



## **JOB DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE (J.D.Q.)**

### **HMI CATEGORY CODE:**

**DIRECTORATE:** Local Policing and Criminal Justice

**AREA/DEPT:** Criminal Justice

### **FAU:**

**SECTION:** Prosecution Unit

**JOB TITLE:** **VICTIM CARE OFFICER**

**REPORTS TO:** Victim Care Merseyside Team Leader

**CURRENT RANK/GRADE:** **D**

**DATE:** May 2022

**1. JOB PURPOSE:** (Briefly state your job's overall objectives. To.....")

To provide a vital customer centred, professional and effective service with high quality tailored support to victims. To identify individual victims needs and provide a bespoke cope and recovery support plan, together with, emotional support, advice, guidance, and action. This will be achieved by completing initial assessment of needs with individual outcomes and goals, and risk assessments that are comprehensive to determine how and what the victim needs to cope and recover from the crime.

To be responsible for identifying potential safeguarding concerns and manage any immediate victim risks. To identify and provide immediate interventions for service users to help improve their emotional wellbeing as part of the victim's journey, which in some cases will include long term emotional support practical guidance for vulnerable victims of crime. Ongoing victim care case workload and prioritisation will form an integral aspect to the role to ensure an effective and efficient customer focused service, in line with Ministry of Justice requirements.

**2. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

(Describe the important end results you are expected to achieve).

- a) Take ownership for individual victims and be their designated care support provider and coordinator, ensure trust and confidence are established and developed with the victim in order to better support them. Encourage conversation and support the ability of the victim to

cope and recover from the impact the crime has had upon them. Act as the point of contact for all victims within the allocated caseload and ensure compliance with the Victim's Code of Practice (VCOP).

- b) Undertake a formal needs assessment and, jointly with the victim, make decisions on the best course of action for each victim's recovery plan, including situational understanding and awareness of the victim with regards threat, harm, risk, vulnerability, and any immediate risk management that is required under Safeguarding legislation and in line with the National Decision Making Model. Make relevant quick decisions to protect the victim who could be in emotional crisis and / or at risk when immediate risks are identified
- c) Proactively identify the best method of communication to facilitate the support strategy for a victim in their recovery, helping to reduce the mental load and stress for the victim, and enabling the victim to freely communicate in a manner that suits their personal circumstances and their long-term recovery needs. This will include, where a victim has specialist needs, disabilities or language requirements to facilitate their cope and recovery. Find solutions and actively manage facilitating the method of communication required.
- d) Actively self-manage, review and prioritise a live caseload of victims, providing support and interventions. The effectiveness of the intervention will have a positive impact on a victim's future recovery on mental health and wellbeing.
- e) Recognise when a victim requires more specialist interventions or referrals due to complex or specialist needs and provide reassurance to the victim regarding referral to the appropriate department and / or other specialist service provider, ensuring relevant information is passed to the onward referral on behalf of the victim (with their consent).
- f) Ensure victim contacts, actions and interventions are recorded appropriately and accurately on Victim Care Merseyside IT systems.
- g) Maintain the trust and confidentiality of victims who may be high profile, and ensure they are afforded the same empathetic approach and confidentiality that all victims are entitled to. There will be cases that are highly sensitive following discussion with the Professional Standards Department that will require careful victim management and confidentiality. Victims in such cases could prove challenging from their experience and interactions with police and the postholders ability to build a good rapport from the outset will be crucial to the force reputation as well as the victim's ability to be supported for cope and recovery.

- h) Provide and maintain effective working relationships between Victim Care Merseyside and third-party providers of support, including specialist. Work cross strand to be able to support local operations/demands and identify opportunities to add value to the service and support victims are entitled to, and provide advice and guidance to officers. Comply and keep up to date with relevant legislation, confidentiality and organisational policies and procedures, as well as the Victims Code of Practice and other victim related policies and procedures.
- i) As required for the team, be a SPOC for specific aspects of a victims needs and be able to advise colleagues, share best practice and training inputs and represent VCM at local force strand or community forums if the Team Leader/Manager nominates.
- j) Undertake all responsibilities relating to information management, data quality and information sharing, intelligence and information security to ensure accordance with the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on Information Management, issued by the College of Policing.

### **3(a) KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE:**

(What kind of knowledge, skills and experience are necessary to enable satisfactory performance in the job and why are they necessary?).

The role requires a Level 3 NVQ qualification (or equivalent) or significant experience in a similar role / environment. Ideally the qualification will be relevant to victims and/or customer services (E.g. NVQ in Community Justice: Work with Victims).

The ability to show empathy and compassion to victims, having the ability to quickly build trust and confidence will be a crucial aspect to this role. Remain calm, polite and professional and de-escalate any potential conflict that may arise when communicating with others. Manage conversations and be able to 'close contact' where required in a respectful manner.

Post holder will need to demonstrate adaptability within a constantly evolving Criminal Justice system, provide a quality service being flexible about different ways of working and contributing to successful outcomes and continuous improvement. Be a problem solver, taking a positive approach to solving problems and identifying solutions. When reviewing the victim needs assessment the VCO will use their experience, knowledge and skills when considering appropriate interventions for the victim.

Knowledge and understanding of the priorities of victims and witnesses in the Criminal Justice System and can be trained in Criminal Injury Compensation Claims. E.g., Victim's Code of Practice, Witness Charter and other Victim related policies and procedures both internal and external to organisation.

Knowledge, experience and awareness (or able to learn) of criminal offences, the criminal justice processes and out of court suspect disposals, to be able to use this knowledge to help victims understand decisions and be reassured.

Excellent communication skills with ability to show empathy using active listening skills – the post holder will be communicating with victims including vulnerable victims as a key function of the role. Adapt communication styles to support the needs of the victim.

Manage, prioritise, and review workload to maximise time and productivity and ability to adapt to changing demands to ensure effective and efficient service delivery as part of the team. Have the ability to assess, interpret, analyse and evaluate information that will help identify relevant actions that enable the best outcomes for victims and take a ‘one team approach’ to ensure the team works well together and strives to deliver the best possible service for individual victims.

Knowledge or ability to learn to use relevant force IT systems (E.g. Corvus, Niche, etc).

Knowledge and ability to build knowledge of other victim service providers will form part of this role. This is crucial to ensure the victim can be signposted/referred to third party providers, when required, to help their continued cope and recovery, or because of more specialist needs identified by the VCO.

Clear and demonstrable professional and ethical standards in line with all force policies.

**3(b)** (Does your post require any Police Powers, and if so what are they, and why are they necessary?)

N/A

#### **4. RELATIONSHIPS:**

*(a) Supervisory responsibilities:*

N/A

*(b) Supervision Received:*

Reports to Victim CareTeam Leader

(c) **Other Contacts:**

(i) **Within Merseyside Police:**

Regular contact with Operational Officers, Other Criminal Justice Departments and other Operational Strands regarding delivering a high-quality support service to victims

(ii) **Outside Merseyside Police:**

Regular contact with Victims of Crime, Social Services, Third Sector Partners, National Health Service, Non-prosecuting agencies, Local Government agencies, Specialist commissioned service providers, Action Fraud, Office for the PCC Merseyside, Other police forces, British Transport Police, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector charities and victim care providers, including domestic abuse provision, Victim Care Merseyside Service providers, (Not exhaustive) ) regarding delivering a high-quality support service to victims.

## 5. **CONTEXT:**

(a) **Operating Environment:** (Services provided, work patterns, who are the customers).

Postholder will work flexibly across areas of victim need to meet changing demand and ensuring there is a responsive, relevant service to Victims of crime in Merseyside. Core hours will be 7am to 7pm with staff meeting core periods of demand and sharing the rota for start and finish times with the team.

Service users of Victim Care Merseyside are victims of volume crime and those who contact who are victims of specialist crime types will be referred to other specialist agencies by Victim Care Officers.

Post will be based at HQ with the future option of agile working, as determined by Senior Management and Force Policy.

(b) **Framework and Boundaries:** (Policies and procedures which affect you and how these can be changed).

The post holder is required to work within the criminal justice, legal and procedural framework to ensure compliance with all relevant statutes and policies. Changes in legislation and procedure dictate variations in policy and working practice.

Victim's Code of Practice

Witness Charter

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Data Protection Act 2018

(c) **Organisation:** (For each type of post that reports directly to you, outline below the posts overall responsibilities).

N/A

**6. DIMENSIONS:** (Indicate in quantitative terms, key areas on which your job has an impact).

**Financial:** N/A

**Staff:** N/A

**Other:** Victims, Partner Agencies, Members of the public and operational officers.

**7. JOB CHALLENGES:** (Describe the most challenging or complex parts of your job).

A Victim Care Officer will be in contact with individuals who may be going through a traumatic time in their lives as a victim of crime. This will require the post holder to be supportive, pro-active, polite and considerate, showing empathy and compassion giving the individual the time needed to deal with their specific needs and concerns whilst managing a demanding case load. Sometimes the victim will get frustrated and possibly angry about their situation, however the postholder must remain calm and professional.

A Victim Care Officer will need to support individuals who may have personal challenges and are in fear and crisis following a crime experience.

The type of cases being prosecuted can be distressing/disturbing for both victim and the Victim Care Officer. The Victim Care Officer must be professional whilst managing the needs of the victims.

Staff will need to recognise the emotional impact of the role on their own well being and seek help when necessary.

Victim Care Merseyside staff will provide a seamless journey onward to Witness Care Unit staff to support a victim through the criminal justice process.

It is acknowledged that Victim Care Merseyside will be embedded into Merseyside police which will bring significant benefits to victims, but in doing so must maintain a degree of independence.

Building the trust and confidence of a victim is crucial, to achieve this the VCO must be highly organised, able to prioritise and have excellent communication skills and emotional intelligence.

## 8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

(Provide any further information, not included in your previous answers, which you consider would assist others to achieve a better understanding of your job).

Victim Care Merseyside is a new service and the central element of the PCC's commissioned victim care services under the brand. This team will be the central pillar of VCM. This newly recruited team of Victim Care Officers, Team Leaders and Team Manager will embed new processes to ensure victims of crime in Merseyside are able to quickly identify and access the support they need from capable, informed, empathetic and professional care officers, helping to make sure the 'victims journey' is a better one and they are to recover as much as possible from the impact of crime.

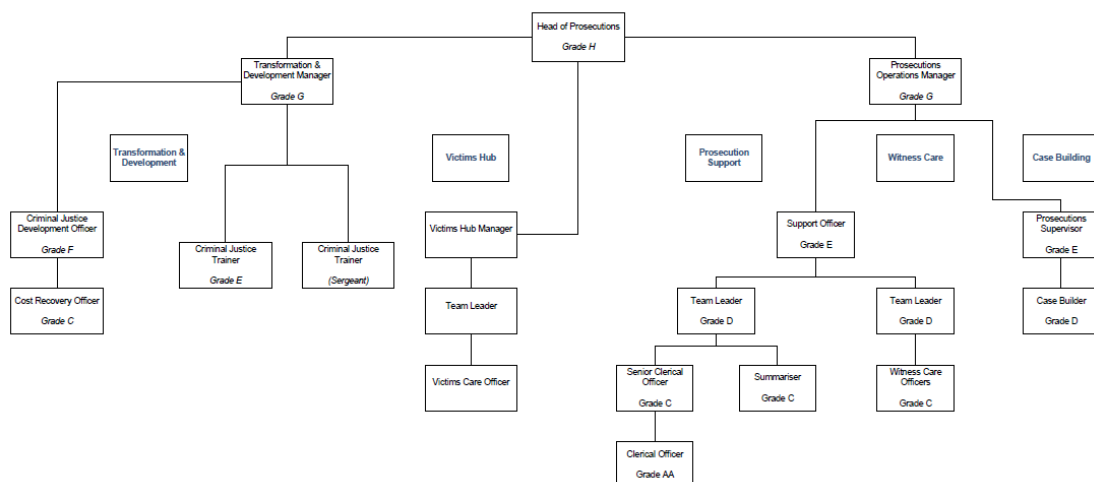
The aim of the Hub is to assist victims of crime to 'cope and recover' from their experience. This is the core requirement of the Ministry of Justice Victim Services Grant.

Postholder must understand the importance of the data captured and how it can improve the support service provided to victims, ensuring that information is handled in accordance with Data Protection Act, GDPR and MOPI legislation and according to the victim's entitlement to confidentiality. The postholder will ensure to respect the rights and wishes of victims in contact and follow procedures accordingly.

Have awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion both within the organisation, wider community, and individual victims who access the VCM support service, to ensure that all communities in Merseyside have trust and confidence in an inclusive support service.

## 9. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:

(Draw an organisational chart of your Department / Section, indicating the position of your post within it).



**10. AGREEMENT OF QUESTIONNAIRE CONTENT:**

(Please sign when completed)

POSTHOLDER'S NAME:

(Please print in block capitals)

POSTHOLDER'S SIGNATURE:

Date:

Extn

MANAGER'S NAME:

(Please print in block capitals)

MANAGER'S SIGNATURE:

Date:

Extn