page 83 shows the company had net assets of £529k as at 31 March 2020 and cash at bank of £1,301,285.

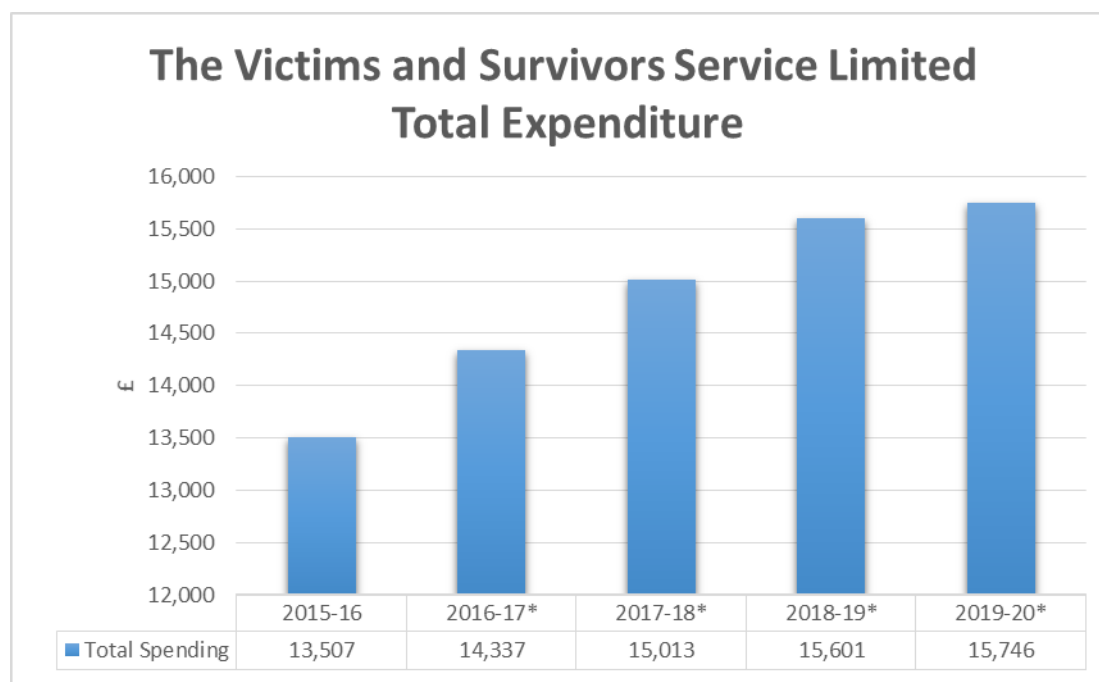
Long Term Expenditure Trends

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.

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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.

Diagram 11: Long term expenditure trends of VSS



*2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 Out-turn figures include PEACE IV funded expenditure.

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 working days.

Given the unique circumstances created by COVID-19, the NI Executive implemented measures, with effect from 25th March 2020, to ensure that Departments and NDPBs paid their suppliers as quickly as possible in order to maintain cash flow and protect jobs. It suggested making payments, in some circumstances, to at risk suppliers even if goods and services were paused. VSS assessed the impact of COVID-19 on the list of suppliers at the time of publication and were content that outside of CPD framework contracts with which VSS were engaged no such payments were necessary.

Overall for 2019-20, 91% of invoices were paid within 10 working days and 100% within 30 working days. On average 6 working days were taken to pay invoices during 2019-20.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

In comparison, during 2018-19 79% of invoices were paid within 10 working days and 98% within 30 working days with an average payment time of 8 working days.

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 a budget to the end of the financial year 2020-21. 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.

PEACE IV Funding

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is also in receipt of PEACE IV funding during 2019-20 from the Special EU Programmes Body. An initial grant of £13.373m was awarded under Promoting Peace and Reconciliation (Action 3.3: Victims and Survivors) for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 July 2021.

In addition, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has received advance funding totalling £2.15m from SEUPB to facilitate cash flow 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).

In November 2018, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited submitted a bid to SEUPB, seeking additional funding, to facilitate the following:

- Extension of project activity (including Health and Wellbeing and Advocacy Networks) to 30 June 2022 (with revised project end date of 31 December 2022);
- Engagement in new areas of Resilience activity, including Storytelling, Gender and Peacebuilding; and
- Pilot in family therapy (transgenerational).

Approval was granted by SEUPB in January 2020 for £1.57m of additional funding for these purposes.

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 to make improvements and changes to services based on such feedback. The Complaints Policy and Procedure is available in a user-friendly leaflet format (available on request) as well as in a downloadable format on the Victims and Survivors Service Limited website.

Table 5 below provides a summary of the complaints handled in 2019-20.

Table 5: Summary of Complaints 2019-20

Category	Number	Notes
Open 2018-19 Complaints	3	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Social media use by funded organisations</i>
Complaints Received 2019-20	11	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Communication issues and process challenges</i>
Complaints Upheld / Partially Upheld	4	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Communication issues and process challenges</i>
Complaints not Upheld	10	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Social media use and conduct of funded organisations</i>
Total Complaints handled in year	14	

Positive feedback and messages of thanks received during 2019-20

In 2019-20 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 or who care for others living with injuries. In 2019-20, the organisation recorded **88** such messages compared to **107** in the previous year.

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Anti-Bribery and Corruption

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Anti-fraud policy sets out how it 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 Victims and Survivors Service Limited 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 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 use of an outreach office (Dungannon) facilitates the minimisation of travel for individuals and organisations located outside of the greater Belfast area.

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 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited 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. A staff Health and Wellbeing Programme is in place which incorporates aspects of corporate and social responsibility.

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

Performance Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Victims and Survivors Service Limited three year Corporate Plan 2020-23 (including 2020-21 Delivery Plan) was accepted by The Executive Office Departmental Board on 28 October 2020.



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman

Date: 23rd February 2021



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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 outlines 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 2019-20 were as follows:

Oliver Wilkinson – Chair appointed 1 April 2015 (previously Director appointed 2 December 2013, Interim Chair appointed 30 June 2014)

Bertha McDougall – Director appointed 2 December 2013

Richard Solomon – Director appointed 2 December 2013

Beverley Clarke – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Patricia Haren – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Stephen McIlveen – Director appointed 1 April 2015, Resigned 20 February 2020

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited drafted its Corporate Plan 2020-23 in January 2020. It was submitted to The Executive Office in February 2020 and accepted by The Executive Office Departmental Board on 28 October 2020.

The Corporate Plan 2020-23 outlines the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's approach to Outcomes Based Accountability and grows upon the progress which has

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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 draft Programme for Government 2016-21 and the NI Civil Service Outcomes Delivery 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 2020-21* 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 25 May 2018 and consequently the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has established internal and external working processes to comply with and implement the introduction of this legislation. In addition, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has acted upon a GDPR compliance review carried out by its Internal Audit provider, Ernst & Young. An Information Asset Register has been maintained detailing all data sources held and all policies and procedures were reviewed in light of the new regulation.

All staff and Board members have completed basic GDPR awareness training and the Data Protection Officer receives regular training keeping them abreast of developments regarding data legislation.

There were no instances of personal data loss requiring a report to the Information Commissioner's Office during the year under review.

A working group within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has been established to review and act in instances when a potential data breach occurs. For any non-

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

reportable breach arising, the working groups will take the appropriate actions to inform other parties as necessary (for example our sponsor team within TEO).

During the year staff were advised by the Data Protection Officer on controls and improvements to reduce the likelihood of data breaches.

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

In 2019-20 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited received and responded to nine Freedom of Information requests.

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

The Victims Payment Scheme

The Victims' Payment Scheme regulations were laid at Westminster in January 2020. Some of the regulations for the Scheme came into effect in February and the remainder came into effect on 29 May 2020. It was anticipated that the Scheme would be open for applications from 29 May 2020. It was not anticipated that payments would start on this date but those people who are awarded the payment will receive it backdated to 2014.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

On 14 August 2020, the Secretary of State issued guidance to the Victims' Payments Board. The guidance is to support the independent Board when making decisions about applicants who have serious convictions or in other exceptional circumstances with regard to relevant material evidence.

The issue of eligibility continues to be an area of significant debate and divided political opinion.

On 24 August 2020, The Executive Office designated the Department of Justice to administer this Scheme. The Executive Office agreed to provide grants to the Department of Justice to establish the administrative arrangements for the scheme to allow the recruitment of Board members, IT developments and other steps needed to establish the Board to proceed.

The issue of the overall funding of the scheme remains a point of disagreement between Westminster and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Whilst the Victims and Survivors Service Limited will not be involved in the administration and delivery of the Victims Payment Scheme, we will look at how best to help ensure information held by us can be used to ensure as smooth a process as possible for those involved. We also hope to put support in place within our funded community organisations to help victims and survivors better understand the Scheme and the application process once it is in operation.

Support for the Bereaved

In 2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited implemented a new needs based service delivery model. We have now completed the third year of service delivery using this model and have accumulated monitoring and evaluation data which has allowed us to identify gaps in service delivery. A key gap has been identified in the support to the Bereaved, a view which is also shared across the sector.

In response, VSS have provided information to the Executive Office drawing on policy advice from the Commission for Victims and Survivors, to request that the deadline of 31 March 2017 for bereaved victims and survivors to have been registered with VSS in order to receive self-directed assistance payments is removed.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on movement enforced in March 2020 created an unprecedented challenge to us all. Within VSS, our priority was the immediate review of our Programmes to allow their adaption in order to meet the needs of victims and survivors at this difficult time.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

The NI Assembly published its recovery plan on 12 May 2020. Since then, the opening up of society in 2020 has been gradual and remains tentative.

The restrictions have meant that the services delivered by VSS and our funded organisations within the Community and Voluntary sector have had to change. As a result, VSS will seek to adjust our 2020-21 delivery plan to be more reflective of the work we can carry out in line with the restrictions in place to stop the spread of the virus.

Historical Institutional Abuse

In order to provide health and wellbeing support to victims and survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse, VSS implemented interim arrangements for a small number of individuals from 11 June 2020. VSS submitted a business case in June 2020 in respect of possible longer term service provision, and is continuing to work and engage with the Interim Advocate, TEO and other key stakeholders to develop a permanent service delivery model to commence within 2020-21.

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

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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, that 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.

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 include 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 and are set out in full in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

2.1.3 Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2020

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 2019-20. 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.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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, processes, culture and values, by which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is directed and controlled.

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 corporate governance framework within which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited operated for the year ended 31 March 2020 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 corporate 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 2019-22 and Delivery Plan 2019-20 (accepted by TEO in May 2019);
- The Performance Appraisal Framework;
- The Risk Management Framework;
- Financial Policies and Procedures;
- Whistle-blowing Policy; and
- Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan.

Clinical governance arrangements are also in place, with oversight by a Health and Wellbeing Committee.

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 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 and clinical 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.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

The Board membership is detailed in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board Membership

Name	Position
Oliver Wilkinson	Director appointed 2 December 2013 Appointed Interim Chair 30 June 2014; appointed Chair 1 April 2015
Bertha McDougall	Director appointed 2 December 2013
Richard Solomon	Director appointed 2 December 2013
Beverley Clarke	Director appointed 1 April 2015
Patricia Haren	Director appointed 1 April 2015
Stephen McIlveen	Director appointed 1 April 2015, Resigned 20 February 2020

The Northern Ireland Executive returned to office on 11 January 2020. In its absence no new appointments to the Board could be made. The Board have asked that The Executive Office seek to address this issue as a matter of urgency, given that the current position of Chair plus four members, is well below the normal complement of Chair plus six members.

Despite this the Board was able to maintain quorum throughout 2019-20.

The Board met 10 times in 2019-20. **Table 7** below details the attendance of Board members at meetings held during the year.

Table 7: Board Meeting Attendance

Date	Oliver Wilkinson	Bertha McDougall	Richard Solomon	Stephen McIlveen	Beverley Clarke	Patricia Haren
2 May 2019	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
18 June 2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30 July 2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10 Sept 2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
22 Oct 2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
26 Nov 2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
13 Dec 2019	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
21 Jan 2020	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓
18 Feb 2020	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
31 March 2020	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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;
- Reports 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;
- Compliance and Data Protection Updates; and
- Client Risk Update.

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 2019-20 included:

- Strategic review of support provided under the Individual Needs Programme
- Post-2019 Victims Strategy
- Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse
- Communications Plan
- COVID-19 Emergency Planning

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 which include areas such as the status of delivery against delivery plan outcomes; expenditure against budget; requests made under the Freedom of Information

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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 2020. The overall conclusion was that the Board performed well in 2019-20, and that a range of actions identified at the 2018-19 review had been implemented. The action areas identified within the 2019-20 review will be taken forward in 2020-21 and include:

- Highlighting the risks around Board Member numbers and succession planning; and
- Strategic communications between TEO as the Sponsor Department and the VSS Board.

The Health and Wellbeing Committee

The Health and Wellbeing Committee are appointed by the Board. The Committee nominates one member to the position of Chair.

The Health and Wellbeing Committee's terms of reference sets out its role, including:

- Consideration of strategies in relation to the implementation and evaluation of a Clinical Governance Framework;
- Consideration of strategies in relation to the implementation and evaluation of Health and Wellbeing Services delivered by and on behalf of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited;
- Consideration of strategies concerning the Victims and Survivors Service Limited staff health and wellbeing, employee engagement and development; and
- Providing assurances relating to the management of clinical risk and clinical governance requirements for the organisation.

Table 8 below details the Health and Wellbeing Committee members.

Table 8: Health and Wellbeing Committee Membership

Name	Position
Beverley Clarke	Committee Member from April 2017 (Chair)
Patricia Haren	Committee Member from April 2017
Stephen McIlveen	Committee Member from April 2017; Resigned 20 February 2020

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

- The Chief Executive Officer of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited;
- The Head of Health and Wellbeing;
- The Health and Wellbeing Programme Manager;
- A Health and Wellbeing Case Manager; and
- The VSP Programme Manager.

The Health and Wellbeing Committee met four times during 2019-20. The Committee completed an annual report of their activities within the 2019-20 year and this has been taken into account in preparation of this Annual Report.

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 October 2019) 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 9 below details the Audit and Risk Committee members.

Table 9: 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
David Reid	Committee Member from 1st September 2018; Resigned 6 August 2019
Briege Lafferty	Committee member from 6 August 2019

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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

- The Accounting Officer for 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 five times in 2019-20.

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 the following standing and annual agenda items:

- 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 2019. The overall conclusion was that the Audit and Risk Committee was performing well.

Risk Management Strategy

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Risk Management Strategy has been approved by the Board with the most recent update made in June 2018. 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 quarterly basis throughout 2019-20. Key risks identified and managed during the reporting period included:

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

- Risk of non-delivery of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited element of the Regional Trauma Network due to lack of effective partnership working;
- Lack of political agreement on the Stormont House Agreement legacy institutions, diluting the strategic impact of the Advocacy Support Programme;
- Risks associated with maintenance of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and Committees;
- Risk that comprehensive and victim-centred approach to provision of support to victims and survivors considering application for Victims Payment is not in place ahead of launch of scheme;
- Risk that appropriate Health and Wellbeing services are not in place for victims of Historical Institutional Abuse within an appropriate timeframe; and
- Risk that the needs of the bereaved are not being met within current schemes.

A revised approach to the monitoring and escalation of risks in line with the risk appetite was implemented in early 2018-19. The Board agreed a revised risk appetite, within which all risks are assessed and escalated as appropriate.

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 64.

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 1-year period, with the option to extend for 4 years (2016-17 to 2020-21).

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.

Table 10 below outlines the internal audit programme that was carried out relating to 2019-20.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Table 10: Internal Audit 2019-20

Report Date	Scope	Audit Rating	Status
Oct-19	Review of VSP Governance and Management	Satisfactory	Final Report
Oct-19	Review of INP Needs-based Frameworks	Satisfactory	Final Report
Jan-20	Review of General Data Protection Regulation	Satisfactory	Final Report
Jun-20	Review of Financial Controls	Satisfactory	Final Report
Jun-20	Review of PEACE IV	Satisfactory	Final Report

The internal auditor's overall assurance rating for 2019-20 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.

During 2019-20 a total of 23 recommendations were made across four areas. There were no Priority One recommendations, nine were identified as Priority Two and fourteen as Priority Three.

In addition, the Follow Up report confirmed that of the ten recommendations reviewed, four were fully implemented and the remaining six partially implemented.

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.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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);
- Accountability and Oversight Meetings (attended by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer and Head of Corporate Services);
- Quarterly Assurance Statements;
- The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, updated April 2018; and
- Ongoing Performance Monitoring against the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Delivery Plan and preparation of its Corporate Plan.

During 2019-20, further guidance on a revised approach to partnership working between Sponsor Departments and Arm's Length Bodies was issued. A draft Partnership Agreement template (to replace the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum) has been issued to all ALBs and Sponsor Departments. I welcome the opportunity to improve the mechanisms for partnership between VSS and TEO in this regard, and work will continue in 2020-21 to work towards adoption of a Partnership Agreement which acts to enable co-operation and collaboration in delivering positive outcome for victims and survivors.

Accountability Meetings

The Accounting Officer and senior staff attended Accountability Meetings during the year with senior staff from the Department. These meetings took place on four occasions during 2019-20.

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. Quarter-end management reporting is shared as standard, in addition to further reporting outlined below.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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;
- Consultancy;
- Information assurance and Data Protection;
- 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 during 2019-20.

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 Victims and Survivors Service Limited website.

Corporate Plan 2019-22 and Delivery Plan 2019-20

The 2019-22 Corporate Plan (and 2019-20 Delivery Plan) was accepted by The Executive Office Departmental Board on 29 May 2019.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

The Chief Executive has monitored the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's performance against the targets set out in its 2019-20 Delivery Plan, included at [Appendix 2](#).

Key achievements and emerging activities carried out in 2019-20 are further outlined under Summary Performance against Delivery Plan Strategic Outcomes on page 16.

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 2019-20.

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 2019-20 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.

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

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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's 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. Nine new cases were opened in 2019-20; six of which were closed by 31 March 2020 whilst the other three remained open. One additional case, relating to a prior year, also remained open at 31 March 2020.

Whistleblowing

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited's 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. This policy is also applicable to members of the public who contact the Victims and Survivors service Limited with concerns about our Funded Organisations.

There were two instances of whistleblowing by members of the public to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in the year to 31 March 2020. 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.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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 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, or after the year end:

Termination of Grant: Funded Organisation

On 16 May 2019, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited terminated its contract with one organisation in receipt of VSP and PEACE IV funding. This followed investigation of a range of issues and took into account the outcome of an independent review of corporate governance arrangements within the organisation.

Given the seriousness of the issues identified relating to corporate governance, financial management and safeguarding, termination of funding was the only appropriate option available to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. Arrangements were made immediately to ensure that services to victims and survivors in the area were not interrupted in the short term. These services were transferred to an alternative provider in July 2019.

On 26 March 2020, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited terminated its contract with another organisation in receipt of VSP and PEACE IV funding. Again this followed investigation of a range of issues and took into account the outcome of an independent review of corporate governance arrangements within the organisation in addition to work undertaken by Group Fraud Investigation Services.

Serious issues were identified relating to the provision of false information to VSS, the recording and reconciliation of records of attendance, management committee conflicts of interest, insufficient controls over expenditure and safeguarding concerns. VSS considered the arrangements in place for victims and survivors in the area and signposted and referred to other available support and services where appropriate.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Direct Award Contracts

During 2019-20 three contracts were awarded by means of a Direct Award, as detailed in **Table 11** below.

Table 11: Direct Award contracts awarded in 2019-20

Awarded	Scope	Award Amount
Sept - 19	Equine Therapy Training	£8,000
Dec - 19	Clinical Governance Reviews and RTN Accreditation	£12,600
Dec - 19	Volunteering Accreditation	£15,240

On each occasion CPD advice was sought prior to award of the contract.

Governance Checks for Existing Clients

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019* provided detail of a 5% spot check of existing clients carried out prior to opening the new Programme for 2019-20, 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 2019*, the maximum extrapolated error identified in the pre-2019-20 spot check was, at the end of the process, 0.81% (recorded as 0.74% in 2018-19 accounts), representing a maximum potential error value of £30,935.

Victims and Survivors Service Limited conducted sensitive checks on a further 5% (n=294) of client records to verify their eligibility for payments prior to opening the 2020-21 scheme. VSS are currently awaiting information from 8 individuals to confirm their eligibility. These individuals have not been determined to be ineligible under the relevant schemes.

Most of the outstanding information relates to obtaining GP Reports. Given the recurring pressures on GP practices, it has proved very challenging to obtain the requested reports for individuals despite several follow up attempts. In recent months this has become ever more challenging with the escalation of Covid-19 and the resulting crisis level of pressure being placed on GPs. GP practices have now moved to a position whereby resource is focused on managing the regional corona virus epidemic, while dealing with the backlog caused by the epidemic. This situation is likely to continue into the foreseeable future.

VSS consider it is irresponsible to continue to put pressure on GPs within the current environment.

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 2020, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has complied with all relevant 2013 Code provision.

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 Report to Those Charged with Governance 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 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.

Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Internal and external audit activity in respect of 2019-20 has reflected the sound system of internal control in place within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, 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 with immediate action undertaken on priority findings and an implementation plan in place for longer term developments.

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

2.2 Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Remuneration Policy

Remuneration of all staff members, including the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer and senior staff, is 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.

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.

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

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

Officials	2019-20				2018-19 (Restated)			
	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
Ms Margaret Bateson, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer (01.04.19 – 15.12.19 and then 13.03.20 – 31.03.20)	60-65 (70-75 FTE)		22	80-85	70-75		31**	100-105
Mr Andrew Walker, Interim Chief Executive and Accounting Officer *** (16.12.20 – 12.03.20)	55-60		19	75-80	n/a		n/a	n/a
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
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 (Resigned 19.02.20)	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Band of Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration	70-75 (FTE)			70-75	70-75 (FTE)			70-75
Median Total Remuneration	30,526			30,526	30,147			30,147
Range of Staff Remuneration	20-25 – 70-75 (FTE)			20-25 – 70-75 (FTE)	20-25 – 70-75 (FTE)			20 - 25 – 70-75 (FTE)
Ratio	2.38****			2.38****	2.48			2.48

* 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.

** This figure has been revised for 2018-19 by CSP.

*** Mr Andrew Walker was temporarily promoted to Interim Chief Executive Officer from 16 December 2019 to 12 March 2020 while Margaret Bateson was on a period of annual leave and unpaid study leave. For the remainder of the 2019-20 year, he was employed

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

by VSS in his substantive role as Head of Corporate Services and then as Interim Head of Health and Wellbeing. Current year remuneration costs are based on full year costs for 2019-20.

**** Agency workers who were covering substantive posts at 31 March 2020 have been included in these calculations at the first point of the applicable scale.

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in Victims and Survivors Service in the financial year 2019-20 was £70-75k (FTE) (2018-19, £70-75k). This was 2.38 times (2018-19, 2.48) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £30,526 (2018-19, £30,147).

In 2019-20, 0 (2018-19, 0) employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director. Remuneration ranged from £20k - £75k (2018-19 £20k - £75k).

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

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 ex-gratia payments.

Exit Packages (Audited Information)

There were no redundancies or ill health retirements costs in the year to 31 March 2020.

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 Information)

Officials	Accrued Pension and related lump sum at pension age as at 31 March 2020	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age	CETV at 31 March 2020	CETV at 31 March 2019	Real increase in CETV
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Mrs Margaret Bateson, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer	10-15	0-2.5	104	88	8
Mr Andrew Walker, Interim Chief Executive and Accounting Officer	10-15	0-2.5	139	127	8

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).

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

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%.

New entrants joining can choose between membership of Alpha or joining a '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 2019 was 1.7% and HM Treasury has announced that public service pensions will be increased accordingly from April 2020.

Employee contribution rates for all members for the period covering 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 are as follows:

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

Scheme Year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Annualised Rate of Pensionable Earnings (Salary Bands)		Contribution rates – All members
From	To	From 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
£0	£ 23,999.99	4.6%
£24,000.00	£55,499.99	5.45%
£55,500.00	£152,499.99	7.35%
£152,500.00	and above	8.05%

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 www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-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

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

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 2019-20.

Fees to Third Parties

Only remuneration and expenses were paid to Directors of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in 2019-20. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board of Directors remuneration details are on page 70.

Expenses reimbursed to/incurred in respect of Non-Executive Directors were as follows:

	Year end 31 March 2020 (£)	Year end 31 March 2019 (£)
O. Wilkinson, Board Chair	0	623
B. McDougall, Board Member	142	132
R. Solomon, Board Member	0	0
P. Haren, Board Member	0	50
S. Magee, Board Member	0	0

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

S. McIlveen, Board Member	0	0
B. Clarke, Board Member	116	295
Total	258	1,100

No further remuneration or expenses were paid to Non-Executive Directors in 2019-20.

Senior Civil Service Staff (Audited)

In 2019-20 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had two senior civil service (or equivalent) staff members (the Chief Executive Officer and Interim Chief Executive Officer).

Staff Composition – breakdown of employees by gender (Audited)

Table 12 below illustrates the breakdown of employed staff by gender and grade.

Table 12: Breakdown of Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and staff by gender and grade as at 31 March 2020

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

Overall breakdown: Staff - 22 female and 13 male; Board – 3 female and 2 male.

At 31 March 2020, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had 35 employees in post (33.88 full time equivalent). An additional 3 agency staff were in place on 31 March 2020, filling key vacancies within the organisational structure. The average permanent staff number was 34.33 during this period as outlined in the Note 2 staff numbers and related costs on page 92.

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

Absence Data

Table 13 below shows the sickness absence results for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Table 13: Sickness Absence

	Working days lost 2019-20	Average days lost per FTE member of staff
Including long-term absence	240.27	7.00*
Excluding long-term absence	121.46	3.54*

* Based on an average FTE of 34.33 permanent employees over the full year.

By comparison there were 317 days absence (including long term absence) in 2018-19, an average of 9.76 working days lost per member of staff during that period.

Excluding long term absence, there were 173 days of absence in 2018-19, an average of 5.34 working days lost per member of staff during that period. Whilst the figures for 2019-20 have shown a decrease from the previous year it is worth noting that as a small organisation, any long term sickness absences has a disproportionate impact upon these metrics. There was one long term sickness absence ongoing as at 31 March 2020.

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.

Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

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 2019-20 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.
- **Staff Health and Wellbeing Programme:** During 2019-20 the programme continued to be offered to enhance staff health and wellbeing. Linked to the Take 5 methodology, the programme seeks to provide opportunity for staff to engage in activities which will benefit their health and wellbeing. The programme also includes a series of actions to enhance the working environment for staff.

Expenditure on External Consultancy

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited spent £0 on external consultancy in 2019-20.

Off-Payroll Engagements

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited had no 'off-payroll' engagement costs in 2019-20.

Assembly Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

2.3 Assembly Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Fees and Charges (Audited)

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited incurred no fees or charges during 2019-20.

Remote Contingent Liabilities (Audited)

There are no remote contingent liabilities.

Losses and Special Payments (Audited)

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited did not make any requests (to The Executive Office) for write-offs / special payments during 2019-20.

A small number of low value payment recoveries remain open in respect of cases relating to individuals. Recovery is progressing via offset against annual payments in the majority of these cases.



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer

Date: 23rd February 2021

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 NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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 2020 under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. The financial statements comprise: the Statements of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Financial Position, Cash Flows and Changes in Taxpayers' Equity; and the related notes, including significant accounting policies. 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 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 the Victims and Survivors Serve Limited's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and of its net expenditure 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 Victims and Survivors Serve 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.

Conclusions relating to going concern

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs(UK) require me to report to you where:

- the Victims and Survivors Serve Limited's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Victims and Survivors Serve Limited's has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Victims and Survivors Serve Limited's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis.

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

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 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 with the Government Financial Reporting Manual; and
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability 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.

My objectives are 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 (UK) 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*

06 March 2021

Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

Financial Statements

3.1 Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 (Restated) £
Income			
Grant from EU	4	<u>2,375,879</u>	<u>2,324,494</u>
		2,375,879	2,324,494
Expenditure			
Staff Costs	2	1,742,345	1,603,970
Programme Costs	3.1	13,426,734	13,384,877
Operating Costs	3.3	483,912	525,345
Depreciation	3.3	92,961	87,241
Provision provided for in year	3.3	0	0
Total Expenditure		<u>15,745,952</u>	<u>15,601,433</u>
Net Operating Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020		<u>(13,370,073)</u>	<u>(13,276,939)</u>
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure		<u>(13,370,073)</u>	<u>(13,276,939)</u>
Amount Transferred to General Fund		<u>(13,370,073)</u>	<u>(13,276,939)</u>

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 87 - 103 form part of these financial statements.

Financial Statements

3.2 Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2020

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	5	19,516	13,321
Intangible Assets	6	116,861	191,417
Total Non-Current Assets		136,377	204,738
Current Assets			
Trade and Other Receivables	10	1,944,672	2,148,980
Cash and Cash Equivalents	11	1,301,285	760,864
Total Current Assets		3,245,957	2,909,844
Total Assets		3,382,334	3,114,582
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	12	640,368	442,543
Total Current Liabilities		640,368	442,543
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		2,741,966	2,672,039
Non-Current Liabilities			
Other Payables	12	2,200,000	2,200,000
Provision for Liabilities and Charges	13	12,900	12,900
Total Non-Current Liabilities		2,212,900	2,212,900
Total Assets less Total Liabilities		529,066	459,139
Taxpayers Equity			
General fund		529,066	459,139

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 87 – 103 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 23rd February 2021.



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 23rd February 2021

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 23rd February 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman

Date: 23rd February 2021

Financial Statements

3.3 Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
(Deficit) / Surplus for the year		(13,370,073)	(13,276,939)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions			
Depreciation	3.3	2,325	3,227
Amortisation	3.3	90,636	84,014
Provision written back	3.3	0	0
(Increase) / Decrease in trade receivables and other current assets	10	204,308	(273,959)
Increase / (Decrease) in trade payables and other current liabilities	12	197,825	(328,919)
Provision utilised	13	0	0
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(12,874,979)	(13,792,576)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	5	(8,520)	0
Purchase of intangible assets	6	(16,080)	(34,042)
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(24,600)	(34,042)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department		13,440,000	13,241,000
Increase / (Decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		540,421	(585,618)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	11	760,864	1,346,482
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,301,285	760,864

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 87 – 103 form part of these financial statements.

Financial Statements

3.4 Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	General Fund £	Taxpayers' Equity £
Balance at 31 March 2018	495,078	495,078
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for 2018-19		
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year	(13,276,939)	(13,276,939)
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	13,241,000	13,241,000
Balance at 31 March 2019	459,139	459,139
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for 2019-20		
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year	(13,370,073)	(13,370,073)
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	13,440,000	13,440,000
Balance at 31 March 2020	529,066	529,066

Notes 1 to 22 on pages 87 – 103 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

3.5 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 2019-20 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 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
- 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:

- HR system software 4 years
- 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 28.7% to 34.2% of pensionable pay based on salary bands 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 2020.

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 additional or revised accounting standards and new (or amendments to) interpretations contained within FReM 2019-20 and management consider that these have not had any impact on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Management have reviewed new accounting standards that have been issued but are not yet effective, nor adopted early for these accounts. Management consider that only IFRS 16 Leases⁴ (with a revised FReM application in 2021-22) will impact the Accounts. It is the expectation of The Victims and Survivors Service Limited that the adoption of IFRS 16 will result in an increase in reported assets (in the form of right of use assets) and reported liabilities (representing the obligation to make future lease payments). Early engagement will be undertaken with The Executive Office to ensure that adequate Depreciation budget is made available as IFRS 16 dictates that the SOCNE will now be impacted by additional depreciation as opposed to operational expenditure as it currently is transacted,

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

⁴ IFRS 16 replaces IAS 17 Leases and related interpretations

Notes to 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 and Seconded)	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Total	Year ended 31-Mar-19 Total
	£	£	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,196,919	187,971	1,384,890	1,312,984
Social security costs	117,263	0	117,263	106,898
Pension costs	347,762	0	347,762	225,164
Board costs	20,253	0	20,253	20,917
Total Net Costs	1,682,197	187,971	1,870,168	1,665,963
Less: Recoveries in respect to outward secondments	127,823	0	127,823	61,993
Total Net Costs	1,554,374	187,971	1,742,345	1,603,970
Funded through Core Funds	1,035,687	180,425	1,216,112	1,177,674
Funded through PEACE IV Funds	518,687	7,546	526,233	426,296
Total Net Costs	1,554,374	187,971	1,742,345	1,603,970

* 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.

For 2019-20, employers' contributions of £321,305 were payable to the NICS pension arrangements (2018-19 £214,828) at one of three rates in the range 28.7% to 34.2% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. The most recent valuation been completed with rates set for another four year period from 1 April 2019. VSS will apply the employer rates set from 1 April 2020 for the remaining three years of the valuation period.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Employees who do not wish to join or remain in the main NICS pension schemes can opt to open a partnership pension account. The partnership pension account is a defined contribution scheme where the employee does not have to make any payments and where the employer continues to make contributions. Employers' contributions of £3,485.31 (2018-19: £1,749.81) 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% (2018-19: 8% to 14.75%) of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to a further 3% of pensionable pay. In addition, employers are required to pay a mini ASLEC to the NICS Pension scheme in relation to staff who have opted to open a partnership account, to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees. Mini ASLEC contributions of £101.65, 0.5% (2018-19: £127.24, 0.5%) of pensionable pay, were made during the 2019-20 year. The total mini ASLEC contributions due for 2019-20 were £150.72 comprising £101.65 new contributions and a balance of £49.07 brought forward from the 2018-19 year.

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

No persons (2018-19: 0 persons) retired early on ill-health grounds; the total additional accrued pension liabilities in the year amounted to £0 (2018-19: £0).

Average Number of Persons Employed (Audited)

The average number of full time equivalent persons employed was as follows:

	Permanently Employed Staff	Others (Agency and Seconded)	Year ended 31 March 20 Total	Year ended 31 March 19 Total
Administrators	23.30	2.49	25.79	25.04
Management	8.28	0.42	8.70	8.47
Senior Management	2.75	0	2.75	3
Total	34.33	2.91	37.24	36.51

Notes to the Financial Statements

3 Expenditure

3.1 Programme Expenditure

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Core Funding £	Year ended 31-Mar-20 PIV Funding £	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Total £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 (Restated) Total £
Grants to Funded Organisations and Individuals	3.2	11,491,410	1,740,265	13,231,675	13,153,916
Provision of Client Support Services		48,418	16,862	65,280	64,887
Workforce Training Plan		0	86,603	86,603	104,366
Monitoring and Evaluation		14,183	0	14,183	9,233
Seminars and events		4,764	15,220	19,984	35,975
Increase in Bad Debt Provision		9,009	0	9,009	16,500
Total		11,567,784	1,858,950	13,426,734	13,384,877

3.2 Grants to Funded Organisations and Individuals

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Core Funding £	Year ended 31-Mar-20 PIV Funding £	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Total £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 Total £
Grants to Groups		6,620,866	1,557,154	8,178,020	8,283,954
Grants to Individuals		4,870,544	183,111	5,053,655	4,869,962
Total		11,491,410	1,740,265	13,231,675	13,153,916

Notes to the Financial Statements

3.3 Operating Costs

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Core Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-20 PIV Funding	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Total	Period ended 31-Mar-19 (Restated)
Rents and Service Charges		78,904	0	78,904	75,892
Rates		22,417	0	22,417	22,013
IT Services		115,984	0	115,984	119,475
Telephones		17,508	0	17,508	16,565
Communications*		25,488	0	25,488	17,623
Recruitment		19,026	6,260	25,286	26,726
Heat, Light and Power		4,745	0	4,745	7,176
Office Expenses		23,611	0	23,611	31,378
NIAO Audit **		30,880	0	30,880	29,996
Premises Expenses		14,693	0	14,693	18,357
Professional Fees		60,655	0	60,655	46,815
Staff Training		28,384	0	28,384	38,287
Travel and Expenses		8,362	10,785	19,147	28,608
Hospitality		2,416	0	2,416	855
Postage and Carriage		10,581	0	10,581	23,592
Bad Debt Write Off		0	0	0	8,411
Managed Services		2,490	0	2,490	11,336
Board Expenses		723	0	723	2,240
Total Operating Costs		466,867	17,045	483,912	525,345
Non-Cash Items					
Depreciation	5	2,325	0	2,325	3,227
Amortisation	6	90,636	0	90,636	84,014
Provision provided for in year	13	0	0	0	0
Total Non-Cash Items		92,961	0	92,961	87,241
Overall Total		559,828	17,045	576,873	612,586

*Communications costs for 2019-20 were reclassified as an operating expenditure. These costs had been classified as Advertising costs within programme expenditure in the prior year.

**NIAO Audit fee for 2019-20 is £31,720. Variance in accounts owing to over-accrual of 2018-19 NIAO audit fee.

Notes to the Financial Statements

4. Income

	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Grant from EU	2,375,879	2,324,494
	<u>2,375,879</u>	<u>2,324,494</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 December 2022 is £14.944m.

It should be noted that EU income does not match to EU expenditure in 2019-20 year owing to an adjustment made for a prior year.

There was no other operating income in 2019-20.

Notes to the Financial Statements

5. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Fixtures and Fittings £	IT Equipment £	Year ended 31-Mar-20 Total £
Cost:			
At 1 April 2019	19,394	7,161	26,555
Additions in year	0	8,520	8,520
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2020	19,394	15,681	35,075
Accumulated Depreciation:			
At 1 April 2019	6,253	6,981	13,234
Charge in year	1,888	437	2,325
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2020	8,141	7,418	15,559
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	11,253	8,263	19,516
Asset Financing:			
Owned:	11,253	8,263	19,516
Financed Leased: On-balance sheet (SOFP) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:			
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	11,253	8,263	19,516
	Fixtures and Fittings £	IT Equipment £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 Total £
Cost:			
At 1 April 2018	19,394	7,161	26,555
Additions in year	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2019	19,394	7,161	26,555
Accumulated Depreciation:			
At 1 April 2018	4,314	5,693	10,007
Charge in year	1,939	1,288	3,227
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2019	6,253	6,981	13,234
Carrying Value at 31 March 2019	13,141	180	13,321
Asset Financing:			
Owned:	13,141	180	13,321
Financed Leased: On-balance sheet (SOFP) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:			
Carrying amount at 31 March 2019	13,141	180	13,321

Notes to the Financial Statements

6. Intangible Assets

	Website Development £	MIS – License/ Software £	HR System £	Year ended 31-Mar- 20 Total £
Cost:				
At 1 April 2019	13,140	350,150	0	363,290
Additions in year	0	10,080	6,000	16,080
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2020	13,140	360,230	6,000	379,370
Amortisation:				
At 1 April 2019	7,315	164,558	0	171,873
Charge in year	2,763	87,748	125	90,636
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2020	10,078	252,306	125	262,509
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	3,062	107,924	5,875	116,861
Asset Financing:				
Owned:	3,062	107,924	5,875	116,861
Financed Leased: On-balance sheet (SOFP) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:				
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	3,062	107,924	5,875	116,861

Notes to the Financial Statements

	Website Development £	MIS - License/ Software £	HR System £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 Total £
Cost:				
At 1 April 2018	8,940	320,308	0	329,248
Additions during year	4,200	29,842	0	34,042
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2019	13,140	350,150	0	363,290
Amortisation:				
At 1 April 2018	4,992	82,867	0	87,859
Charge in year	2,323	81,691	0	84,014
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2019	7,315	164,558	0	171,873
Carrying Value at 31 March 2019	5,825	185,592	0	191,417
Asset Financing:				
Owned:	5,825	185,592	0	191,417
Financed Leased: On-balance sheet (SOFP) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:				
Carrying amount at 31 March 2019	5,825	185,592	0	191,417

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.

Notes to the Financial Statements

9. Inventories

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has no inventories.

10. Trade Receivables, Financial and Other Assets

	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Amounts falling due within one year from VSS operations		
Programme receivables	170,243	153,781
Prepayments and accrued income	38,248	60,896
Income Accrued in respect of EU funds	1,713,922	1,924,085
Other Debtors	71,050	50,000
Bad debt provision	(48,791)	(39,782)
	<u>1,944,672</u>	<u>2,148,980</u>

11. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Balance at 1 April 2019	760,864	1,346,482
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	540,421	(585,618)
Balance at 31 March 2020	<u>1,301,285</u>	<u>760,864</u>

The above balance comprises £883,537 within the TEO account Danske Bank Belfast in a non-interest bearing current account, £418,846 within the PEACE IV account, a debit balance of £1,156 on the credit card account and £58 in petty cash held on-site.

12. Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities

	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Programme Payables	443,862	291,467
Trade Payables	23,158	37,900
Accruals and Deferred Income	173,348	113,176
	<u>640,368</u>	<u>442,543</u>
Amounts falling due after more than one year		
Advanced Monies received from EU Funds	2,200,000	2,200,000
	<u>2,200,000</u>	<u>2,200,000</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

13. Provisions for Liabilities and Charges

	The Disappeared £	Year ended 31-Mar-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Balance at 1 April 19	12,900	12,900	12,900
Provided for in the year	0	0	0
Utilisation in year	0	0	0
Provisions written back	0	0	0
Balance at 31 March 20	<u>12,900</u>	<u>12,900</u>	<u>12,900</u>

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

- *The Disappeared Funeral Costs*

At 31 March 2020, 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 provision is 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 (2018-19: 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-20 £	Year ended 31-Mar-19 £
Buildings:		
Not later than one year	93,500	54,000
Greater than one year, and less than five years	0	0
Greater than five years	0	0
Total	<u>93,500</u>	<u>54,000</u>
Other:		
Not later than one year	187,000	0
Greater than one year, and less than five years	0	0
Greater than five years	0	0
Total	<u>187,000</u>	<u>0</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

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

VSS had no commitments under PFI Contracts and Other Services Concession Arrangements Contracts in 2019-20. There similarly no such commitments in the 2018-19 year.

17. Other Financial Commitments

VSS had other Financial Commitments in 2019-20. There similarly no such commitments in the 2018-19 year.

18. Contingent Liabilities

VSS had Contingent Liabilities in 2019-20. There similarly no such liabilities in the 2018-19 year.

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 year the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had various material transactions with The Executive Office (Grant in Aid £13,440,000, CPD Recharges £16,334). It should be noted that CPD Recharges are invoiced through The Executive Office rather than CPD directly.

During 2019-20 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was also in receipt of PEACE IV grant funding from the Special EU Programmes Body. During the year the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had various material transactions with the Special EU Programmes Body (£2,678,643).

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

VSS had no Third Party Assets in 2019-20. There similarly no such assets in the 2018/19 year.

Notes to the Financial Statements

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 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

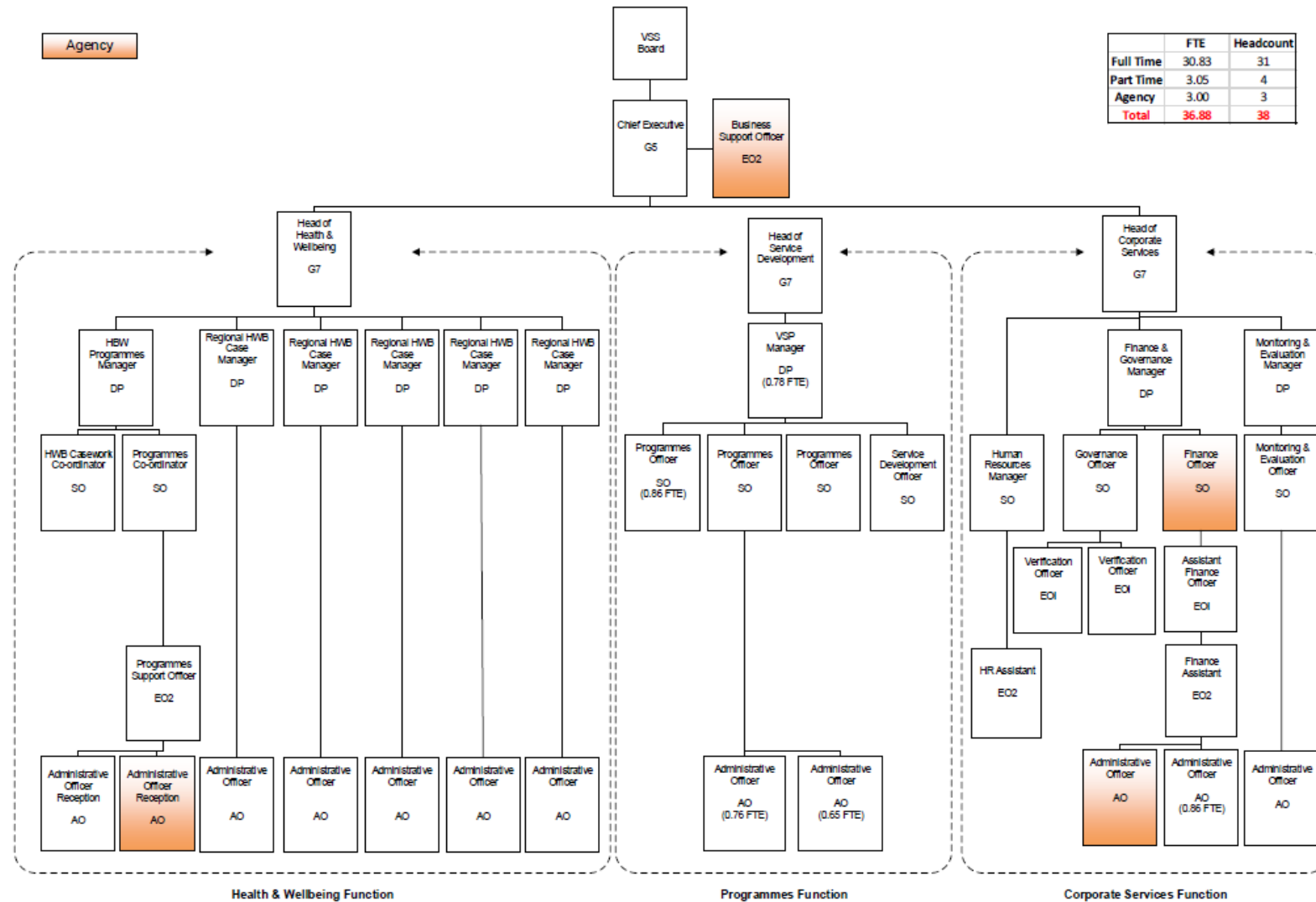
There were no events after the reporting period.

Date for authorisation for issue

The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 6th March 2021.

APPENDIX 1

Appendix 1: Organisation Chart as at 31 March 2020



APPENDIX 2

Appendix 2: Delivery Plan Extract 2019-20

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 – IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF VICTIMS AND 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.	- 25 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	Develop analysis of outcomes to date from Psychological Therapies and Complementary Therapies , in particular in respect of those not reporting positive outcomes/improvement.	- Baseline data on trends in relation to clients reporting improvement, and those not reporting improvement. - Report, and recommendations on possible actions to address cohort of clients for whom these therapies are not successful.	- Improved understanding of the underlying factors which impact on success rate for therapies. - Adoption of strategy/further actions to begin to positively impact the success rates.	Achieved
4	Ensure access and availability of Disability Aids to 80 individuals physically injured as a result of the Conflict / Troubles.	- Framework reviewed. - Continued relationships with Statutory, Community and Voluntary Services.	- Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60% of individuals as a result of disability aid provided.	Achieved

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5	Ensure access and availability of Trauma-focused Physical Activity that supports 70 individuals engage in a therapeutic process to address Conflict/Troubles-related trauma.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework reviewed. - Continued training of Caseworkers in use of Framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60%of individuals as a result of trauma focused-physical activity. 	Achieved
6	Ensure access and availability of support towards managing Persistent Pain to 750 individuals (includes Home Heating provision) Offer persistent pain review to 100 individuals .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved communication and referral pathways with GPs, private providers and statutory services for those with persistent pain. - Completion of assessments and care plans through review of each individual's persistent pain. - Increased access to additional VSS Frameworks following assessment of need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60%of individuals as a result of persistent pain interventions. 	Achieved
7	Ensure access and availability of Psychological Support to 60 individuals with Conflict/Troubles-related trauma (outside of talking therapies provided via VSP-funded organisations).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved communication and referral pathways with GPs, private providers and statutory services for those who require 1 to 1 psychological support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved wellbeing, function and independence for 60%of individuals as a result of psychological support interventions. 	Achieved
8	Provision of Social Support activities to 9,800 individuals through VSS funded organisations including befriending, respite, and other activities in line with the Take 5 framework. www.makinglifebettertogether.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement with community and statutory partners to develop Take 5 outcomes based monitoring and evaluation tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline data to be established throughout 19/20 to establish outcome to measure improved wellbeing, function and independence. 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

<p>9</p>	<p>Develop a strong regional network of up to 26 HWB Caseworkers and 5 HWB Case Managers with agreed processes, procedures and referral pathways, ensuring appropriate geographical spread and equity of access.</p> <p>Identify and agree KPIs in relation to client pathway and completion of INCs.</p> <p>Define and Identify needs of 50 “Hard to Reach” victims and survivors who may require support and intervention through VSS Frameworks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued development of HWB Caseworker Network with regular schedule of meetings/engagement. - Increased engagement by Caseworkers with local organisations with potential to benefit victims and survivors. - HWB Case Manager team to progress outreach to wider Health and Wellbeing-oriented networks – including development of stakeholder engagement plan. - Caseworker coverage for border regions. - Review of Clinical Governance arrangements, compliance with standards and policies/procedures within the Network. - Review equality of access for Victims and Survivors in current model and produce recommendations for development of the network. - Finalised pathway with timescales in relation to contact with Caseworkers to issue of awards in VSS. 	<p>Ongoing improvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communication across victims/survivors sector. - responsiveness to individual needs. - pathways of referral and communication with statutory sector. - clinical governance compliance. - equity of access. <p>Consistent, timely pathway for access to support and interventions.</p> <p>Increased contact and support with Hard to Reach individuals.</p> <p>60% of individuals engaged with a Health and Wellbeing Caseworker report an improvement in functioning.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of training and development needs. - Client Pathway KPIs to provide baseline expectations in 20-21. - Develop a definition of “hard to reach” victims and survivors. - Identify through engagement strategy and caseworker network. Assess needs through INC process. Identify any specific needs relating to this group to inform development of Frameworks. 		
10	Support communication and engagement through the Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Groups (VSPWG) meetings, including sub committees and Co-Design Programme engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuation of Monitoring and Evaluation sub-group to look at focussed pieces of work. - 5 meetings per year covering the North East and South West areas 	<p>Baselines established in 18-19 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
11	Plan and deliver Phase 1 of Regional Trauma Network in collaboration with HSCB / TEO / Statutory Sector / Victims and Survivors Sector. Attendance at all levels of RTN Regional and local development groups and Board.	<p>Contribution to all aspects of RTN development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance at meetings / sub-groups. - Comments/amendments to documentation. <p>VSS Stage 1 Implementation Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PID. 	<p>Coordinated and planned implementation of Phase 1 RTN.</p> <p>Victims and Survivors receive the most appropriate intervention to meet their needs.</p>	Not achieved

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	<p>Development and completion of VSS Phase 1 Implementation Plan and associated documentation.</p> <p>Contribution to recommendations for Phase 2.</p> <p>Case Managers to engage with 100 clients resulting in 60 referrals to the RTN (on basis of Sep 19 start date).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk / issue log. - Highlight reports. - Stakeholder engagement plan. <p>Methodology to identify initial clients to access RTN.</p> <p>Agreed pathway from initial contact with VSS to local RTN teams.</p> <p>Training of case-managers in use of assessment protocol and pathway.</p> <p>Data-base developed to monitor and collate information on referrals to RTN and outcomes.</p>	<p>Learning from Phase 1 will contribute to further roll-out of RTN.</p>	
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APPENDIX 2

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

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
12	Ensure access and availability of Personal and Professional Development : Supporting 2,400 interventions through the VSP.	- 23 organisations deliver a broad range of personal and professional development (PPD) activities.	- Increased opportunities to develop interests and time to connect with other people.	Achieved
13	Ensure access and availability of Education and Training through the INP Framework to meet specific needs for 70 individuals in addition to those already accessing Framework.	- Continued relationships with Statutory, Community and Voluntary Services. - Identification of clients through the Caseworker Network and funded organisations.	- Increased opportunities for employment progression and/or career development. - Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing of 60% of individuals who engage in education and training.	Achieved
14	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. This is in addition to those already accessing Framework.	- Continued review and implementation of Literacy and Numeracy Framework (PEACE IV). - Complete mid-term review of contract.	- Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing of 60% of individuals who engage in numeracy and literacy tuition. - 80% of individuals who engage in numeracy and literacy tuition demonstrate improved numeracy and literacy skills.	Achieved
15	Delivery of a Social Isolation Programme to support individuals who have been affected by the Conflict/Troubles.	- Continued review and implementation of Social Isolation Framework (PEACE IV).	- Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing for	Partially Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
	<p>150 from VSS-funded organisations. 100 individuals identified through Caseworker Network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved opportunities to engage in pass-time courses and activities. - Facilitation of client engagement with programme through consideration of barriers such as travel. - Identification of clients through the Caseworker Network and funded organisations. 	<p>80% of individuals engaged in Social Isolation programme.</p>	
<p>16</p>	<p>Delivery of a Volunteering Programme to support individuals who have been affected by the Conflict/Troubles.</p> <p>150 from VSS-funded organisations. 100 individuals identified through Caseworker Network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued review and implementation of Volunteering Framework (PEACE IV). - Improved opportunities to engage in volunteering activities. - Cross-organisational relationships and referral pathways developed and formalised. - Identification of clients through the Caseworker Network and VSP funded organisations. - Large Annual Event to mark VOLUNTEERS WEEK (June) annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved psychological, physical and social functioning and subjective wellbeing for 80% of individuals engaged in Volunteering Programme. 	<p>Partially Achieved</p>

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REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
17	<p>Design, develop and implement Workforce Training and Development Plan -2019-20 in line with the CVS Minimum Standards published in November 2016.</p> <p>- Align training provision with outcome of 2018-19 Skills Audit exercise.</p>	<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. - Capacity plan in line with the changing service delivery model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased capacity and confidence within VSS funded organisations leading to a higher quality of service delivery for victims and survivors. - Increased capacity and confidence within VSS leading to a higher quality of service delivery for victims and survivors. 	<p>Achieved</p>

APPENDIX 2

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

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
18	<p>Ensure access and availability of Welfare Advice: Facilitate 2,400 interventions, and monitor the impact of Welfare Reform on victims and survivors.</p> <p>Engagement with the Department for Communities (DfC) to support and advocate for individual victims and survivors transitioning to Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and to Universal Credit (UC).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6 organisations directly delivering services to assist victims and survivors make sense of what they are entitled to as well as provide support and guidance during changes implemented through welfare reform. - Establishment of monitoring processes, and a baseline for measurement of positive outcomes - Prompt provision of welfare advice/support to victims and survivors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased access to welfare support for victims and survivors - Financial maximisation for clients (receiving benefits entitled to, appealing where appropriate and justified) - Clients successfully moving from DLA to PIP, following VSS provision of information to DfC/Capita 	Achieved
19	Provide Self Directed Assistance Payments to up to 5,850 individuals.	- Payments delivered by 30 June 2019	- improved financial position for clients in receipt of support	Achieved
20	Provide Additional Needs Payments to up to 1,470 individuals.		- recognition of victimhood	
21	Provide Transition Payments to up to 1,300 individuals.			

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

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
22	Maintain 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 with regular schedule of meetings/engagement and agreed Terms of Reference (April 2018)	<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. 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5 – AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
23	Maintain robust corporate governance arrangements within VSS (including Board, Committees, Policies, MSFM etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly Board meeting and minutes published on website and forwarded to TEO within 5 working days. - Quarterly ARC and HWB Committee meetings and minutes published on website. - Compliance with legal, statutory and departmental requirements. - Quarterly reporting to TEO and engagement in Accountability Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintenance of a high degree of transparency on the accountability arrangements with VSS. - Transparency over governance arrangements. - Assurance over VSS activities and use of public funds. 	Achieved
24	Ensure a robust risk management process is in place and followed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly Strategic Risk Register. - Monthly Operational Risk Logs. - Quarterly Assurance Statements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assurance over VSS management of risk - Appropriate mitigating strategies applied to identified risks. 	Achieved
25	Ensure robust financial processes and procedures are being developed and followed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular review of Financial Policies and Procedures. - Annual review of MSFM by VSS Board to ensure VSS compliance. - Draft financial statements 2018-2019: JUNE 2019. - Final financial statements 2018-2019: SEPT 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unqualified accounts for 2018-19 -Satisfactory Internal Audit Assurance 	Achieved

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REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of Internal Audit Plan. - Implementation of NIAO recommendations. 		
26	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 INP and Corporate invoices paid within the statutory time frame of 30 days - 95% of Corporate invoices paid within 10 days 	Achieved
27	Ensure eligibility of expenditure across all programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -100% vouching and verification of PEACE IV and VSP Expenditure - Debt recovery in line with VSS Debt Recovery Procedure - Management of irregularities in line with VSS Irregularity Procedures. - Review approach to verification of VSP expenditure, following outcome of 18-19 Verification Reviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PEACE error rate less than 2% VSP error rate (per internal spot checking exercise) < 2% by value - Consistency in implementation of Programme rules. 	Achieved
28	<p>Continue manage and develop the VSP 2017-2020 with a focus on 4 strategic outcomes above.</p> <p>Plan for continuation of support to victims organisations post-March</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual monitoring of funded organisation budgets and delivery plans. - Monitoring and evaluation framework agreed with each funded organisation. 	<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. -Clarity on position post 2020 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
	2020 (i.e. following end of existing 3-year programme)	- Consistent and up to date monitoring of progress towards meeting VSS outcomes.		
29	Programme Management of PEACE IV in line with EU Programme Rules and national rules and legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual monitoring of budget and work plans. - Progress against overall PEACE IV outputs (11,350 HWN Assessments, 6,300 Advocacy – over full project life). - Regular meetings between VSS and its PEACE IV Partners (CVS and WAVE). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved quality of services and care - Error rate of less than 2% - Effective management of PEACE Partnership 	Achieved
30	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.	<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. - Audited updated policies and procedures in relation to GDPR. - Implementation of HR and Recruitment systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved access and quality of information. - Improved quality control and consistency of records. - Compliance with GDPR requirements. 	Achieved
31	Implement communication and engagement plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current and accurate framework of stakeholders. - Strong communication with relevant agencies and sectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved communication and engagement with key stakeholders. 	Achieved

APPENDIX 2

REF	Key Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Performance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong and relevant key messages. - Updated publicity and communications information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informed and dynamic engagement with key stakeholders that is responsive to changing views and emerging concerns. 	
32	Continue to develop an effective workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff development plan. - Appropriate provision of training. - Staff succession plan. - VSS Staff HandWB Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced reliance on key staff. - Highly skilled VSS workforce with evolving skillsets aligned to VSS activities and objectives. 	Achieved
33	<p>Agree and embed the VSS Clinical Governance Framework with VSS staff and VSS funded organisations.</p> <p>Audit of clinical governance policies/procedures and standards with associated report.</p>	<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. - Confidence that clinical governance is embedded in practice and consistently applied. 	Achieved

APPENDIX 3

Appendix 3: Monitoring and 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 and 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 and 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 and 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 and 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