

Victims and Survivors Service Limited

Annual Report and Accounts For the year ended 31 March 2017

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

21 December 2017

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

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

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Officers and Professional Advisers

Officers and Professional Advisers

Directors

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

Bertha McDougall – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Richard Solomon – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Beverley Clarke – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Patricia Haren – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Séamus Magee – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Stephen McIlveen – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Auditors

Northern Ireland Audit Office

106 University Street

Belfast

BT7 1EU

Registered Office

1st Floor Seatem House

28-32 Alfred Street

Belfast

BT2 8EN

Principal Bankers

Danske Bank

8/9 Donegall Square North

Belfast

BT1 5GJ

Foreword

Foreword

I am pleased to present the Victims and Survivors Limited Annual Report and Accounts for the 2016/17 financial year.

It has been a particularly exciting and important year for us.

We have built upon the work of the co-design programme in 2015-16, evaluated the pilots we have carried out to date and rolled out best practice across the sector alongside our community and voluntary partners. We have also provided key input to policy makers in terms of how services to victims and survivors could be improved in the future.

I look forward to seeing the benefits of the huge amount of work that has been put into the design and planning of new service delivery models in 2016-17 for implementation from April 2017 and beyond.

We are also starting to see real results from our investment in outcomes based monitoring and evaluation tools across our health and wellbeing programmes. For the first time, we are evidencing the impact of our services and more importantly finding out new ways to deliver better support and services to victims and survivors.

In 2016-17, we secured PEACE IV funding over a 4 year period to add much value to existing support and services including a Health and Wellbeing Caseworker Network and an Advocacy Support Programme to assist victims and survivors engaging with legacy mechanisms. This is in addition to a workforce training and development programme to increase the existing skill and capacity within the sector. The extensive planning and design which took place this year allows implementation to commence as planned in April 2017.

I also want to acknowledge the continued support provided to us by The Executive Office, the Commission for Victims and Survivors, and the Victims and Survivors Forum. This partnership approach is vital to us in constantly improving how we deliver services.

The year has not been without challenges. Operational challenges including the ongoing increase in the numbers of victims and survivors coming forward for support have continued to present challenges in terms of the sustainability of current service delivery models and pressures on our staff and our partners in the community and voluntary sector.

Ministers approved a three year business case in November 2016 effective April 2017 to March 2020 for a new needs based service delivery model. It is a credit to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's staff and our partners within the community and voluntary sector that a significant change management programme has been completed in terms

Foreword

of the design and planning for new service delivery models during 2016-17 alongside maintaining existing services within the resources available. I would like to thank them for their dedication and perseverance.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their support and commitment as together we have made significant improvements in how we deliver services and provide support to victims and survivors.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Oliver Wilkinson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman

Date: 15 December 2017

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

1.1 Introduction and Background

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer's Statement

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

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

I am pleased that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has achieved 98% of its Corporate Objectives as well as managing its budget within 0.4% of the budget allocation.

More importantly, we have made significant progress in implementing an outcomes based approach to all that we do throughout 2016-17.

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 2009-2019

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is the delivery body named in the ten-year Strategy for Victims and Survivors 2009-2019 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.

“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:

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

- (1) *In this Order references to “victim and survivor” are references to an individual appearing to the Commission to be any of the following-*
- (a) *someone who is or has been physically or psychologically injured as a result of or in consequence of a conflict-related incident;*
 - (b) *someone who provides a substantial amount of care on a regular basis for an individual mentioned in paragraph (a); or*
 - (c) *someone who has been bereaved as a result of or in consequence of a conflict-related incident.*
- (2) *Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), an individual may be psychologically injured as a result of or in consequence of—*
- (a) *witnessing a conflict-related incident or the consequences of such an incident;*
or
 - (b) *providing medical or other emergency assistance to an individual in connection with a conflict-related incident.¹*

Formation and Status

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

Strategic Priorities

The Strategy for Victims and Survivors 2009-2019 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: Individual Needs Programme, Victims Support Programme and the victims and survivors element of the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE IV).

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

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, goods, and respite that contribute to improved wellbeing and quality of life.
- Direct financial assistance for certain victims and survivors who have particularly low incomes.
- In certain circumstances: support for individuals to access education and training opportunities.

Funding for Organisations: the Victims Support Programme

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

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

- Services that support and maintain resilience 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.
- Talking therapies and complementary therapies that improve the mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of victims and survivors, and that enhance their quality of life.

Peace IV Programme

The PEACE IV Programme is a unique cross-border initiative, financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) of the European Union and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Designed to support peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland, it also contributes to the promotion of social and economic stability. The programme commenced on 1 April 2017.

In recognition of the needs of those who have suffered from the trauma of the troubles and conflict, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was identified in November 2015 as the single lead partner to develop the capacity for services to meet the needs of victims and survivors under Objective 3 of the Programme: Shared Spaces and Services.

The PEACE IV Programme has added value to the existing Victim Support Programme by investing in cross-border health and well-being services that develop proven expertise within the region and increase the capacity and the quality of care in the sector for victims and survivors and their families from April 2017.

This includes:

- Advocacy support to include practical support for victims and survivors engaging with institutions, historical process and inquiries (23 Advocacy Support workers);
- Development of qualified Case Managers and Health and Wellbeing (HWB) Case Workers to identify and address the needs of victims and survivors (5 Case Managers, 25 HWB 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>;
- Development of the capacity of the sector through training and development (to meet national and regional standards), research and improved regulation.

The PEACE IV – Shared Spaces & Services – Victims and Survivors Limited opened for applications in November 2016 with delivery of services to commencing in April 2017.

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 2016-17 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 VSS

We work to support victims and survivors to access quality services

We listen to and learn from victims and survivors and others

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 with 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



Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

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

Government is responsible for setting policy for victims and survivors, and is ultimately accountable for resourcing the victim/survivor sector.

The Commission for Victims and Survivors is responsible for the strategic assessment of need and for the oversight of the Forum. On the basis of these functions, it is responsible for ensuring that the correct structures are in place to meet assessed need, and for advising Government on victims' and survivors' issues. A memorandum of understanding is in place between The Victims and Survivors Service Limited and the Commission for Victims and Survivors.

The Victims and Survivors Forum acts as an advisory body to the Commission, focusing on three areas of work: the development of appropriate services to meet needs; dealing with the past; and building for the future.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is the delivery vehicle within this arrangement, responsible for providing support to individuals and groups by commissioning appropriate services and distributing funding in response to assessed and agreed need.

During 2016-17, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited participated in the meetings and working groups listed below. This engagement was undertaken in order to maintain and improve relationships with these partner organisations and groups, in the interest of delivering better services for victims and survivors.

The Monthly Trilateral Meeting

The Monthly Trilateral Meeting was established in 2012-13 and continues to facilitate ongoing communication and information-sharing between The Executive Office, the Commission for Victims and Survivors, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.

Table 1 below lists the attendees of the Monthly Trilateral Meeting.

Table 1: Monthly Trilateral Meeting Members

Name	Organisation	Position
Margaret Bateson	Victims and Survivors Service Limited	Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
Brendan Smith	Victims and Survivors Service Limited	Head of Corporate Services
Geraldine Hamilton	Victims and Survivors Service Limited	Head of Health and Well Being
John Beggs	Commission for Victims and Survivors	Secretary to the Commissioner
Peter Mann	Commission for Victims and Survivors	Policy Officer
Patricia McIntyre	Victims and Survivors Unit, The Executive Office	Principal, Finance, Strategic Planning & Social Change
Marie Matthews	Victims and Survivors Unit, The Executive Office	Deputy Principal, Finance, Strategic Planning & Social Change
Linda Mervyn	Victims and Survivors Unit, The Executive Office	Deputy Principal, Finance, Strategic Planning & Social Change

The Forum Services Working Group

The Forum Services Working Group is a sub-group of the Victims and Survivors Forum. The Forum is convened by the Commission for Victims and Survivors to enable consultation and discussion with victims and survivors of the Conflict/Troubles. The Forum currently consists of 23 members, all of whom meet the definition of a victim as detailed in the Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

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

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited met the Forum Services Working Group two times in 2016-17. This engagement has been invaluable to the Victims and Survivors

Service Limited Board and Senior Management team of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in hearing the views of victims and survivors and taking these into account when making decisions on the allocation of funding and support.

The Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Groups

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited convenes the Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Groups (VSPWG). The VSPWGs are forums of practitioners from the statutory and community/voluntary sectors who work in the trauma field. The first VSPWG was initially piloted in the Belfast area and following a review of this in September 2015, three Regional VSPWGs based in Belfast, the North West and the Southern area of Northern Ireland were established.

The aims of the Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Groups are:

- To provide community/voluntary/statutory perspectives on working with victims and survivors of the Troubles/ Conflict.
- To share/improve good practice to benefit service providers and users.
- To support collaborative working.
- To provide Victims and Survivors Service Limited with evidence of needs of victims/survivors.
- To assist Victims and Survivors Service Limited understanding of the barriers to participation.
- To enable effective signposting of users to services.
- To inform policies and strategies relevant to support for victims and survivors.

The VSPWGs focus on strategic rather than operational issues of concern to the victims and survivors sector. In addition, the VSPWGs are project-led with each one developing an Action Plan to deliver priority projects. Examples include producing an advice paper on monitoring and evaluation of social support work and the establishment of sub groups to scope and identify activities to build resilience for the PEACE IV programme and to commence developing psycho-educational resources for victims and survivors. The VSPWGs provide an invaluable platform for networking and sharing of information between Victims and Survivors Service Limited funded organisations. This is crucial in developing a network of services for victims and survivors and ensuring that organisations are aware of the wide range of services available.

The meetings of Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Groups held in 2016-17 are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Victims and Practitioners Working Groups Meetings

Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Group	Meetings Held
Belfast	7 April 2016 26 May 2016 4 August 2016 5 October 2016 8 December 2016
Southern Region	19 May 2016 7 July 2016 9 September 2016 17 November 2016
North West Region	25 May 2016 28 September 2016 29 November 2016

External Stakeholders

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

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

Strategic Developments Impacting Programmes Delivery and Stakeholder Engagement

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is working to continually improve the services and support that it delivers to victims and survivors. The Victims Practitioners Working Groups as outlined above, in conjunction with an on-going programme of collaborative design is instrumental in taking forward this work.

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

The Collaborative Design Programme, led by The Executive Office in conjunction with the Commission for Victims and Survivors and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited,

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was established in early 2015 to take forward a new innovative partnership approach to design improved 'victim led' services and support to victims and survivors and service delivery and developments have been underpinned by the Collaborative Design Programme since 2015.

This ongoing process informed the Commission's policy advice approved by Ministers in late 2016, which shaped the new service delivery model being implemented from 2017-2020. This new model is responsive to the complex needs of victims and survivors, and is subject to a robust monitoring and evaluation framework that will provide ongoing opportunities to collectively learn about and develop the best possible services for victims and survivors.

Significant work and developments include the following:

- Pilots on Personalised Budgets, Case Worker Approach and the Disability Aids Scheme implemented and evaluated;
- Outcomes focused Monitoring and Evaluation Framework;
- Minimum Standards Framework;
- Partnership and Collaborative Working across the Sector;
- Geographical mapping of individuals and services to ensure optimum and equitable access to services;
- Process for assisting victims and survivors with Welfare Reform as per Welfare Reform Mitigations Working Group report;
- Review of the Victims and Survivors Strategy; and
- Workforce training and development plan.

As per The Stormont House Agreement (SHA) in December 2014, a number of commitments which specifically related to victims and survivors have been progressed during 2016 namely:

- Partnership agreement and implementation team developed in partnership with Department of Health to progress the Mental Trauma Service;
- Successful application made to SEUPB for PEACE IV funding to develop Health & Wellbeing Caseworker and Advocacy Support Worker Network for victims and survivors within Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Great Britain.

The Victims and Survivors Limited Co-Design Programme Team members are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Victims and Survivors Limited Co-Design Programme Team 2016-17

Name	Organisation	Position
Ricky Irwin	Victims and Survivors Unit, The Executive Office	Director, Equality Victim, Human Rights and Developing Social Change
Patricia McIntyre	Victims and Survivors Unit, The Executive Office	Head of Victims Unit
John Beggs	Commission for Victims and Survivors	Secretary to the Commissioner
Adrian McNamee	Commission for Victims and Survivors	Head of Policy
Margaret Bateson	Victims and Survivors Service Limited	Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
Bertha McDougall	Victims and Survivors Service Limited	Board Member
Geraldine Hamilton	Victims and Survivors Service Limited	Head of Health and Well Being Services

Extensive engagement with the sector which commenced in early 2015, continued throughout 2016. A total of 6 collaborative design workshops were held in 2016 in relation to the development of the PEACE IV Programme and the proposed new service delivery model of 2017-2020.

By 31 March 2017 the Co-Design Programme team had also met nine times.

1.2 Overview

The purpose of this section is to provide sufficient information in addition to the strategic context outlined above around the key risks to the achievement of corporate objectives and how the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has performed during the year.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is operating within a challenging, complex and changing strategic context.

A number of operational challenges have been faced this year, the most significant being the continuing increase in the numbers of victims and survivors coming forward for support and the sustainability of current service delivery models.

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

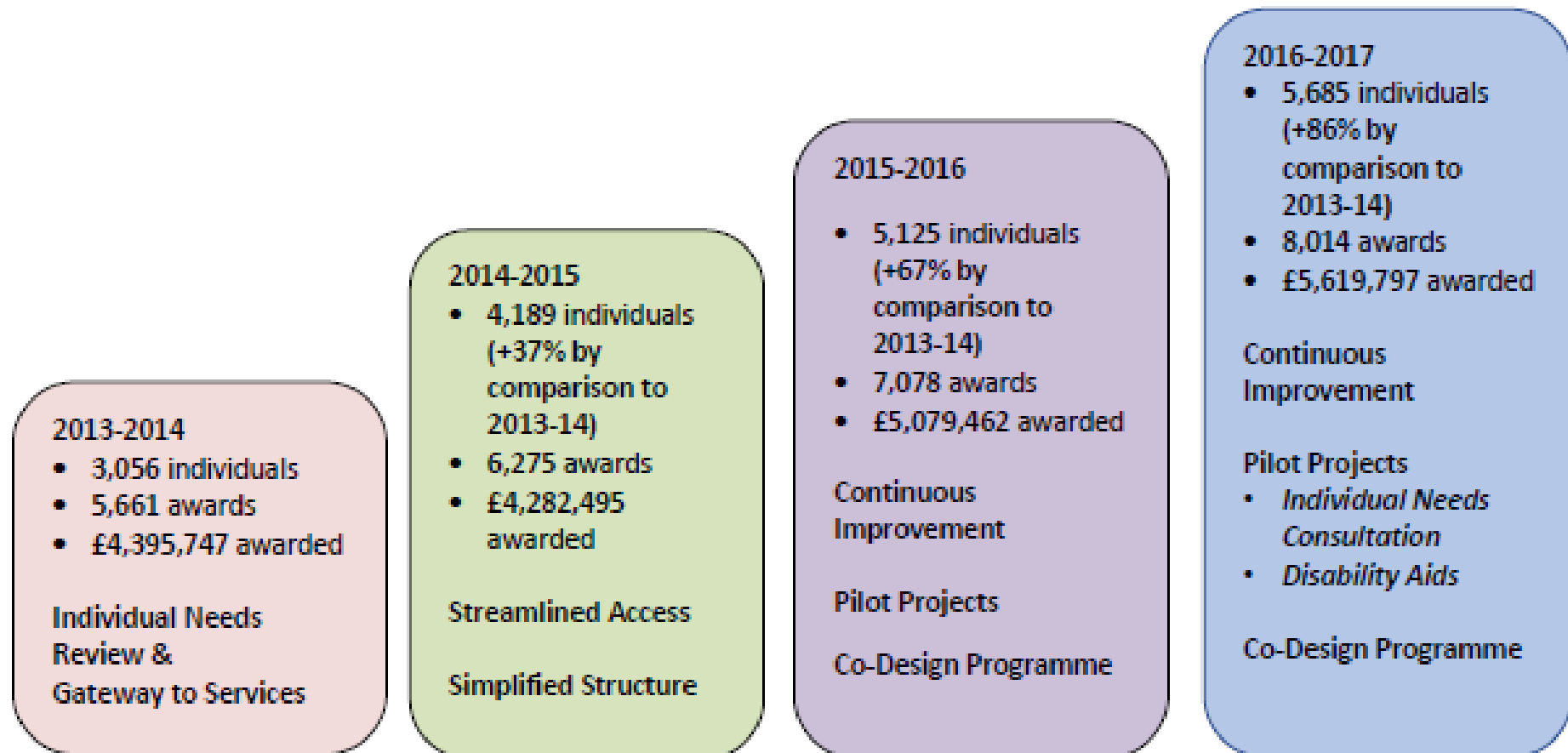
The original business case for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in 2013 assumed assistance to 3,000 individual victims and survivors per annum. In 2016-17, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited provided support and services to directly to 5,685 individuals (+86% compared to original business case and 2013-14)

A stable budget position for 2016-17 was welcomed. However the increase in budget (+28% compared to 2013-14) is not in line with the growing levels of demand. These are outlined in diagram 2 below.

Significant work has been undertaken in 2016-17, particularly around the Co-Design Programme which will seek to address how these growing levels of demand and increasing complexity of need can be addressed.

This includes a move away from a grant-led approach towards a needs based approach to providing support and services to victims and survivors.






Diagram 2: Level of Demand



Summary Performance against Business Plan Objectives

The principal activities of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in this year have been outlined above. In addition, the objectives and **47** key performance indicators were agreed with The Executive Office.

The achievement of these targets was monitored on a monthly basis and as at 31 March 2017, summary progress against all **47** targets was as follows:

Achievement Status		Number of Targets	Status Description
BLUE		46	Completed
GREEN		0	Achieved or on track for delivery
GREEN/AMBER		0	Broadly on track and there is <i>justifiable</i> confidence of getting close to targeted outcomes
AMBER		0	Progress less than planned. Significant doubt around the achievement of targeted outcomes
RED		1	Commitments not achieved or not expected to be achieved within the current PfG period

All business plan targets for 2016-17 were met with the exception of one. This related to the planned transition from cheque payments to BACS for individual payments.

This plan has been put indefinitely on hold for a number of reasons:

- The costs and resources to carry out a BACS project is likely to exceed any benefits due to the new service delivery model (more simplified payments);
- The new service delivery model is likely to result in significant resources to explain changes to individuals. A change in payments process in addition to the new service delivery changes is likely to initiate unnecessary distress and anxiety.

Further details are outlined in [Appendix 2](#).

Key progress in 2016-17 against these key objectives is outlined below. Specific risks and issues managed throughout the year in order to achieve these objectives are outlined on page 58.

Summary Financial Performance

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is sponsored by The Executive Office. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited had grant in aid budget allocation of £14,574K.

As at year end 31st March 2017, there was an underspend of £237K. Excluding capital expenditure of £237K and the bulk transfer provision of £170K, there was a net underspend of £59K representing 0.4% of the budget allocated. This is within the tolerance target of 1.5%. The Statement of Financial Position on page 94 shows the company had net assets of £157K as at 31 March 2017, and cash at bank of £1,181K.

Long Term Expenditure Trends

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

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

Table 4: Long Term Expenditure Spending

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

Summary Programmes Performance

Victims Support Programme

- Over the period April 2016 to March 2017 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited delivered funding to a total of 64 organisations.
- Following significant research and a review of skills and capacity, a Workforce Training Plan to enhance their skills and capacity was developed for delivery in 2015-16. This has been continued into 2016-2017 with a focus on widening opportunities to further develop the skills and capacity of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited funded organisations delivering social support activities.
- Consultation with funded organisations in relation to the development of improved outcomes and impact-focused monitoring and evaluation, continued into 2016-2017. An agreed framework of MYMOP (***Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile***) for measuring outcomes in relation to the delivery of Complementary Therapies and CORE net for measuring outcomes in relation to the delivery of Counselling activities was developed.
- A new call for funding was launched in November 2016. As a result, 56 organisations were issued letters of offer to deliver services over a 3 year period from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2020.

Individual Needs Programme

- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited engaged directly with individual victims and survivors to make available to them appropriate services and support. As at 31 March 2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had engaged with 5,685 individuals in this way.
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited exceeded its target figures for the delivery of support to individuals under the Individual Needs Programme.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited continues to engage with, listen to, and provide support to individuals on a daily basis.

During 2016-2017, telephone calls averaged 995 per week, and on average 139 individuals called into the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in person per week.

This represents marked increase on the levels of front line service delivery activity recorded in the previous year: during 2015-2016, telephone calls averaged 480 per week, and on average 106 individuals called into the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in person per week. This increase was due primarily to the service delivery challenges discussed above, and the impact that this had for individual victims and survivors seeking assistance, in particular under the Financial Assistance Scheme.

Summary Governance Performance

Corporate Governance

- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Internal Audit Plan was implemented, with an Annual Assurance level of *Satisfactory* awarded.
- All funding for 2016-17 was fully committed.
- The Senior Management Team continued to meet on a monthly basis to manage strategic and operational risks and ensure clear communication between functions.
- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board maintained its full complement of seven members and met on a monthly basis.

Clinical Governance

- The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has established a robust framework of protocols to support its commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of Victims and Survivors.
- For individual victims and survivors, this includes policies and protocols in relation to the identification and management of risk.
- Signposting and referral protocols and pathways have been strengthened for individuals requiring psychological support and interventions provided through organisations funded by Victims and Survivors Service Limited, other organisations and statutory services.
- The health and well-being of staff within the service is of significant importance, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited recognises the impact upon staff in dealing with vulnerable individuals. Staff training in relation to policies and protocols on clinical risk identification and management, lone working, engaging with adults at risk and self-care have continued to be developed and delivered. Staff supervision and clinical supervision are provided on a regular basis.
- A Workforce Training Plan to enhance the skills and capacity across the sector for those delivering support and services to victims and survivors continued in 2016-17. The purpose of the Workforce Training Plan is to build upon existing standards across the sector and promote and develop best practice.
- A Clinical Governance Framework was designed and developed in 2016-17 for implementation in 2017-18. This comprehensive, live framework, developed in line with the CVS Minimum Standards, comprises the 4 key components of Clinical Governance i.e. Risk Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Education & Training and Effective Practice.

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

1.3 Performance Analysis

As summarised above, during 2016-17, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was responsible for delivering funding and resources for victims and survivors in two key ways:

1. **The Victims Support Programme** (2013-2017) provides funding to organisations to enable them to deliver services and support to victims and survivors. This Programme is delivered in two streams: funding for Health and Wellbeing services, and funding for Social Support services.
2. **The Individual Needs Programme** (2016-2017) delivers funding and funded services directly to individuals who have been affected by Conflict/Troubles related incidents in the following ways:
 - Individuals who have been **physically or psychologically injured** and the injury has an ongoing impact in their day-to-day life;
 - Individuals **bereaved** of a parent, child, or spouse/partner; and/or
 - Individuals who **care** for someone who has been injured, for 35 hours or more per week.

Over the year 2016-2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited delivered support to a total of **5,685** individuals through the Individual Needs Programme, and to **12,375** individuals engaged with services provided by the **64** organisations supported through the Victims Support Programme.

This is outlined further in the review of each of the programmes below.

This section also reviews in more detail a number of other important organisational Key Performance Indicators.

VICTIMS SUPPORT PROGRAMME (2013-2017)

Aims and Objectives of the Victims Support Programme

Over the whole period 2013-17, funding was delivered to organisations under the Victims Support Programme in two ways:

1. Grants to applicant organisations who applied **before** 17 December 2012 (Usually for more than £75,000 per annum)
2. Grants to applicant organisations who applied **after** 17 December 2012 (Maximum award £75,000 per annum)

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These grants support organisations to deliver Health and Wellbeing and Social Support services to victims and survivors. The aims and objectives of this programme are detailed in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Aims and Objectives of the Health and Wellbeing and Social Support Programmes

Health and Wellbeing	
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To contribute to the wellbeing of victims/survivors by providing treatment and/or care appropriate to the individual
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide packages of treatment or care designed for specific individuals• To provide high quality care for individuals through direct support and referrals to organisations that work to professional best practice standards• To monitor progress made by individuals
Social Support	
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To support and maintain the resilience of victims and survivors• To assist victims and survivors to address the legacy of the past• To assist victims and survivors to build a shared and better future
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide a two-year funding programme from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2015 (reviewed after year 1) for services and activities aimed at group activity and informal engagement with victims and survivors• To provide services and activities to support the needs of individual victims and survivors for which there is an evidence base and using best practice standards• To monitor and evaluate progress made by individuals

Victims Support Programme 2016-2017

In 2016-2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited delivered grant funding to 64 organisations: Large Grants to 39 organisations across the region and Small Grants to a further 25 organisations.

In December 2014, a one year extension was offered to Victims Support Programme organisations to continue delivering their services into 2015-2016, subject to the achievement of key objectives and the provision of monitoring and evaluation information.

The collaborative design process resulted in positive engagement with the sector, however, establishing the best way to improve services for victims and survivors took

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longer than initially planned so it was considered valuable to continue this engagement into 2016-17. The Department therefore approved a further 1 year extension to the Victims Support Programme 2016-17 in order to ensure continuity of services to victims and survivors. This provided a further year for Co-Design consultation and to align a new Victims Support Programme with the opportunities presented by Peace IV.

Extensions to letters of offer were subject to the achievement of key objectives and the provision of monitoring and evaluation information.

For a full list of organisations in receipt of funding through the Victims Support Programme, please refer to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited website – www.victimsservice.org

Monitoring and Evaluation

Since December 2014, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has been developing an outcomes based monitoring and evaluation framework in consultation with the sector.

The first two systems, detailed below, relating to Health and Wellbeing programmes are now fully operational with all organisations who are funded and regulated to provide Complementary Therapies and Talking Therapies.

MYMOP (Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile)

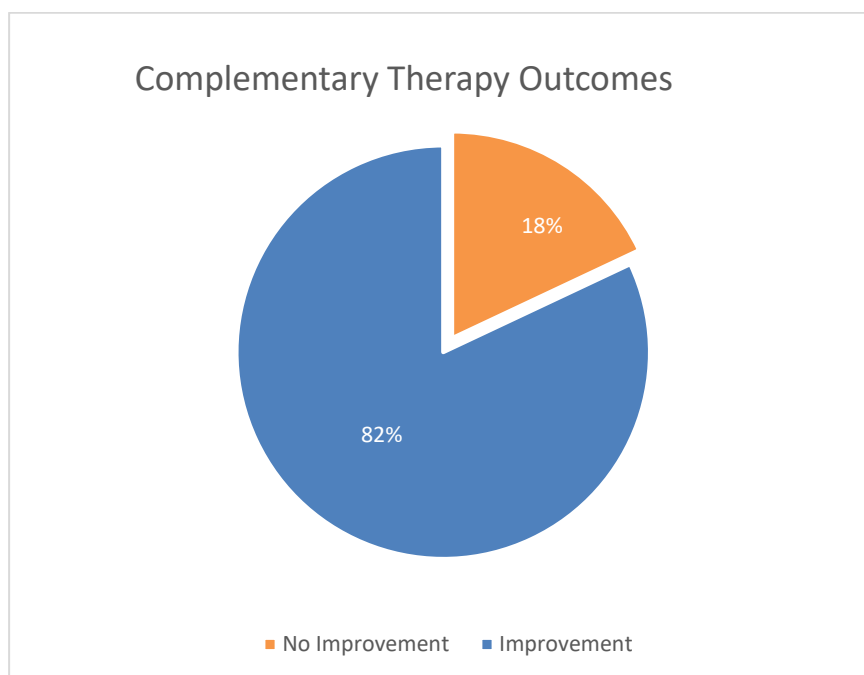
MYMOP has been implemented for all organisations delivering complementary therapies. It is a client-generated outcome questionnaire. It is problem-specific but includes general wellbeing and is applicable to all clients presenting with symptoms, whether these are physical, emotional or social.

Throughout the course of 2016/17, a total of **3,183** individuals received complementary therapy. **2,844** completed therapies and **339** ended therapy early. Results remained remarkably consistent every month throughout the year, indicating an overall improvement in approximately 4 out of 5 individuals.

This is an extremely positive approach and a significant step in improving the health and wellbeing of victims and survivors.

Looking forward, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited will work with our community and voluntary partners to identify reasons why this intervention may appear not to be effective in 1 out of every 5 cases.

Diagram 3: Complementary Therapy Outcomes



CORE Net - Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation Net

CORE Net - Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation Net is a web based system to record outcome measures which track the progress and recovery of individuals accessing therapies.

CORE is a client self-report questionnaire administered to measure outcomes for individuals engaging in talking therapies. It is administered at each session of therapy and measures outcomes within four domains:

- Wellbeing
- Risk
- Problems
- Functioning

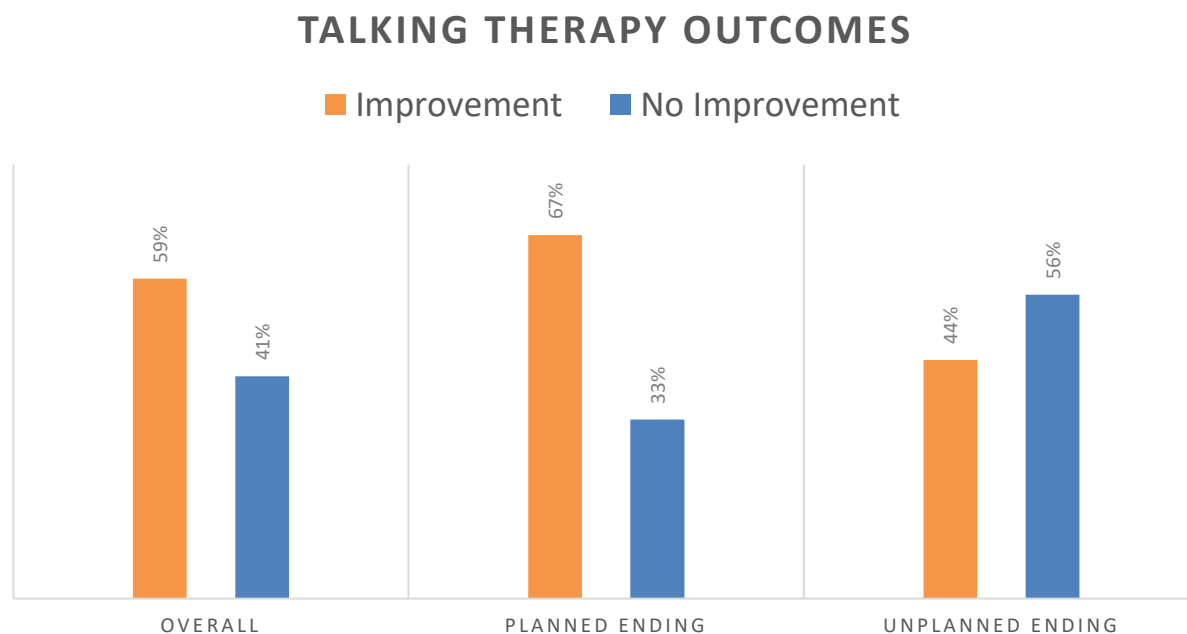
25 organisations across Northern Ireland offered talking therapies to victims and survivors. The CORE Net site was implemented in August 2016 with 11 supported organisations (Phase 1); the remaining 14 organisations were implemented in November 2016 (Phase 2).

By the end of the financial year, information relating to **1,378** clients out of **2,703** accessing a talking therapy was available. **443** completed therapy as planned and **255** ended therapy early; **680** individuals remained in therapy at this point.

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Results indicate that while overall **59%** of clients show an improvement following engagement in a talking therapy, the best outcomes (**67%**) are obtained when the therapy is completed according to plan.

Diagram 4: Talking Therapy Outcomes



It is too early in the implementation of this approach to make any firm statements. Emerging themes and patterns will be explored throughout 2017-18 and beyond with our community and voluntary partners.

Monitoring Outputs

Whilst Monitoring and Evaluations systems are currently going through a transition period, the existing monitoring tools continued to be operational, enabling the Victims and Survivors Service Limited to continue to collect output information in relation to the Victims Support Programme.

In 2016/17 **8,153** unique individuals accessed **28,690** Social Support Interventions, including respite support, befriending, information and formal classes, drop-in and outreach support services, welfare advice, advocacy support and youth activities provided by funded organisations.

Looking ahead: New Service Delivery Model 2017-2018

A 3 year business case for funding was approved by ministers in November 2016.

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A call for applications opened in November 2016 to organisations across Northern Ireland to deliver services to victims and survivors in line with the vision, mission and values of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (Commission for Victims and Survivors, 2012).

In conjunction with the Commission for Victims and Survivors, a number of strategic outcomes for victims and survivors have been developed. These focus on the impact interventions and support services rather than the inputs, outputs and activities delivered.

This follows on from learning from the outcomes based monitoring and evaluation outlined above through Core NET and MYMOP for talking therapies and complementary therapies respectively.

Applications were assessed against a new business plan approach and were required to demonstrate need and demand within the current strategic context and alignment to a number of strategies including the new outcomes based Programme for Government and linkages with other initiatives within the health and social care sector.

As a result 56 organisations were approved to deliver services from April 2017 with an overall focus on improving the health and wellbeing of victims across 4 key thematic areas outlined below.

Table 6: Strategic Outcomes

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

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is the Lead Partner for the victims and survivors element of the PEACE IV programme. The new service delivery model for the Victims Support Programme is designed to align with and complement this project.

Through this PEACE IV funding, HWB Caseworkers and Advocacy Workers will be directly employed by VSP funded organisations. Signposting and referral pathways will be designed and developed to ensure that the needs of victims and survivors are appropriately identified and met.

Over the next 3 years, there will be a continued focus on ensuring that funded organisations adhere to the CVS Minimum Standards through support which will be available through the Workforce Training and Development Plan to develop sectoral capacity alongside clear corporate and clinical governance frameworks.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS PROGRAMME (2016-2017)

Aims and Objectives of the Individual Needs Programme

The aims and objectives of the Individual Needs Programme are detailed in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Aims and Objectives of the Individual Needs Programme

Individual Needs Programme	
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In line with Health and Wellbeing and Social Support, as per the Victims Support Programme
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide services and packages of support that respond to the individual's needs, on the basis of confirmed eligibility for services under the Programme• To monitor progress made by individuals

The Individual Needs Programme was made available to victims and survivors who:

- a) have been **physically or psychologically injured** and the injury has an ongoing impact in their day-to-day life;
- b) have been **bereaved** of a parent, child, or spouse/partner; or
- c) **care** for someone who has been injured, for 35 hours or more per week.

Background to the delivery of the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017

The Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017 was delivered within the context of the ongoing Co-Design Programme (see page 16), which aims to address a range of issues in consultation with the sector's key stakeholders, in order to deliver improved services for victims and survivors. To ensure continuity of service provision and to manage expectations of victims and survivors and other stakeholders during this period of ongoing

consultation, the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017 was delivered in line with the previous year's Programme framework.

Taking the above into account, Table 8 below outlines the support that was made available to individuals through the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017.

Table 8: The Delivery of the Support Schemes and the Financial Assistance Scheme within the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017

Scheme	Support available	Eligible individuals
SUPPORT SCHEMES		
Support for Education & Training	Assistance of up to £500 towards the cost of education and training. Exceptional cases considered on a case by case basis.	Limited to existing individuals engaged in long-term accredited courses to which Victims and Survivors Service Limited had previously committed support. Closed to new applicants.
Support for Carers	A cash payment of £500.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary carers of individuals living with injuries.
Support for the Injured 1	Assistance of up to £500 towards the costs of services, aids, and adaptations used by people living with injuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals who receive DLA Middle Rate Care Component (or equivalent level of benefit) as a result of physical and/or psychological injuries from a Conflict/Troubles-related incident.
Support for the Injured 2	Assistance of up to £1,500 towards the costs of services, aids, and adaptations used by people living with injuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals who receive DLA High Rate Care Component (or equivalent level of benefit) as a result of physical and/or psychological injuries from a Conflict/Troubles-related incident.
Support for the Injured 3	Assistance towards the costs of services that help individuals to manage chronic pain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals living with injuries (both psychological and physical) who have previously been assessed, with ongoing treatment plans.
Support for the Bereaved	Assistance of up to £500 towards costs associated with respite breaks, home heating, or complementary therapies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereaved partners/spouses, bereaved parents, or children who have lost a parent.
Disability Aids (Pilot)	Assistance towards the costs of disability aids and adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals living with physical injuries

Scheme	Support available	Eligible individuals
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME		
Financial Assistance	Direct financial assistance offered to certain individuals on the basis of a financial means test: cash payment of £750.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals living with injuries. • Carers of individuals living with injuries. • Bereaved partners/spouses, bereaved parents, or children who have lost a parent.

Application Process: Support Schemes

As in 2015-2016, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited sought to deliver the Support Schemes in 2016-2017 with minimum delay and bureaucracy for individual victims and survivors. Access to the Support Schemes was managed as follows:

- **Existing individuals** whose eligibility for the relevant Schemes had already been determined were contacted directly and issued with Award Letters. This correspondence was streamlined and improved on the basis of lessons learned in previous years and in consultation with the Commission for Victims and Survivors.
- **New individuals** were invited to complete a simple Registration Form and provide the relevant supporting information to confirm their eligibility for the Schemes. Award Letters were issued on receipt of the completed Registration Form and supporting documentation, confirmed eligibility and budget availability.

In 2016-17 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was able to support individuals in cases where all relevant supporting documentation was received by 31 March 2017.

Application Process: Financial Assistance

As in previous years, this Scheme was the only means-tested measure within the Individual Needs Programme. The sole exception to the means-testing rule was in relation to those Seriously Injured applicants who could provide evidence that they were in receipt of Disability Living Allowance High Rate Care Component or the equivalent as a result of Conflict/Troubles-related injuries.

Spot Check of Applications for Financial Assistance made by Self Declaration in 2015-2016

In 2015-2016 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was required by The Executive Office to conduct a 10% spot check in relation to the use of Self Declarations by existing recipients of the Scheme, to ensure that its requirements continued to be met. The 10% spot check involved contacting individuals that applied via Self Declaration to request up to date bank statements and details of income and outgoings, to enable a full means test

calculation. The detailed findings of the spot check were outlined in the *Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2016*.

Implications for the application process for Financial Assistance 2016-2017

The spot check demonstrated a need for a significant change to the delivery mechanism for this Scheme. An Options Paper was prepared by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, and presented to the Co-Design Programme, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and Audit and Risk Committee. A hybrid mechanism was agreed which would balance the need for a victim-centred approach with the need to meet the relevant regularity governance requirements by ensuring that payments are made for the purposes intended by the Northern Ireland Assembly.

In 2016-2017, this approach was implemented as follows:

- Where the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had on record that the individual was in receipt of indefinite or current Disability Living Allowance High Rate Care Component or the equivalent, no further information was requested. Updated information was sought for those not on indefinite or current awards.
- For existing individuals in receipt of state benefits, as these individuals had already been means tested by the Department for Communities, only a Self Declaration was required along with up to date supporting information to demonstrate their current benefit allowance.
- For existing individuals in employment or in receipt of a pension, a Self Declaration was sought, requesting supporting information to show the household income and outgoings.
- For new applicants, and for existing individuals whose financial circumstances had changed, a full application was required including supporting information to show the household income and outgoings.

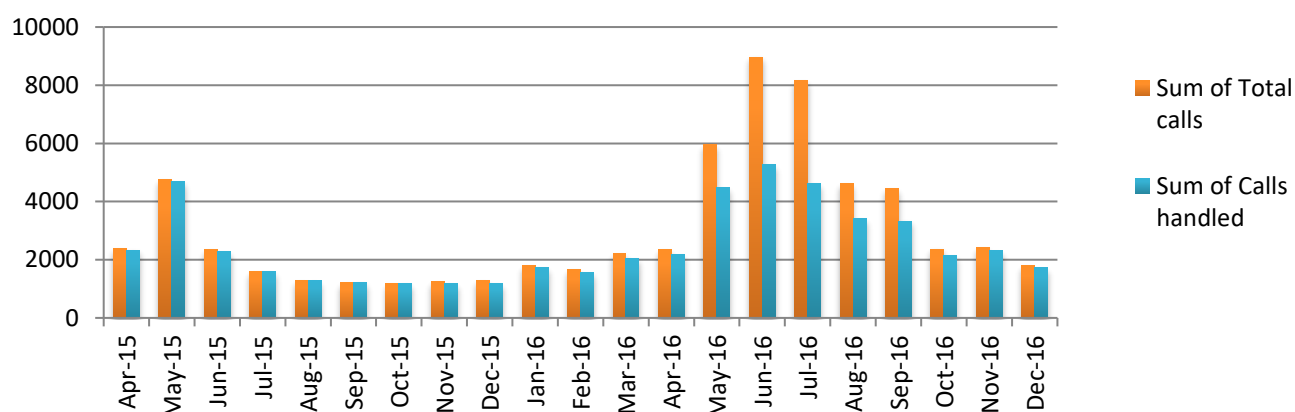
In designing the Scheme's audit trail requirements, i.e. Application and Self Declaration Forms, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited consulted with the Commission for Victims and Survivors and with experienced welfare officers within the sector. The Scheme was open for applications for a six-week period from 9 May 2016 – 17 June 2016. Upon review of applications submitted within that timeframe, all applicants that did not submit full supporting information were given a further opportunity of 10 working days to provide the required documentation.

While this delivery approach was considered proportionate and satisfactory from a governance perspective, the change from the more simplified Self Declaration process implemented in 2015-2016 created confusion for some individuals. The impact of this is outlined below.

Implications for victim-centred service delivery in 2016-2017

The delivery of the Financial Assistance Scheme 2016-2017 as outlined above gave rise to an increase in the volume of queries over the period April – October 2016, as individuals made contact via telephone and in person to resolve queries and concerns regarding their applications. The scale of this increase was unprecedented in the experience of the organisation, and peaked over the period May to November 2016 as illustrated below.

Table 9: Incoming Telephone Call Activity: April 2015 – December 2016



Individuals contacting the organisation frequently presented as confused and annoyed in relation to the changes to the Financial Assistance Scheme compared to previous years. Many presented with anger and impatience, some expressed significant frustration and even distress. These individuals were supported by staff, in line with the internal policies and procedures.

Both the volume and nature of this increased engagement placed a strain on the front line service team within the organisation. Despite this, however, the team maintained an overall positive tone over this challenging period. This is demonstrated by the fact that there was not a notable increase in the number of complaints received by the organisation (see Table 16 on page 51).

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited provided the Commission for Victims and Survivors with a paper detailing the various impacts of this approach to delivering support to victims and survivors, and recommending changes on that basis. This information was taken into account in the Commission’s policy advice approved by Ministers in November 2016, and informs the new Service Delivery Model for 2017-2018 onwards (see below).

Projects delivered as part of the Individual Needs Programme

Within the broader context of the Co-Design Programme, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited implemented three additional measures under the Individual Needs Programme. These projects were delivered to maintain the provision of support that is flexible and responsive to individual needs, pending confirmation of the new Service Delivery Model which applies from 2017-2018 onwards (see below).

- (i) **Personalised Budget and Caseworker Approach Pilot:** this highly successful approach, which was detailed in the Victims and Survivors Service Limited *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016* was extended in its established format as an ongoing Pilot in 2016-2017. 29 Caseworkers based within the organisations funded under the Victims Support Programme, together with one Caseworker within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, continued to engage with individuals in receipt of awards under the Individual Needs Programme. The Caseworkers used the *Individual Needs Consultation* form proposed by the Commission for Victims and Survivors to capture the individual's needs and document proposed solutions under the Personalised Budget approach to using their awards.

Over the course of the year, 908 individual victims and survivors participated in this process, engaging with a Caseworker and using their award towards the cost of items identified to meet their personal needs. This level of activity represented a 120% increase on the uptake of the Pilot in 2015-2016. This significant increase in demand demonstrates an overwhelmingly positive response by victims and survivors and their representatives to a more flexible approach to meeting personal needs.

An evaluation of the items purchased under the Personalised Budget approach showed that individuals used their Individual Needs Programme award primarily to meet basic household costs including home heating, furniture, and white goods. This information was monitored as part of the ongoing Co-Design Programme of consultation, to inform the support award structure of the new Service Delivery Model (see below).

- (ii) **Disability Aids Scheme:** the findings of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited internal evaluation of the positive outcomes and impact of the Disability Aids Pilot Scheme were documented in the *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016*. As recommended in that evaluation, the approach was extended as part of the Individual Needs Programme core activity in 2016-2017.

The Disability Aids Scheme 2016-2017, like the Pilot Scheme in 2015-2016, aimed to assess an individual's needs with the objective of enhancing and/or maintaining

independent living, quality of life, and improved health and wellbeing of victims and survivors living with Conflict/Troubles-related injuries.

It sought to:

- Understand the needs of individuals in relation to physical aids and adaptations;
- Remove or resolve barriers limiting access to statutory support; and
- Provide, where appropriate, equipment that is deemed to be of a specification that enhances quality of life but avoids duplication and is not currently funded under the provision of the National Health Service or other statutory bodies.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited developed a guidance note for the delivery of the 2016/17 Disability Aids Scheme based on lessons learned during the Pilot Scheme in 2015/16. This guidance note was designed to inform decision making about the delivery of bespoke items based on assessed need. Guidance in relation to supporting documentation requirements, including templates to facilitate engagement with General Practitioners and other health professionals, was also established, along with a designated records system for the Scheme.

Over the course of the year, a total of 26 individuals were allocated awards under the Disability Aids Scheme, totalling £100,452.

In November 2016, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited prepared an Options Paper that outlined the positive outcomes and impact of the Scheme, and detailed the key lessons learned. The Options Paper demonstrated the overall positive added value delivered for victims and survivors by this Scheme. However, the Options Paper also identified that there was one area of provision under the Scheme that constituted a high risk, namely: the provision of home adaptations. It was identified that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has limited capacity to manage individuals' expectations in relation to the scope of required adaptations, and limited capacity to control or forecast the budget and by extension to guarantee value for money.

On that basis, it was recommended that the delivery of the Scheme as part of the new Service Delivery Model (see below) should be based on the 2016-2017 delivery framework, amended to introduce capped value grant funding for Home Adaptations delivered by the Housing Executive.

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

In January 2016 the *Welfare Reform Mitigations Working Group Report* was presented to the NI Executive, with the First Minister indicating acceptance of all of its recommendations. The Report was published on 3 February 2016. From that date onwards, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited took steps to engage with the department responsible for implementing the reforms and mitigations, to better understand the implications for victims and survivors and to ensure that the needs of individuals engaged with the organisation are appropriately supported. It was established that the primary impact and relevant mitigations of the proposed reforms for victims and survivors included the following provision for individuals transitioning from Disability Living Allowance to the Personal Independence Payment (extracted from brief provided to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board in February 2016):

Where a claimant scores at least 4 points in the assessment but does not qualify for Personal Independence Payment and is seeking benefit on basis of a Conflict-related injury, he/she should be awarded the additional 4 points to qualify for the benefit. He/She should also qualify for supplementary payments at the standard rate of whichever Personal Independence Payment component is most advantageous for a period of one year.

In light of this, and in collaboration with the Commission for Victims and Survivors, the Department for Communities, and The Executive Office, it was agreed that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited would facilitate the communication of relevant information about individuals registered with the organisation on the basis of injuries suffered as a result of the Conflict/Troubles, and known to be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. A pathway for this facilitated communication was agreed, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited issued correspondence to these identified individuals, inviting their consent to share relevant information in support of their Personal Independence Payment claims with the Department for Communities and its contracted assessors at CAPITA. The objective of this exercise is to facilitate as far as possible the review of the individual's case by paper based assessment, avoiding wherever possible a face-to-face assessment.

To support a wider understanding of this process and the mitigations applicable to injured victims and survivors, the Department for Communities has engaged with the Forum for Victims and Survivors and the Victims and Survivors Practitioners' Working Group, and the Commission for Victims and Survivors has delivered an awareness session with the CAPITA assessors, addressing issues relevant to victims and survivors.

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The transition from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment commenced in early 2017. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited wrote to more than 1,500 individuals to request their consent to share their information, and has received this consent from 1,114 individuals to date. Their information is being shared on a case-by-case basis as the requests are issued by the Department for Communities and CAPITA. At the time of writing this report, this arrangement is operating well: individuals' information has been requested by CAPITA / the Department for Communities in 37 cases, and face-to-face assessments have been avoided in at least 30 of these to date. On that basis, this exercise is proving to be a positive example of cross-departmental co-working.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is monitoring this process for issues and risks arising, and has shared with the Commission for Victims and Survivors and the Department for Communities its concern that individual victims' and survivors' expectations must be carefully managed by all stakeholders. This engagement therefore remains a current topic of discussion and review by both the Victims and Survivors Service Limited senior management team and the wider Co-Design Meeting.

Looking ahead: New Service Delivery Model 2017-2018

The Commission for Victims and Survivors provided policy advice to Ministers in August 2016 on the future service delivery model to be administered by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited from 2017-2018 onwards. This was strongly informed by the ongoing Collaborative Design Process and included briefs and recommendations submitted by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited based on analysis of service delivery and lessons learned to date. At the end of November 2016, Ministerial approval for this advice was given, and a confirmed service delivery model and Business Case for Funding was delivered by The Executive Office. This enabled the Victims and Survivors Service Limited to plan for the new Programmes opening in April 2017.

Key aspects of the New Service Delivery Model

The distinguishing element of the new service delivery model is its focus on need: in line with the outcomes-based accountability model of policy implementation under the draft Programme for Government 2016-2021, the new model focuses on delivering services that respond to identified needs and that will make a positive difference to the lives of individuals. In addition, the new model takes into account feedback considered by the Collaborative Design Team in relation to the following:

- a) **The need to reduce bureaucracy surrounding payments made to individuals.** Instead of making awards available, to be claimed by submission of valid invoices/receipts, the new model makes cash payments to eligible individuals. However, given budget restraints and sustainability considerations,

these payments are only available to “existing individuals” i.e. individuals registered with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited by 31 March 2017 and confirmed eligible for support per the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017.

- b) The benefits delivered by the successful implementation of the pilot projects discussed above.** This is made possible by the role played by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited as nominated lead for the PEACE IV Victims and Survivors Programme: dovetailing with the new service delivery model and opening simultaneously, this Programme enables the recruitment of a network of Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers across the organisations also funded under the Victims Support Programme. These Health & Wellbeing Caseworkers are supported by Regional Health and Wellbeing Case Managers within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. This infrastructure builds upon the learning of the Caseworker Pilot to deliver one-to-one support for victims and survivors across the region, facilitating their access not only to services funded under the Victims Support Programme, but also through Additional Needs Based Frameworks under the Individual Needs Programme, and signposting and referral to services in the wider statutory, community, and voluntary sectors. This element of the new model is open to all victims and survivors, both those already registered with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited by 31 March 2017 and new individuals coming forward to both this organisation and the organisations funded under the Victims Support Programme.

The new service delivery model is therefore a ‘hybrid’ transitional approach comprising two key components: support for ‘existing individuals’ of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, and support made available to both existing and new individuals coming forward for assistance.

In terms of **support available to ‘existing individuals’**: the Business Case for Funding provided for cash payments to be made to all individuals registered with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited by 31 March 2017 and confirmed eligible for support per the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017.

The governance arrangements applicable to this aspect of the new service delivery model included a spot check of a sample of existing individuals, to ensure that their circumstances remained such that they continued to be eligible for the relevant payments. The methodology was agreed between the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and The Executive Office in early February 2017, and the spot check was conducted over February, March and April 2017. On 2 May 2017 it was agreed with The Executive Office that sufficient assurances had been obtained, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited proceeded to open the new programme.

Table 10 below outlines the detail of the support made available to the existing individuals confirmed eligible following the spot check.

Table 10: New Service Delivery Model – Part 1 – Cash Payments delivered to Existing Individuals*

Ref	Payment	Value	Eligible individuals
1	Self Directed Assistance Payment	£500	Individuals confirmed eligible for the following awards under the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017 rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Bereaved • Support for the Injured 1 (Disability Living Allowance Middle Rate Care Component) • Support for the Injured 2 (Disability Living Allowance High Rate Care Component) • Support for Carers • Financial Assistance Scheme
2	Additional Needs Based Payment	£500	Individuals confirmed to meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereaved of a spouse/partner • Bereaved of both parents • Injured and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance High Rate Care Component
3	Transition Payment	£200	Individuals who received the Financial Assistance Scheme award in 2016-2017, <i>in addition to</i> another Support Scheme Award

* “Existing Individuals” refers to individuals registered with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited by 31 March 2017 and confirmed eligible for support per the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017.

** An individual can only receive a maximum of £1,000 cash in the year.

In terms of **needs based support available to both ‘new and existing individuals’**: the Business Case for Funding provided for Additional Needs Based Frameworks, which will operate broadly as the Disability Aids Pilot and Scheme had operated in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

Table 11 below outlines the detail of the Additional Needs Based Frameworks.

Table 11: New Service Delivery Model – Part 2 – Needs-Based Support open to Existing* and New Individuals**

<i>Framework</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Eligible individuals</i>
Disability Aids Framework	Variable, in line with need and solutions identified	Individuals who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the definition of a victim/survivor per the Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006; and • Are able to provide, with the support of a Health & Wellbeing Caseworker, supporting information to demonstrate their specific need in line with the relevant Framework requirements
Education & Training Framework***		
Persistent Pain Framework		
Psychological Therapies Framework		
Trauma-Focused Physical Activity Framework***		
Volunteering Framework***		

* “Existing Individuals” refers to individuals registered with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited by 31 March 2017 and confirmed eligible for support per the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017.

** “New Individuals” refers to individuals engaging with the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the first time after 31 March 2017 and confirmed eligible for support per the relevant Additional Needs Based Framework.

*** The delivery of these Frameworks include the delivery of PEACE IV funds, rather than exclusively Individual Needs Programme Funding. However, they are delivered as an integral part of the new service delivery model and are therefore not differentiated from the Individual Needs Programme for the purposes of public understanding of the support that is available.

At the time of writing this report, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is establishing the network of Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers under the PEACE IV Programme, and commencing delivery of support via these Additional Needs Frameworks.

Awards and Payments made under the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017

Under the Individual Needs Programme 2016-2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited issued 5,685 individuals with award letters.

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The final outturn of the Individual Needs Programme in 2016-2017 was £5.38m. Table 12 below outlines the total number of awards and the values of payments made to individuals.

Table 12: Awards and Payments made under the Individual Needs Programme in 2016-2017

Scheme	Number of Awards made	Value of Payments £'000
Disability Aids	26	89
Education and Training	14	9
Financial Assistance	2,779	2,082
Support For Carers	558	272
Support for the Injured	1,818	1,590
Support for the Injured (Chronic Pain)	44	28
Support for the Bereaved	2,775	1,307
TOTALS	8,014	5,376

8,014 awards were issued to 5,685 individuals.

OTHER KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Financial Performance

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 Dear Accounting Officer (Department of Finance) (DAO) 12/08 *Supporting Businesses prompt payment of Invoices* which introduced a prompt payment of ten days, with effect from December 2008.

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Table 13 below shows the average number of days taken to pay invoices in each month over the year 2016-17.

Table 13: Payments 2016-17

Month	Percentage of invoices paid within 10 days	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days	Average days taken to pay invoices per month
Apr-2016	96%	2%	5
May-2016	80%	20%	7
Jun-2016	60%	20%	18
Jul-2016	71%	18%	12
Aug-2016	44%	42%	19
Sep-2016	72%	22%	12
Oct-2016	2%	70%	28
Nov-2016	32%	47%	23
Dec-2016	45%	21%	31
Jan-2017	70%	18%	13
Feb-2017	93%	4%	8
Mar-2017	85%	12%	3

Overall for 2016-17, 63% of invoices were paid within 10 days and 87% within 30 days. On average 15 days were taken to pay invoices during 2016-17. This is a decrease on 2015-16 when 79% were paid within 10 days, 97% within 30 days and an average of 11 days overall.

Staff absence contributed to the decrease in processing times during October 2016 which also contributed to the overall decrease during 2016-17. Contingency plans were implemented during 2016-17 to ensure payment processing times are maintained during periods of annual and sickness absence.

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 annually by the Assembly. It is, therefore, not exposed to significant liquidity risks. In addition, the Victims and

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

Survivors Service Limited does not access funds from commercial sources and so is not exposed to significant interest rate risks.

The Executive Office has indicated that it intends to continue to fund the organisation for the foreseeable future and has provided indicative budgets to the end of the financial year 2017-18. The organisation has the staff resources required to achieve its current business objectives and has a proposed staffing structure with consideration currently being given regarding the Senior Management Team and future business objectives.

The opening budget position for 2016-17 was communicated to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in March 2016 as £13.266m. Following the June 2016 Monitoring Round, this position was increased to £14.016m. £465k was allocated to alleviate budget pressures on the Individual Needs Programme in relation to new victims and survivors coming forward across all schemes; to support preparatory work to design and develop the health and wellbeing caseworker model due to implementation April 2017; to support trauma training as part of the Workforce Training Plan; and to augment the Welfare Advice Programme within the Victims Support Programme. At that time, a capital budget of £285k was also allocated in respect of the proposed new Management Information System (MIS).

A further £258k was allocated following the October and January Monitoring Rounds primarily to alleviate further budget pressures on the Individual Needs Programme in relation to new victims and survivors coming forward across all schemes.

A sum of £300k was also allocated following the January Monitoring Round for pension obligations relating to staff who transferred from the Community Relations Council on 12 November 2012.

Peace IV Funding

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited also received Peace IV funding during 2016-17 from the Special EU Programmes Body. A grant of £13.373m has been awarded under Promoting Peace and Reconciliation (Action 3.3: Victims and Survivors) for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 July 2021.

In 2016-17, expenditure related primarily to the design development of the project to ensure implementation could take place effective April 2017. This included:

- Preparatory work to design and develop advocacy support and health and wellbeing caseworker networks;
- Recruitment of Victims and Survivors Service Limited Health and Wellbeing Case Managers and support staff;
- Recruitment of additional governance and verification staff in anticipation

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

The financial results for the period as set out on page 93 indicate that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited received grant funding of £61,048 during 2016-17.

Staffing Performance

Staff Composition

Senior Civil Service Staff

In 2016-17 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had one senior civil service (or equivalent) staff member.

The table below illustrates the breakdown of staff by gender and grade:

Table 14: Breakdown of Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and staff by gender and grade

Board		Grade 5 DP (SMT)		SO		EO1		EO2		AO			
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
4	3	0	1	0	5	2	7	0	3	1	1	5	4

Overall breakdown: Staff - 21 female and 8 male; Board – 3 female and 4 male.

At 31 March 2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had 29 employees in post (28.02 Full Time Equivalent). The average permanent staff number was 25.48 during this period as outlined on page 105.

Absence Data

Table 15 below shows the sick absence results for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the year ended 31 March 2017.

Table 15: Sickness Absence

	Working days lost 2016-17	Average days lost per WTE member of staff
Including long-term absence	252	9.89*
Excluding long-term absence	85	3.34*

* Based on an average WTE of 25.48 permanent employees over the full year.

This compares to 337 days absence (including long term absence) in 2015-16, an average of 13.87 working days lost per member of staff during that period.

Excluding long term absence, this compares to 81 days absence in 2015-16, an average of 3.33 working days lost per member of staff during that period.

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.

Specific staff policies which are in place include:

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- **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 2016-17 there was significant emphasis on improving leadership and management. A high uptake of learning and development opportunities was maintained across the Victims and Survivors Service Limited.

- **Health and Safety**

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is committed to applying all existing health and safety at work legislation and regulations to ensure that staff and visitors enjoy the benefits of a safe environment.

Expenditure on Consultancy

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited spent £0 on consultancy in 2016-17.

Off-Payroll Engagements

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited had two 'off-payroll' engagements exceeding a cost of over £58,200 per annum during 2016-17.

The engagements were in relation to procurement of two temporary members of staff at a 2016-17 cost of £73,632 and £58,471.

Service Delivery Performance

Complaints Handling

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

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

Complaints outstanding from 2014-2015

At the time of preparing the *Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016*, three complaints from 2014-2015 remained unresolved. These concerned cases where individuals had complained about a decision to withhold payment from them pending investigation by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. In one of these cases, the individual concerned had referred their complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

All three of these complaints were closed in 2016-2017. In all three cases, the Police Service of Northern Ireland advised that while there was insufficient evidence to proceed with a further investigation, due to significant breaches by the individuals in relation to the terms and conditions of grant, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited should not issue payment to the individuals concerned. In March 2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited received verbal notification from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman that it had closed its investigation of the case referred to it in 2014-2015.

Complaints outstanding from 2015-2016

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

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

on the Complaints Register for 2016-2017, and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited cooperated fully with information requests from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman at that time. At 31 March 2017 the investigation remained ongoing.

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

Complaints Handled in 2016-2017

In 2016-2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited recorded 20 complaints, including the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman case above. While this was an increase on the previous year's total of 13, this figure remained significantly lower than the numbers recorded in earlier years (70 in 2014-2015), and negligible in terms of the proportion of complaints to the total number of individuals accessing support (0.35% of 5,685 individuals). The increase in complaints in 2016-2017 is clearly linked to the service delivery challenges discussed above, and the impact that this had for individual victims and survivors seeking assistance, in particular under the Financial Assistance Scheme.

All except two of these complaints were resolved as at 31 March 2017. The details of the two outstanding complaints are as follows:

- The complaint discussed above, which closed on 31 May 2017.
- On 20 September 2016 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was notified that the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman had commenced an investigation into another complaint. Following this investigation, the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman wrote to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited on 17 August 2017 with its findings and recommendations. On this basis, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited wrote to the complainant on 19 October 2017 to offer an apology and payment of £150. This matter is now closed.

Table 16 below provides a summary of the complaints handled in 2016-2017.

Table 16: Summary of Complaints 2016-2017

Category	Number	Notes
Number of complaints upheld	6	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication Issues and Process Challenges</i> (i.e. issues that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited can resolve upon review) • <i>Records Management Issues</i> (1 case)
Number of complaints partially upheld	5	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication Issues and Process Challenges</i> (i.e. issues that the Victims and Survivors Service Limited can resolve upon review) • <i>Other Concerns</i>
Number of complaints not upheld	7	Key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Policy and Budget Concerns</i> (i.e. issues beyond the scope of the control of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited)
Number of complaints unresolved/still open at year end	2	Ongoing Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman investigations (see narrative above).
Total complaints received to year ended 31 March 2017	20	

Positive feedback and messages of thanks received during 2016-2017

In 2016-2017, 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. Recording this positive feedback provides a qualitative insight into the impact of the support provided under the Individual Needs Programme for individuals who are injured, bereaved, and care for others living with injuries. Over the whole period, the organisation recorded **133** such messages.

Sustainability Report

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

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

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

The relocation of the Belfast office to Seatem House was successful completed during 2015-16.

The relocation of the Dungannon office from 5 Ballygawley Road to 1 Ballygawley Road took place in July 2016 and provided a substantial reduction in square footage, heating and lighting usage. Designing the layout to NICS office standards has reduced the number of cellular offices and maximised utilisation of available space. In addition utilities are restricted to control usage, for example both heating and light operate automatically within set parameters.

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 Victims and Survivors Service Limited has also, in order to reduce its carbon footprint, pursued a policy of enabling staff to work with flexibility in their 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.

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

Going Concern

The accounts are prepared on a going concern basis as it is assumed that the parent Department, The Executive Office, will continue to fund the organisation's activities. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited three year Corporate Plan 2016-19 was approved by the Department in July 2016 and by Ministers in September 2016.



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer

Date: 15 December 2017

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

Overview

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

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

These are outlined below.

2.1 Corporate Governance Report

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

2.1.1 Director's Report

Introduction and Background

The Directors during 2016-17 were as follows:

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

Bertha McDougall – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Richard Solomon – Director appointed 5 December 2013

Beverley Clarke – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Patricia Haren – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Séamus Magee – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Stephen McIlveen – Director appointed 1 April 2015

Following a number of strategic planning sessions, The Victims and Survivors Service Limited drafted its Corporate Plan 2017-20 in March 2017 and submitted to The Executive Office in June 2017.

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

The Corporate Plan 2017-20 outlines the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's approach to Outcomes Based Accountability and grows upon the progress which has been made as part of the Co-Design Programme and the outcomes-led approach outlined in the Performance Analysis section above.

This new approach is consistent with the Programme for Government 2016-2021 outcomes focused plan for all citizens in Northern Ireland.

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

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited *Action Plan 2017-18* details the measurable targets and steps that will be taken over the next financial year to work towards these outcomes. Progress against this Plan is monitored on an ongoing basis and reported on monthly 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 Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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

In 2016-2017 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited received and responded to six Freedom of Information requests.

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

- Details of services and support available to individual victims and survivors, both under the Individual Needs Programme and via regional organisations funded under the Victims Support Programme, and how to access this assistance.

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

- Details of funding available to organisations under the Victims Support Programme, and how to access the same.
- Minutes of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board and Audit and Risk Committee meetings.

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

Senior Management Team

The permanent head of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. This position was held during 2016-17 by Margaret Bateson who was appointed Chief Executive and Accounting Officer following a public recruitment process on 11 July 2016.

During 2016-17, the composition of the Senior Management Team was as follows:

Table 17: Senior Management Team

Name	Grade	Post Title	Date Appointed
Margaret Bateson	G5	Chief Executive and Accounting Officer	11 July 2016
Brendan Smith	G7	Head of Corporate Services	21 September 2015
Geraldine Hamilton	G7	Head of Health and Well-Being	1 February 2016
Caroline Armstrong	DP	Finance and Governance Manager	1 July 2014
Sara Templer	DP	INP Programmes Manager	18 April 2016
Emma Dargan	DP	VSP Programmes Manager	18 April 2016
David Hall	DP	Temporary MI Manager	5 February 2015
Nicola Nugent	DP	Regional Health and Well-Being Case Manager	20 February 2017
Rachel McConnell	DP	Regional Health and Well-Being Case Manager	1 March 2017

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

Related Parties

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

Register of Interests

The Chair, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board, the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer and Senior Management Team 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 and Survivors Service Limited were notified in July 2017 by Capita, its Internal Audit provider that the organisation had made the decision to wind up the Assurance, Risk and Governance Team which provided internal audit services. At that time, completion of year one audit activity, in respect of 2016-17, within a three year contract had not been completed.

Please see the Governance Statement on Page 58 for further detail.

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

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.

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

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

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

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

2.1.3 Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2017

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 report directly to The Executive Office.

This statement is given in respect of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's accounts for 2016-17. 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

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

governance issues and concludes with a review of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited conformance with the Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013.

The Purpose of the Governance Statement

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

Overview of the Governance Framework

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

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 Victims and Survivors Service Limited's aims and objectives and can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The governance framework within which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited operated for the year ended 31 March 2017 comprises:

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

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

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

- The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (signed September 2014);
- The Executive Office Oversight Arrangements;
- The Corporate Plan 2016-19 and Business Plan 2016-17 (agreed by Ministers in September 2016);
- The Performance Appraisal Framework (signed November 2012, updated May 2015);
- The Risk Management Framework (signed July 2013, updated September 2016);
- Financial Policies and Procedures (signed July 2013, updated July 2015);
- Whistle-blowing Policy (signed July 2013, updated September 2016); and

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- Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan (signed December 2014, updated November 2016).

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, the 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;

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- Establishing and overseeing the implementation of the corporate governance arrangements of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited, including risk management; and
- Overseeing and monitoring progress against all of its equality of opportunity and good relations obligations.

Table 18 below lists the Board members.

Table 18: Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board Membership

Name	Position
Oliver Wilkinson	Director appointed 13 December 2013 Appointed Interim Chair 30 June 2014; appointed Chair 1 April 2015
Bertha McDougall	Director appointed 4 December 2013
Richard Solomon	Director appointed 5 December 2013
Beverley Clarke	Director appointed 1 April 2015
Patricia Haren	Director appointed 1 April 2015
Séamus Magee	Director appointed 1 April 2015
Stephen McIlveen	Director appointed 1 April 2015

The Board met 11 times in 2016-17. Table 19 below details the attendance of Board members at the meetings.

Table 19: Board Meeting Attendance

Date	Oliver Wilkinson	Bertha McDougall	Richard Solomon	Séamus Magee	Stephen McIlveen	Beverley Clarke	Patricia Haren
26 April 2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
17 May 2016	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14 June 2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
16 August 2016	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
13 Sept 2016	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
25 Oct 2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15 Nov 2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13 Dec 2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17 Jan 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17 Feb 2017	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
14 Mar 2017	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

In addition to the key considerations outlined above, at these meetings the Board addressed the following standing agenda items:

- Minutes of Previous Meeting;
- Chairman's Update;
- Chief Executive and Accounting Officer Update;
- Progress against Budget;
- Progress against Business and Corporate Plan and risks in achieving stated objectives;
- Progress reports on Programmes, Health and Wellbeing Services and Communications;
- Compliance Update.

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.

The Board receives written reports from me on key areas: Corporate Services, Programmes, Health and Wellbeing Services, and Communications.

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

A review of all management reporting was completed in 2015-16 to adapt to the strategic direction of the organisation. This resulted in the development of a suite of reports for the Board which focus on providing Board members with information of particular strategic relevance. This approach is designed to improve the Board's ability to provide effective strategic stewardship of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. The same reporting continued throughout 2016-17.

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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 within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited. Directors and Senior management are required to report any significant changes 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 2017. The overall conclusion was that the Board performed well in 2016-17. The actions of this will be taken forward in 2017-18, and include:

- Continual review of performance and best practice.
- The Board obtaining a stakeholder perspective on the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's performance, strengths and areas for development; and
- A review of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited risk appetite.

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 set 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 audit arrangements (internal and external) and on the implications of assurances provided in respect of risk and control. The Audit and Risk Committee does not have executive powers.

Table 20 below lists the Audit and Risk Committee members.

Table 20: Audit and Risk Committee Membership

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

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

- The Accounting Officer of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited;
- The Head of Corporate Services

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- The Finance and Governance Manager (Secretary of the Committee);
- Representative(s) from the Northern Ireland Audit Office as observer(s);
- Observers from the Victims Unit in The Executive Office;
- Internal Audit.

The Audit and Risk Committee met five times in 2016-17. Table 21 below shows dates of and attendance at each of these meetings.

Table 21: Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Dates and Attendance

Committee Members	11.4.16	26.7.16	12.10.16	9.12.16	15.3.17
Colm Doran	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bertha McDougall	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Richard Solomon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Séamus Magee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

With the exception of the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, the remaining members are Board members. For this reason, additional reports are not provided from the Audit and Risk Committee to the Board, however, the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee prepares an Update Report to the Board following each Audit and Risk Committee.

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 will include standing agenda items and annual agenda items including:

- The review of the corporate risk register;
- Scrutiny of the annual accounts;
- Consideration of internal and external audit strategy;
- Review of internal and external audit findings;
- Consideration of 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 March 2017. The overall conclusion was that the Audit and Risk Committee was performing well. The actions of this will be taken forward in 2017-18, and include:

- A review of the Terms of Reference to include the role of the Audit and Risk Committee members and the quorum. The Terms of Reference should reflect good practice.

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- A review of the Audit and Risk Committee skills mix;
- Development of an Audit and Risk Committee Induction Checklist; and
- Scheduling of bi-lateral meetings with the Accounting Officer, the Head of Internal Audit and the external Audit Director; and the Board Chair.

Risk Management Strategy

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Risk Management Strategy was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in March 2013 and adopted formally in the financial year 2013-14. This was updated again in May 2014 and September 2016. This 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 on a monthly basis throughout 2016-17 and key risks identified and managed during the reporting period included:

- Insufficient time to establish the policy, service delivery models and monitoring and evaluation frameworks for 2016-17 and beyond, including unsuccessful transition to new service delivery model in 2017-18;
- Failure to meet 2016-17 priorities and support change management process due to senior management team capacity and resources;
- Potential conflict between personalised caseworker and victims centred approach currently being piloted by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and requirements in terms of level of internal controls and checks;
- Possibility of non-recovery of funding in relation to insolvency of a Victims and Survivors Service Limited funded organisation;
- Level of change and pace having a negative impact on staff welfare;
- Political environment resulting in a delay in budget allocation and a reduction in budget allocation;
- Risk of non-delivery of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited element of the Regional Trauma Network due to lack of partnership working; and demotivation if statutory services model does not change at the same pace;
- Lack of political agreement on the Stormont House Agreement legacy institutions will dilute the strategic impact of the Advocacy Support Programme from April 2017.

In 2016-17 there were no instances where the committee determined that risk(s) lay outside the organisation's risk appetite and were thus unacceptable. It is the intention of the Board to review the organisation's risk appetite across each function in 2017-18.

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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 73. Standing agenda items include all Direct Award Contracts (DAC) and a procurement register.

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 January 2014, with re-appointment on 25 February 2016. A strategic audit plan, for a period of three years, was agreed by the Audit and Risk Committee on 12 October 2016.

Capita Consulting developed an internal audit charter which meets the requirements of Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. This was reviewed and confirmed by the Head of Internal Audit of The Executive Office and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee on 9 December 2016.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited were notified in July 2017 by Capita, its Internal Audit provider, that the organisation had made the decision to wind up the Assurance, Risk and Governance Team which provided internal audit services. At that time, completion of year one audit activity, in respect of 2016-17, within a three year contract had not been completed.

However, Capita have now completed all field work in relation to 2016-17 and all outstanding reports. A commitment has also been made to attend the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's Audit and Risk Committee in October 2017 to present the final reports and the Annual Assurance Report.

The internal audit contract had been procured by the Central Procurement Directorate within the Department of Finance, therefore, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited obtained advice from the Central Procurement Directorate in this regard.

The remaining two years of the contract were transferred to another supplier – Ernst & Young, in November 2017.

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Table 22 below outlines the internal audit programme that was carried out relating to 2016-17.

Table 22: Internal Audit 2016-17

Date	Scope	Audit Rating	Status
Jun 2017	Budget Management and INP Payments	Satisfactory	Final Report
Jun 2017	Health and Wellbeing Services	Satisfactory	Final Report
Jun 2017	Procurement	Satisfactory	Final Report
Sept 2017	Financial Assistance	Satisfactory	Final Report
Sept 2017	MI / ICT	Satisfactory	Final Report
Sept 2017	Follow Up	N/A	Final Report

The 2016-17 fieldwork was completed in February 2017 with all reports finalised by September 2017.

The internal auditor's overall assurance rating for 2016-17 was Satisfactory, in line with the previous financial year.

A Substantial assurance level denotes that there is a robust system of risk management, control and governance which should ensure that objectives are fully achieved.

A Satisfactory assurance level denotes that there is some risk that objectives may not be fully achieved. Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and/or effectiveness of risk management, control and governance.

A Limited assurance level denotes that there is considerable risk that the system will fail to meet its objectives. Prompt action is required to improve the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, control and governance.

14 recommendations were made across four areas, none were identified as priority one, 5 were identified as priority two, and 9 as priority three. No recommendations were made in respect of Budget Management and INP Payments. This is a significant improvement on the number of recommendations (23) made in 2015-16 and evidences the Victims and Survivors Service Limited commitment to continually strengthening internal governance.

In addition, the Follow Up report confirmed that 20 of the 21 recommendations made in 2015-16 were implemented in full or partially implemented during 2016-17. This is a result

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of enhanced monitoring and reporting procedures in relation to internal audit recommendations, assigning responsibility and timeframes for follow up. The one recommendation not implemented relates to adoption of a risk based approach to verification which is expected to be introduced during 2017-18.

Key recommendations from Internal Audit include:

Health and Wellbeing Services

- Ensure appropriate documentary evidence regarding eligibility and claims.

Procurement

- Complete review of contracts register.

Financial Assistance

- Explore potential mechanisms for controlled data sharing between the Victims and Survivors Service Limited and relevant Departments.

MI / ICT

- Ensure sufficient time is allotted to facilitate full participation in the user Acceptance Testing phase of the new CRM platform;
- Develop and document contingency staffing arrangements within the MI/ICT team;
- Identify and document separate staff members to discharge the Project Sponsor and Project Manager roles in relation to the development of the new CRM platform;
- The Project Plan and monthly RAAID Log should be amended to assign responsibility for actions clearly to named individual post holders rather than teams;
- The Business Support Manager should set out the rationale for his assessment of project progress and ensure that delays which have arisen from high risks are clearly classified as ongoing or overcome within periodic progress reports;
- Job Descriptions for MI/ICT team members should be expanded to include details of reporting lines between relevant staff and their managers and direct reports;
- The MI/ICT team should continue engagement with the senior management team in order to ensure information provided meets the needs of users and has an enhanced focus on outcomes.

External Audit

The Comptroller and Auditor General has the statutory responsibility for the audit of Victims and Survivors Service Limited under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. In addition to the NIAO audit fee, £1,261 of expenditure was incurred in relation to non-audit work for participation in the National fraud Initiative.

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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 as an observer at Victims and Survivors Service Limited Audit and Risk Committee meetings.

The Executive Office Oversight Arrangements

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

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

- Monthly Tri-Lateral Meetings between the Commission for Victims and Survivors Limited, the Department and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited (attended by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer and senior Victims and Survivors Service Limited staff); see Table 2 on page 16.
- Accountability and Oversight Meetings (attended by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer and senior Victims and Survivors Service Limited staff); see Table 23 on page 70.
- Quarterly Stewardship Statements; see Table 24 on page 71.
- Management Statement and Financial Memorandum updated September 2014.
- Performance Monitoring against Business Plan and preparation of Corporate Plan 2017-20 submitted to the Department in June 2017.

Accountability Meetings

The Accounting Officer and senior staff attended four Accountability Meetings during the year with the Accounting Officer of The Executive Office or his deputy and senior staff from the Department. The dates of each of these meetings are provided in Table 23.

Table 23: Accountability Meetings 2016-17

Meeting	Date
1	20 April 2016
2	27 July 2016
3	31 October 2016
4	25 January 2017

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

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

Stewardship Statements

The Quarterly Stewardship 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, database and post project evaluations;
- Monitoring of expenditure;
- Procurement;
- Consultancy;
- Information/data management and assurance;
- Staff management;
- Arm's Length Bodies;
- Internal, external audit and PAC reports/recommendations; and
- Other significant issues

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The Accounting Officer submitted four Stewardship Statements to The Executive Office as requested by the Department, as shown in Table 24 below.

Table 24: Stewardship Statements

Effective Date	Duration
1 April 2016 – 30 June 2016	3 months
1 July 2016 – 30 September 2016	3 months
1 October 2016 – 31 December 2016	3 months
1 January 2017 – 31 March 2017	3 months

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum is a key control document setting out the broad framework within which the Victims and Survivors Service Limited will operate. This was drafted and in operation from November 2012 and formally adopted in January 2013. 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.

In March 2014, it was identified that the document needed to be updated in line with:

- Current procurement guidance;
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy recommendations from the review commissioned by the Commission for Victims and Survivors; and
- Current month end management information and reporting systems.

These changes were approved by The Executive Office in September 2014 and considered by the Board in November 2014.

Corporate Plan 2016-19 and Business Plan 2016-17

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited three year Corporate Plan 2017-20 was submitted to the Department on 28 June 2017. In the absence of a Northern Ireland Executive, this is currently awaiting Departmental and Ministerial approval. In the meantime, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is operating 'business as usual'.

The Chief Executive has monitored the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's performance against the targets set out in its 2016-17 Business Plan, included at

Appendix 2. This was approved by the Department in September 2016 and subsequent reports have included status of internal work streams; delivery of business plan objectives; expenditure against plan; resource inputs by project; requests made under the Freedom of Information Act; Assembly Questions relevant to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited; absence management; recruitment and communications.

Key achievements and emerging activities carried out in 2016-17 are further outlined under Performance against Objectives on page 21.

The Board is satisfied as to the quality of data and information provided by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer who gained assurance through reports provided by senior staff in 2016-17.

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 2016-17 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
- Four in-year monitoring bids submitted to 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. Plans are in place and a qualified accountant is in post to further develop cost centre accounting and more detailed and strengthened variance analysis.

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

Fraud and Counter-Fraud

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

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited investigated seventeen cases of suspected fraud in 2016-17, seven of which were newly identified during 2016-17. All cases are ongoing, two of which are with the PSNI.

As part of all investigations, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited routinely seek advice from the Group Internal Audit and Fraud Investigation Service.

Whistle-blowing

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

There were two instances of whistle-blowing within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in the year to 31 March 2017. Both cases were investigated and closed by 31 March 2017. There was no evidence to substantiate the claims made in either case and no actions were required.

Training

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

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

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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. This has included increasing technical competencies in project, information, financial and staff management.

In this period, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited provided training in Fire Awareness and First Aid in order to meet mandatory Health and Safety requirements. Each newly recruited employee received induction training. The induction training provides information relating to the wider organisational context, internal policies and key procedures including training in Freedom of Information and Data Protection.

To build upon staff self-care and resilience the Victims and Survivors Service Limited delivered a health and wellbeing day for staff members. This involved a range of wellbeing activities structured under the HSC Take 5 initiative: www.makinglifebettertogether.com/take5

Significant Governance Issues

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

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

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

The Audit and Risk Committee does not currently have a member with a specific finance qualification. This is an outstanding Commission for Victims and Survivors review recommendation. During 2016-17, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited publicly advertised this position on two occasions but was unsuccessful in filling this vacancy.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited will consider alternative options in this regard in 2017-18.

The Audit and Risk Committee and the Board are both satisfied that the Audit and Risk Committee currently has sufficient financial experience and expertise to effectively manage the organisation's annual budget.

Direct Award Contracts

Six Direct Award Contracts were awarded for varying short term periods in 2016-17. Four of these exceeded £5,000 and required advice from the Central Procurement Directorate.

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In three of these instances, they were content there were sufficient grounds to award a Direct Award Contract.

Advice was sought from the Central Procurement Directorate in respect of a short term extension to the Public Relations and Media Monitoring contract. This was required urgently due a vacant position - the Information and Engagement Officer. Following advice that the value of the Direct Award Contract would exceed the Victims and Survivors Service Limited delegated limit, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited proceeded to re-define the boundaries of the contract and issued a reduced value Direct Award Contract. A new contract was openly procured when the Direct Award Contract expired.

One Direct Award Contract exceeded the Victims and Survivors Service Limited delegated limit of £30,000 and required approval from The Executive Office. This Direct Award Contract was made in respect of the Disability Aid Scheme which continued as a pilot during 2016-17. Approval was obtained from The Executive Office on 21 October 2016.

I am content that expenditure in each of these areas is regular and eligible.

Retrospective Business Case

In November 2016, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited opened a call for applications for the new Victims Support Programme and new Peace IV Programme to commence 1 April 2017. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has delegated authority from The Executive Office to carry out Economic Appraisals. However, due to resource and time pressures at that time as a result of the launch of the new service delivery model, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited did not have the internal capacity to carry these out. This was therefore procured as a managed service contract. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited openly procured this contract.

Expenditure on this contract was £53,363.

This is over the £30,000 delegated limit of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited which therefore necessitated approval from The Executive Office and for the procurement exercise to be carried out by Central Procurement Directorate.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited did not request the approval of The Executive Office prior to issuing the contract nor assistance from the Central Procurement Directorate.

This was identified by the Victims and Survivors Limited in September 2017 following an internal procurement review. No other significant issues have been identified as part of this review.

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A retrospective business case was submitted to The Executive Office on 2 October 2017. The Executive Office was also notified that the contract exceeded the Victims and Survivors Service Limited delegated limit of £30,000 and should have been procured by the Central Procurement Directorate. The Executive Office approved the retrospective business case on 13 December 2017.

This is a one off issue which has been rectified in September 2017.

While the internal procurement review has demonstrated that there are no systemic procurement issues, due to the value of this issue, all procurement greater than £5K will be centralised within the Finance and Governance function from October 2017.

Governance Checks for Existing Clients

In February 2017 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited outlined a methodology for spot checking existing clients to confirm their ongoing eligibility for support as part of the Proposed Management and Control Arrangements for the Individual Needs Programme 2017-18 and beyond. The Executive Office approved this methodology on 24 February 2017, and the spot checks commenced immediately afterwards.

In line with the methodology approved by The Executive Office, the spot check exercise was carried out on all clients issued with a 2016-17 award letter, ie, not just those clients who received payment against an award. The approved sample size was 11% of all clients in receipt of an award, which equalled 564 individuals.

Table 25: Breakdown of 2016-17 Client Records

Scheme	Total Clients in Receipt of an Award*	Sample	
Support for Carers	476	78	16%
Support for Bereaved	2697	263	10%
Support for Injured – MRC	849	95	11%
Support for Injured – HRC	718	88	12%
Financial Assistance only – Carers	12	2	17%
Financial Assistance only – Bereaved	5	1	20%
Financial Assistance only – Injured	543	36	7%
Financial Assistance only – Bereaved and Injured	20	1	5%
	5,320	564	11%

* As at mid February 2017

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In every case the Victims and Survivors Service Limited conducted a desk review of each client's hard copy file to determine whether up to date confirmation of eligibility for awards was required and, if so, what information was needed from the client. Following the desk review, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited contacted the individuals whose information required updating by telephone, to request the supporting documentation and to explain why it was needed. A letter was then issued to the individuals to remind them to respond. These actions were followed up regularly and intensively by staff over the period 20 March 2017 – 14 April 2017.

Of the 564 individuals sampled, supporting documentation was received from 534 individuals. In two of these 534 cases the Victims and Survivors Service Limited identified errors in the allocation of 2016-17 awards. This finding represents an error rate of 0.4%, or an extrapolated error value of £13,447. See table 26 below:-

Table 26: Extrapolated Value of Error

Scheme	Awards Issued	Value of Award	Total Value of Awards	Error Rate	Value of Error
Support for Carers	476	£500	£238,000	0%	£0
Support for Bereaved	2,697	£500	£1,348,500	0%	£0
Support for Injured – MRC	849	£500	£424,500	1.075%	£4,565
Support for Injured – HRC	718	£1,500	£1,077,000	1.163%	£12,523
Financial Assistance only – Carers	12	£750	£9,000	0%	£0
Financial Assistance only - Bereaved	5	£750	£3,750	0%	£0
Financial Assistance only –Injured	543	£750	£407,250	0%	£0
Financial Assistance only – Bereaved and Injured	20	£750	£15,000	0%	£0
	5,320		£3,523,000	0.382%	£13,447

Of the remaining 30 individuals that did not respond, 8 individuals were confirmed as deceased and 16 individuals had not returned a signed award letter for 2016-17, therefore, no payment was made.

The maximum extrapolated error, therefore, taking into consideration the two individuals confirmed as ineligible for 2016-17, and assuming those remaining six individuals that did

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not respond, are ineligible is 1.4% which represents a maximum potential error value of £49,972. See table 27 below.

Table 27: Maximum Potential Value of Error

Scheme	Awards Issued	Total Value of Awards	Number of Potential Ineligible	Error Rate	Value of Error
Support for Carers	476	£238,000	3	3.8%	£9,154
Support for Bereaved	2,697	£1,348,500	0	0%	£0
Support for Injured – MRC	849	£424,500	3	3.2%	£13,405
Support for Injured – HRC	718	£1,077,000	2	2.3%	£24,477
Financial Assistance only – Carers	12	£9,000	0	0%	£0
Financial Assistance only - Bereaved	5	£3,750	0	0%	£0
Financial Assistance only –Injured	543	£407,250	0	0%	£0
Financial Assistance only – Bereaved and Injured	20	£15,000	0	0%	£0
	5,320	£3,523,000	8	1.4%	£49,972

On the basis of the analysis of the spot check findings, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited agreed with The Executive Office that, going forward under the new service delivery model, an annual spot check of 10% of existing clients in receipt of Self Directed Assistance Payments should be carried out to confirm their ongoing eligibility for these payments. In addition to this, and in line with the outcomes based accountability model, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited will conduct annual surveys with both intentionally and randomly selected samples of clients to establish individual outcomes resulting from this support.

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.

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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 2017, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has complied with all relevant 2013 Code provision, apart from the requirement to have a qualified finance professional on the Victims and Survivors Service Limited Audit and Risk Committee.

Conclusion

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

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

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

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

The system of accountability on which I rely as Accounting Officer to form an opinion on the probity and use of public funds, as detailed in Managing Public Money NI has continued to develop throughout 2016-17. Significant work has been undertaken in increasing the capacity of the Board and Senior Management Team and in ensuring the structure of the organisation is appropriate to meet the organisation's business and corporate plans. Investment has been made in management information systems and outcomes focused monitoring and evaluation frameworks to improve how we deliver, monitor and evaluate the quality of services.

A robust follow up system of audit recommendations is maintained and significant progress continued throughout 2016-17. Any weaknesses identified internally by management, the Board, the Audit and Risk Committee, and Internal and External Audit have been considered and immediate action undertaken on priority findings and an implementation plan in place for longer term developments.

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Findings from the spot check exercise have directly informed policy advice and a new service delivery model has been in place since April 2017 which further minimises risk of ineligible expenditure.

2.2 Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

Remuneration Policy

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

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

Service Contracts

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

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

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

Salary and Pension Entitlements

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

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

Officials	2016-17				2015-16			
	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits* (to nearest £1000)	Total £'000	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to the nearest £100)	Pension Benefits (to nearest £1000)	Total £'000
Mrs Margaret Bateson, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. Interim CEO from 7 August 2014, permanent from 11 July 2016	65-70		23	85-90	50-55		13	75-80
Mr Oliver Wilkinson, Board Member and Chair	5-10			5-10	5-10			5-10
Mrs Bertha McDougall, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Mr Richard Solomon, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Mr Séamus Magee, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Ms Patricia Haren, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Ms Beverley Clarke, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Mr Stephen McIlveen, Board Member	0-5			0-5	0-5			0-5
Band of Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration	65-70			65-70	50-55			50-55
Median Total Remuneration	28,500			28,500	23,969			23,969
Range of Staff Remuneration				20-25 – 65-70				15-20 - 50-55
Ratio	2.3			2.3	2.3			2.3

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

Salary

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

Exit Packages (Audited Information)

There were no redundancies or ill health retirements costs in the year to 31 March 2017.

Benefits in Kind

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

No Benefits in Kind were paid during the year.

Bonuses

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

Pension Benefits (Audited)

	Accrued Pension as at 31 March 2017 & related sum £'000	Real increase in pension & lump sum at pension age £'000	CETV at 31 March 2017 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2016 £'000	Real increase in CETV £'000	Employer contribution to partnership pension account Nearest £100
Mrs Margaret Bateson, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer	5-10 (£0 lump sum)	4	66	52	7	

Victims and Survivors Service Limited Pension Arrangements

Pension benefits are provided through the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension arrangements which are administered by Civil Service Pensions (CSP). 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). These arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by the Assembly each year. From April 2011 pensions payable under classic, premium, and classic plus are increased annually in line with changes in the cost of living. Prior to 2011, pensions were reviewed in line with the changes the Retail Prices Index (RPI).

New entrants joining on or after 1 October 2002 and before 30 July 2007 could choose between membership of premium or joining a good quality 'money purchase' stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account). New entrants joining on or after 30 July 2007 are eligible for membership of the nuvos arrangement or they can opt for a partnership pension account. Nuvos 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 current rate is 2.3%. CARE pension benefits are increased annually in line with increases in the cost of living.

A new pension scheme, Alpha, was introduced for new entrants from 1 April 2015. The majority of existing members of the NICS pension arrangements have also moved to

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

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 also 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 the scheme membership. The rate will be 2.32%. CARE pension benefits are increased annually in line with changes in the cost of living.

Increases in public service pensions are the responsibility of HM Treasury. Pensions are reviewed each year in line with the cost of living. Any applicable increases are applied from April and are determined by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) figure for the preceding September. The CPI in September 2016 was 1% and HM Treasury has announced that public service pensions will increase accordingly from April 2017.

Employee contribution rates for all new members for the period covering 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017 are as follows:

Scheme Year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

Annualised Rate of Pensionable Earnings (Salary Bands)		Classic members or classic members who moved into alpha	All other members
From	To	From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017	From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
£0	£15,000.99	4.6%	4.6%
£15,001.00	£21,210.99	4.6%	4.6%
£21,211.00	£48,471.99	5.45%	5.45%
£48,472.00	£150,000.99	7.35%	7.35%
£150,001.00 and above		8.05%	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.

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

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 pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of **classic**, **premium**, and **classic plus** and 65 for members of **nuvos**. The normal 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 arrangements can be found at the website <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni>.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values (audited)

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 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 at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 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 the value of the 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

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

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 2016-17.

Fees to Third Parties

Only remuneration and expenses were paid to Directors of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited in 2016-17. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited Board of Directors has received the following remuneration, reflected in the 2016-17 financial statements:

	Remuneration Rate	Year end 31 March 2017 (£)	Year end 31 March 2016 (£)
O Wilkinson, Board Chair	£8,200 p.a (from 1 April 2015)	8,265	8,260
B McDougall, Board Member	£125 per day	3,976*	4,493
R Solomon, Board Member	£125 per day	2,331	3,281
P Haren, Board Member	£125 per day	3,601	3,095
S Magee, Board Member	£125 per day	3,180	4,795
S McIlveen, Board Member	£125 per day	2,625	2,017
B Clarke, Board Member	£125 per day	3,849	4,053
Total		27,827	29,994

* This payment includes 2015-16 remuneration under accrued from 2015-16.

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

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

	Year end 31 March 2017 (£)	Year end 31 March 2016 (£)
O. Wilkinson, Member/Board Chair	929	1,159
B. McDougall, Board Member	289	622
R. Solomon, Board Member	0	0
P. Haren, Board Member	55	74
S. Magee, Board Member	502	1,128
S. McIlveen, Board Member	0	0
B. Clarke, Board Member	681	642
Total	2,456	3,625

No further remuneration or expenses were paid to Non-Executive Directors in 2016-17.

2.3 Assembly Accountability Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

Fees and Charges (audited)

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited incurred no fees or charges during 2016-17.

Remote Contingent Liabilities (audited)

There are no remote contingent liabilities.

Losses and Special Payments (audited)

The delegated limit, as outlined in the Management Statement Financial Memorandum, for cash losses is up to £1,000 per case/incident.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited wrote to The Executive Office on 28 September 2016 to request write off for the following:

- debts transferred from the Community Relations Council (NI): £35,072.77
 - In November 2012 the Community Relations Council (NI) transferred its functions to the Victims and Survivors Service Limited which included rental income debts of £1,060.60 and grant funding debts of £34,012.17. Some of these debts extend as far back as June 2009. The Community Relations Council (NI) and the Victims and Survivors Service Limited have made reasonable steps to recovery these debts. Approval for write off was obtained from The Executive Office on 30 March 2017.

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited wrote to The Executive Office on 3 January 2017 to request write off for the following which materialised in 2015-16:

- Financial Assistance ineligible expenditure: £11,480
 - In September 2015, an eligibility spot check commenced in respect of 2,664 Financial Assistance awards. Following a desk review, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited wrote to a sample of 96 means tested individuals to request further financial information. Following a review of all information presented, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited determined that 14 of the 189 individuals who returned complete information were not eligible for a Financial Assistance Scheme award (£820) in 2015-16. The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has worked closely with The Executive Office to find a balance between a victims centred approach and one which can fully fulfil governance requirements. As a result, the Victims and Survivors Service Limited has introduced additional audit trail requirements for the Financial Assistance Scheme in 2016-17 to fully satisfy governance requirements.

Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2017

Approval for write off was obtained from The Executive Office on 31 March 2017.

In addition to the above, a number of payment recoveries may be required in respect of ongoing suspected fraud cases. These are expected to be finalised during 2017-18.



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer

Date: 15 December 2017

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

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the year ended 31 March 2017 under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. The financial statements comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report and the Assembly Accountability Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

Respective responsibilities of accounting officer, directors and auditor

As explained more fully in the Accounting Officer's and Directors' Responsibilities Statement, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining 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. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the directors; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by me in the course of performing the audit. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my certificate.

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.

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.

Opinion on financial statements

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2017 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

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

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 part 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 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
19 December 2017

Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

Financial Statements

4.1 Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

For the year ended 31 March 2017

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £	Restated Year ended 31-Mar-16 £
Income			
Grant from EU	4	61,048	0
Other Operating Income	4	0	0
Total Income		61,048	0
Expenditure			
Staff Costs	2	1,385,741	1,169,609
Programme Costs	3a	11,983,200	11,566,844
Operating Costs	3c	519,289	690,859
Depreciation and Amortisation	3c	20,670	6,160
Loss on Fixed Asset Disposal	3c	1,307	53,551
Provision provided for in period	3c	189,881	2,465
Total Expenditure		14,100,088	13,489,488
Net (Deficit) / Surplus for the year		(14,039,040)	(13,489,488)
Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure			
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure		(14,039,040)	(13,489,488)
Amount Transferred to Reserves		(14,039,040)	(13,489,488)

Notes 1 to 26 on pages 98 to 118 form part of these financial statements.

Financial Statements

4.2 Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2017

	Note	As at 31-Mar-17 £	Restated As at 31-Mar-16 £	Restated As at 1 Apr 15 £
Non-current assets:				
Property, Plant and Equipment	5	19,733	12,943	63,455
Intangible Assets	6	216,416	8,418	1,556
Total non-current assets		236,149	21,361	65,011
Current assets:				
Trade and other receivables	10	86,616	31,645	164,381
Cash and cash equivalents	11	1,181,384	841,109	781,485
Total current assets		1,268,000	872,754	945,866
Total assets		1,504,149	894,115	1,010,877
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables	12	1,452,325	748,151	868,574
Non-current assets less net current liabilities		51,824	145,964	142,303
Non-current liabilities				
Provision for liabilities and charges	13	208,900	42,000	48,851
Total assets less liabilities		(157,076)	103,964	93,452
Taxpayers Equity				
General Reserve (Income and Expenditure)		(157,076)	103,964	93,452

Notes 1 to 26 on pages 98 to 118 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 15 December 2017.



Margaret Bateson
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 15 December 2017

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 15 December 2017 and were signed on its behalf by:



Oliver Wilkinson
Chairman

Date: 15 December 2017

Financial Statements

4.3 Statement of Cash Flow

For the year ended 31 March 2017

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £	Restated Year ended 31-Mar-16 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Surplus / (Deficit) for the period		(14,039,040)	(13,489,488)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions			
Depreciation	3c	2,954	5,189
Amortisation	3c	17,716	972
Loss on Fixed Asset Disposal	3c	1,307	53,551
Provision provided in period	3c	189,881	2,465
Decrease / (Increase) in trade receivables and other current assets	10	(54,971)	132,736
(Decrease) / Increase in trade payables and other current liabilities	12	704,174	(120,423)
Provisions utilised	13	(22,981)	(9,316)
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(13,200,960)	(13,424,314)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	5	(11,051)	(8,142)
Purchase of intangible assets	6	(225,714)	(8,940)
Proceeds on Fixed Asset Disposal		0	1020
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(236,765)	(16,062)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department		13,778,000	13,500,000
Increase / (Decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period		340,275	59,624
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	11	841,109	781,485
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	11	1,181,384	841,109

Notes 1 to 26 on pages 98 to 118 form part of these financial statements.

Financial Statements

4.4 Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

For the year ended 31 March 2017

	General Reserve £000	Total Reserves £000
Opening Balance at 1 April 2015 (restated)	93,452	93,452
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for 2015-16		
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year	(13,489,488)	(13,489,488)
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	13,500,000	13,500,000
Balance at 31 March 2016 (restated)	103,964	103,964
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for 2016-17		
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year	(14,039,040)	(14,039,040)
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	13,778,000	13,778,000
Balance at 31 March 2017	(157,076)	(157,076)

Notes 1 to 26 on pages 98 to 118 form part of these financial statements.

4.5 Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting and disclosure requirements of Companies Act 2006, the 2016-17 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and the Accounts Direction issued by The Executive Office. Where FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Victims and Survivors Service Limited are described below. These have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.1 Accounting Convention

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

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

1.2 Basis of Accounting

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

1.3 Income and Financing

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

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.4 Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

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

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

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

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

- Furniture and Fittings 10 years
- Leasehold Improvements 10 years
- Office Equipment 3 years
- IT Equipment 4 years

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

1.5 Foreign Currency

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

1.6 Intangible Assets

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

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

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

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.7 Impairment

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

1.8 Taxation

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

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

1.9 Pension Arrangements

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

The company makes pension contributions at the rates outlined in the Remuneration Report on page 81 above to the approved pension scheme. The cost of contributions for providing pensions for employees is charged to the statement of comprehensive net expenditure account as they are earned, in accordance with IAS 19 *Employee Benefits*. Seconded staff members remain members of their respective pension schemes.

1.10 Provisions

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited makes provisions for liabilities and charges where, at the date of the Statement of Financial Position, a legal or constructive liability exists (ie, 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 2017.

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

The following additional or revised accounting standards and new (or amendments to) interpretations are contained within the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) 2016-17:

- Employee Benefits (IAS19)
- Disclosure Initiative (IAS1)
- Clarification of Acceptable Methods of Depreciation and Amortisation (IAS16, IAS38)

Victims and Survivors Service Limited considers that these changes have no impact on its operations.

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

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has reviewed the following additional or revised accounting standards and new (or amendments to) interpretations contained within FReM 2016-17:

- Financial Instruments (IFRS9)
- Disclosure Initiative (IAS7)

These changes will be mandatory for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 April 2017 or later periods, but which Victims and Survivors Service Limited has not adopted early. Victims and Survivors Service Limited considers that these changes are not relevant to or will have minimal impact on its operations.

In addition, certain new standards, interpretations and amendments to existing standards have been drafted but not yet issued and will come into effect in accounting periods beginning on or after 1 April 2017. It is not practicable to provide a reasonable estimate of the effect of these standards until a detailed review has been completed.

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

1.19 Contingent Liabilities

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

- There is a possible obligation arising from past events, the existence of which will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one of more uncertain events not wholly within the Victims and Survivors Service Limited's control; or

Notes to the Financial Statements

- 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.

1.20 Going Concern

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

2. Staff Numbers and Related Costs

Staff costs comprise:

	Permanently employed staff £	Others (Agency & Seconded) £	Year ended 31-Mar-17 Total £	Year ended 31-Mar-16 Total £
Wages and salaries	694,117	470,545	1,164,662	960,150
Social security costs	68,831	0	68,831	49,138
Other Pension costs	124,421	0	124,421	130,327
Board Costs	27,827	0	27,827	29,994
Sub Total	915,196	470,545	1,385,741	1,169,609
Less recoveries in respect to outward secondments	0	0	0	0
Total Net Costs*	915,196	470,545	1,385,741	1,169,609

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

Pension

The Northern Ireland Civil Service pension schemes are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes but the Victims and Survivors Service Limited is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The most up to date actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2012. This valuation is then reviewed by the Scheme Actuary and updated to reflect current conditions and rolled forward to the reporting date of the DoF Superannuation and Other Allowances Annual Report and Accounts as at 31 March 2017.

For 2016-17, employers' contributions of £124,421 were payable to the NICS pension arrangements (2015-16 £130,327) at one of three rates in the range 20.8% to 26.3% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. A new scheme funding valuation based on data as at 31 March 2012 was completed by the Actuary during 2014-15. This valuation was used to determine employer contribution rates for the introduction of alpha from April 2015. For 2017-18, the rates will range from 20.8% to 26.3%. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2016-17 to be paid when the member retires, and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £0 (2015-16 £0) were paid to one or more of the panel of three appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age-related and range from 8% to 14.75% (2015-16 3% to 14.7%) of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3% of pensionable pay. In addition, employer contributions of £0, 0.5% (2015-16 £0, 0.5%) of pensionable pay, were payable to the NICS Pension schemes to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees.

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

No persons (2015-16: 0 persons) retired early on ill-health grounds; the total additional accrued pension liabilities in the year amounted to £0 (2015-16: £0).

Notes to the Financial Statements

Average Number of Persons Employed

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

	Permanently employed staff	Others (Agency & Seconded)	Year ended 31-Mar-17 Total	Year ended 31-Mar-16 Total
Administrators	12.55	7.88	20.43	18.81
Management	11.93	1.00	12.93	13.46
Senior Management	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
Total	25.48	10.88	36.36	33.27

3. Expenditure

a. Programme Expenditure

	Note	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £	Year ended 31-Mar-16 £
Programmes Grants	3b	11,635,273	11,383,457
Provision of HWB Support Services		105,240	34,185
Independent Panel Costs		0	1,491
Workforce Training and Development		126,879	93,041
Monitoring and Evaluation		21,134	14,238
Advertising		25,211	26,582
Seminars & Events		13,905	13,850
Increase in Bad Debt Provision		55,558	0
Total		11,983,200	11,566,844

Notes to the Financial Statements

b. Grants to Funded Organisations

	Year ended 31-Mar-17	Year ended 31-Mar-16
	£	£
Victims Support Programme Grants to Groups	6,259,608	6,520,331
Strategic Support Fund	0	0
Grants to Individuals	5,375,665	4,863,126
Total	11,635,273	11,383,457

c. Operating Expenditure

	Year ended 31-Mar-17	Year ended 31-Mar-16
Note	£	£
Rents & Service Charges	79,960	148,201
Rates	36,643	24,632
IT Services	90,800	85,296
Staff Recruitment	33,275	2,191
Telephones	11,026	10,516
Heat, Light & Power	6,798	12,434
Office Expenses	50,766	28,355
NIAO Audit	28,000	28,863
Premises Expenses	24,976	171,198
Professional Fees*	51,715	43,242
Staff Training	6,878	30,930
Travel & Subsistence	18,388	17,469
Hospitality	2,314	6,661
Postage & Carriage	18,988	26,062
Insurance	0	707
Managed Services	55,082	31,784
Office Move costs	0	16,983
Board Costs	3,680	5,335
The Disappeared	0	0
Total Operating Costs	519,289	690,859

Notes to the Financial Statements

Non-cash items:

Depreciation	5	2,954	5,189
Amortisation	6	17,716	972
Loss of Fixed Asset Disposal	5	1,307	53,551
Provision provided for in period	13	189,881	2,465
Total non-cash items		211,858	62,177
Overall Total		731,147	753,036

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

4. Income

	Year ended 31-Mar-17	Restated Year ended 31-Mar-16
	£	£
Grant from EU	61,048	0
Other Operating Income	0	0
	61,048	0

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

The Special EU Programme Body resource budget for the Victims and Survivors Service Limited for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 July 2021 is £13,373K.

There was no other operating income in 2016-17.

Notes to the Financial Statements

5. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Year ended				
	31-Mar-17				
	Furniture & Fittings £	Leasehold Improvements £	IT Equipment £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost:					
At 1 April 2016	9,550	26,308	6,754	0	42,612
Additions in year	10,643	0	408	0	11,501
Disposals	(1,199)	(26,308)	0	0	(27,507)
At 31 March 2017	18,994	0	7,161	0	26,155
Accumulated Depreciation:					
At 1 April 2016	1,532	25,740	2,397	0	29,669
Charge in year	1,285	21	1,648	0	2,954
Disposals	(439)	(25,761)	0	0	(26,200)
At 31 March 2017	2,378	0	4,405	0	6,423
Carrying amount at 31 March 2017	16,616	0	3,117	0	19,733
Asset Financing:					
Owned:	16,616	0	3,117	0	19,733
Finance Leased: On-balance sheet (SOFP) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:	0	0	0	0	0
Carrying amount at 31 March 2017	16,616	0	3,117	0	19,733

Notes to the Financial Statements

**Year
ended
31-Mar-16**

	Furniture & Fittings £	Leasehold Improvements £	IT Equipment £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost:					
At 1 April 2015	48,268	438,539	36,001	1,560	524,368
Additions in year	5,785	0	2,357	0	8,142
Disposals	(44,503)	(412,231)	(31,604)	(1,560)	(489,898)
At 31 March 2016	9,550	26,308	6,754	0	42,612

**Accumulated
Depreciation:**

At 1 April 2015	37,025	412,105	11,046	737	460,913
Charge in year	862	783	3,414	130	5,189
Disposals	(36,355)	(387,148)	(12,063)	(867)	(436,433)
At 31 March 2016	1,532	25,740	2,397	0	29,669

**Carrying amount
at 31 March 2016**

	8,018	568	4,357	0	12,943
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Asset Financing:

Owned: 8,018 568 4,357 0 12,943

Finance Leased:

On-balance sheet
(SOFP) PFI (and
other service
concession
arrangements)
contracts:

0 0 0 0 0

**Carrying amount
at 31 March 2016**

8,018 568 4,357 0 12,943

6. Intangible Assets

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

	Year ended 31-Mar-16		
	Website Development £	IT Software/ Licences £	Total £
Cost:			
At 1 April 2015	2,700	0	2,700
Additions in year	8,940	0	8,940
Disposals	(2,700)	0	(2,700)
At 31 March 2016	8,940	0	8,940
Amortisation:			
At 1 April 2015	1,144	0	1,144
Charge in year	972	0	972
Disposals	(1,594)	0	(1,594)
At 31 March 2016	522	0	522
Carrying amount at 31 March 2016	8,418	0	8,418
Asset Financing:			
Owned	8,418	0	8,418
Finance Leased:			
On-balance sheet (SOF) PFI (and other service concession arrangements) contracts:			
Carrying amount at 31 March 2016	8,418	0	8,418

Notes to the Financial Statements

7. Financial Instruments

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

8. Impairments

There have been no impairment charges for the year.

9. Inventories

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has no inventories.

10. Trade Receivables and other Current Assets

	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £	Restated Year ended 31-Mar-16 £
Amounts falling due within one year arising from Victims and Survivors Service Limited Operations:		
Programme receivables	66,712	46,967
Prepayments & accrued income	75,462	24,491
Room hire receivables	0	1,061
Bad debt provision	(55,558)	(40,874)
	<u>86,616</u>	<u>31,645</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

11. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	Year ended 31-Mar-17	Year ended 31-Mar-16
	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2016	841,109	781,485
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	340,275	59,624
Balance	1,181,384	841,109

The above balance comprises £1,181,325 at the Danske Bank, Belfast in a non-interest bearing current account and £59 in petty cash held on-site.

A large bank balance was held at 31 March 2017 due to a high volume of client payments expected to be incurred in early April 2017.

12. Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities

	Year ended 31-Mar-17	Year ended 31-Mar-16
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Programme payables	1,199,563	495,148
Trade payables	106,192	43,654
Other taxation & social security	0	0
Accruals & deferred Income	146,570	209,349
	1,452,325	748,151

13. Provisions for Liabilities and Charges

				Year ended 31-Mar-17	Year ended 31- Mar-16
	Bulk Transfer £	Pension Actuarial Services £	The Disappeared £	Total £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2016	0	26,000	16,000	42,000	48,851
Provided for in the year	170,000	22,981	900	193,881	2,465
Utilised in year	0	(22,981)	0	(22,981)	(9,316)
Provisions written back	0	0	(4,000)	(4,000)	0
Balance at 31 March 2017	170,000	26,000	12,900	208,900	42,000

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

1 *Pensions Bulk Transfer Value*

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

members have opted to transfer their pension benefits. Final calculation and payment of the bulk transfer value is expected in early 2018.

2 *GAD and NILGOSC Pension Actuarial Services*

- This provision represents an estimation of costs incurred by GAD and NILGOSC through the calculation of transfer values, provision of actuarial services, agreement of terms, etc.

3 *The Disappeared Funeral Costs*

- At 31 March 2017, the remains of four 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 as previously provided under the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund. Costs in respect of one Disappeared have been included as an accrual as these remains were discovered during 2017-18.

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

14. Capital Commitments

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited had no capital commitments in the financial year (2015-16: Nil).

15. Commitments under Leases

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are given in the table below.

	Year ended 31-Mar-17 £	Year ended 31-Mar-16 £
Annual Obligations under operating leases for the following periods comprise:		
Buildings:		
Not later than one year	21,910	70,066
Later than one year, and not later than five years	14,375	36,903
Later than five years	0	0
Total	36,285	106,969

Notes to the Financial Statements

Other:

Not later than one year	2,592	2,515
Later than one year, and not later than five years	2,700	754
Later than five years	0	0
Total	5,292	3,269

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

None.

17. Other Financial Commitments

None.

18. Contingent Liabilities Disclosed Under IAS 37

None.

19. Related-Party Transactions

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited is an Arms Length Body sponsored by The Executive Office. The Executive Office is regarded as a Related Party. During the period the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had various material transactions with The Executive Office (Grant in Aid £13,778,000).

During 2016-17 the Victims and Survivors Service Limited was also in receipt of Peace IV grant funding from the Special EU Programmes Body. During the period the Victims and Survivors Service Limited had various material transactions with the Special EU Programmes Body (£61,048).

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.

Notes to the Financial Statements

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

20. Third Party Assets

None.

21. Net Incoming Resources is Stated after Charging

	Year ended 31-Mar-17	Year ended 31-Mar-16
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	2,954	5,189
Amortisation of intangible assets	17,716	972
Auditors' remuneration	28,000	28,863
	<u>48,670</u>	<u>35,024</u>

22. Fund Balances

	Year ended 31-Mar-17	Restated Year ended 31-Mar-16
	£	£
Opening balance	103,904	93,452
Net operating cost for year	(14,039,040)	(13,489,488)
Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	13,778,000	13,500,000
Closing balance	<u>(157,076)</u>	<u>103,964</u>

Any positive funds above must be spent in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with The Executive Office on victims and survivors and associated administration and overhead costs incurred in delivering the programmes.

23. Financial Compliance – Programmes

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited maintains and manages a register outlining any significant breaches and issues of non-compliance for all groups funded under the VSP and individuals under the INP. During 2016-17, there were no significant breaches.

Notes to the Financial Statements

24. 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.

25. Events after the Reporting Period

There were no events after the reporting period.

26. Restatement and Prior Period Adjustment

The Victims and Survivors Service Limited has restated the comparative information in earlier years to reflect a change in accounting treatment for Grant in Aid from the Sponsor Department. Previously Grant in Aid received was treated as income but is now accounted for as financing from a controlling party and is credited directly to the General Reserve (see Note 1.3).

This restatement has resulted in the following adjustments:-

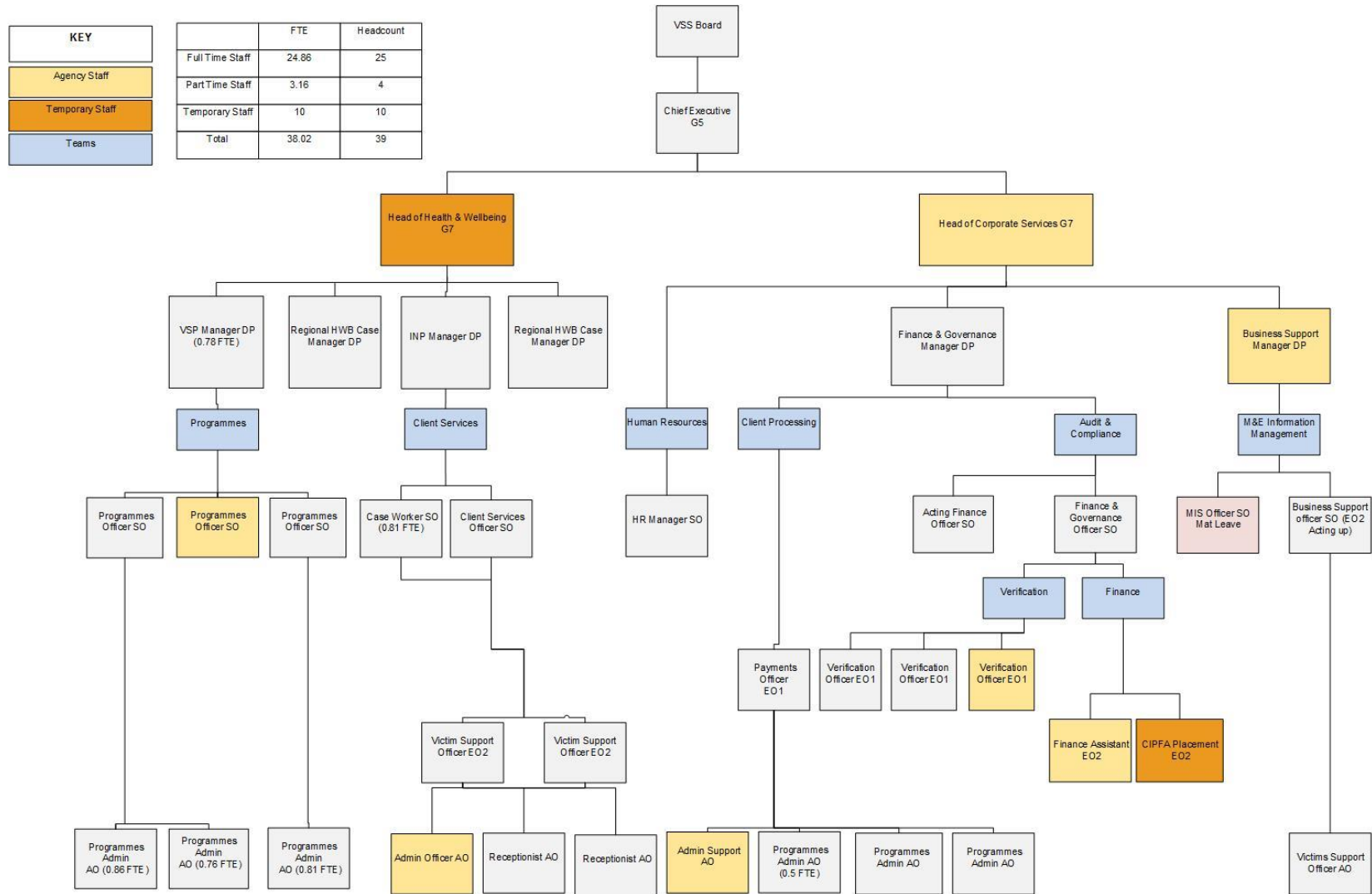
		Original	Adjustment	Restated
		£	£	£
Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure				
Income – Grant in Aid from Sponsor Department	1 April 2015	12,662,998	(12,662,998)	0
	31 March 2016	13,683,000	(13,683,000)	0
Statement of Financial Position				
Trade and Other Receivables	1 April 2015	455,381	(291,000)	164,381
	31 March 2016	505,645	(474,000)	31,645
General Reserve	1 April 2015	(384,452)	291,000	(93,452)
	31 March 2016	(577,964)	474,000	(103,964)

Date of authorisation for issue

The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 21 December 2017.

APPENDIX 1

Appendix 1: Organisation Chart as at 31 March 2017



APPENDIX 2

Appendix 2: Business Plan Extract 2016-17

Key Actions

Targeted Actions	Target Date
Corporate Objective 1: VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS To work to ensure victims and survivors and their representatives have access to clear information and quality services within allocated resources To engage with stakeholders to ensure a co-ordinated approach to meeting the needs of the victims and survivors sector	
A – INDIVIDUAL NEEDS PROGRAMME & INDIVIDUAL CLIENTS	
Deliver Financial Assistance Scheme including the design of improved, user-friendly application forms	July 2016 (Publicise Scheme in March; application period April, payments commence May, payments complete July)
Deliver Support for Injured Scheme	April 2016
Deliver Support for Carers Scheme	May 2016
Deliver Support for Bereaved Scheme	May 2016
Design and embed signposting protocol at entry to service. Maintain up to date documentation of relevant support available through funded organisations, partner organisations and networks, and statutory provision.	April 2016
Design and embed improved INP paperwork journey through VSS office/staff teams	April 2016
Monitor the client journey	Ongoing to March 2017
Develop care pathway for victims and survivors with mental health needs	Ongoing to March 2017
Monitor effectiveness of Telephony System operated by IT Assist	Ongoing to March 2017

APPENDIX 2

B – VICTIMS SUPPORT PROGRAMME	
Ensure continuity of services under the VSP 2016/17.	Interim LoO: 31 March 2016 Final LoO: within 8 weeks of budget confirmation
Identify and roll out Best Practice across the sector: Implement HWB Workforce Development Training Plan for 2016/17 (based on findings of 2013 Skills Audit and 2013-2015 engagement with HWB Service Providers)	March 2017
Identify and roll out Best Practice across the sector: Implement Social Support (SS) Training Needs Analysis to inform Workforce Training Plan	September 2016
Maintain Befriending Services established in 2014/15	Ongoing to March 2017
Deliver Corporate Governance Refresher training to VSP Groups	September/ October 2016
Open call for applications Issued letters of offer for next programming period 2017-18	November 2016 Preparation of new contracts and work plans by 31 March 2017
C – PEACE IV VICTIMS & SURVIVORS PROGRAMME	
Complete all processes associated with preparation for delivery of PEACE IV Victims & Survivors Programme	Ongoing to March 2017
Open call for applications to PEACE IV Victims & Survivors Programme	November 2016
D – WIDER STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	
Chair, service and support Regional Victims and Survivors Practitioners Working Group (VSPWG) Meetings	Ongoing to March 2017
Monitor geographical spread across the region	September 2016
E – COLLABORATIVE-DESIGN PROGRAMME	

APPENDIX 2

Address recommendations made in the research commissioned by CVS into: - the Impact of the VSP and INP (2014/15), - the evaluation of the Pilot Caseworker and Personalised Budget Approach (2015/16), and findings of the Pilot Disability Aids Scheme (2015/16).	Ongoing to March 2017
Engage with CVS and Department in the delivery of the Victims Collaborative-Design Programme	Ongoing to March 2017
F – EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS	
Review stakeholder analysis and communication and engagement plan	April 2016
Review and update publicity and communications information and actions for clarity and relevance	Ongoing to March 2017
Integrated engagement with key stakeholders including Forum Services Working Group (FSWG), CVS and TEO	Ongoing to March 2017
Corporate Objective 2: FINANCIAL	
To ensure sound financial management and controls are in place and provide value for money	
Ensure robust financial processes and procedures are being developed and followed	Ongoing to March 2017
By year end operate within allocated budget avoiding overspend and managing underspend within a tolerance of 1.5%	Ongoing to March 2017
Pay 100% of invoices within the statutory time frame of 30 days	Ongoing to March 2017
Transfer to BACS payments for INP Payments	March 2017
Carry out vouching and verification in line with VSP and INP operating rules	Ongoing to March 2017
Corporate Objective 3: INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESSES	
To ensure that the work of the VSS is guided by high quality corporate and clinical governance	
CLINICAL GOVERNANCE	
Ensure robust clinical risk management protocol is in place and followed	Ongoing to March 2017

APPENDIX 2

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	
Implementation of Individual Needs Programme	May 2016
Implementation of Individual Needs Programme	April 17 and beyond
Implementation of Victims Support Programme	April 2016 – March 2017
Review capacity of funded organisations and their staffing structures	October 2017
Maintain a robust VSS Board and ARC to oversee the strategic direction and governance arrangements.	Ongoing to March 2017
Design and develop the long term strategy of the VSS moving forward	April 2016
Review and update Policies and Procedures	Ongoing to March 2017
Meet Department Requirements in line with Good Governance Checklist and MSFM at TEO Accountability Meetings	Monthly and Quarterly to March 2017
Senior Management Team meetings	Ongoing to March 2017
Ensure a robust risk management process is in place and followed	Ongoing to March 2017
Ensure information is provided in response to statutory obligations and any external information requests (Corporate Communication)	Ongoing to March 2017
Improvement in Internal Communications	Ongoing to March 2017
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (MIS) and MONITORING & EVALUATION	
Implementation of delivery of new MIS, in line with MIS timetable established in 2015/16, to upgrade to fully integrated electronic records management system	October 2016
Implement Monitoring and Evaluation Framework as agreed in consultation with stakeholders December 2014 – March 2015	Ongoing to March 2017 (M& E Methodology to be signed off by SMT April 2016.

APPENDIX 2

	Integrated Interim Report August 2016 Draft Final Report Jan 2017. FINAL Report by March 2017.)
Corporate Objective 4: LEARNING, GROWING, INNOVATING To listen to victims and survivors, staff, and others to continually develop and improve service provision	
Plan capacity requirements for going forward in line with documented change management plan	April 2016
Implement a Training and Development plan and Competency Framework for all staff to ensure skills and competencies match any changes in role requirements	Ongoing to March 2017
Implement Staff Wellbeing and Engagement Plan	June 2016
Maintain a working environment that is health and safety compliant	Ongoing to March 2017