

Decision by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

Item: Beacon Funding 2026–27

Date: 24th November 2025

Background: Proposal for funding Catch 22 victim support services under the Beacon umbrella for 2026–27.

Paper: DMM Catch 22 Victim Services – 2026-27 contract extension

Decision: Core extension approved by PCC; enhancements to be revisited when budgets are confirmed.



Meeting	Decision Making Meeting
Date	24 November 2025
Title of Report	Beacon funding 2026-27
Submitted By	Steve Williams
Purpose of Report	To propose recommendations for funding for Catch 22 (operating under the Beacon umbrella) in 2026-27.
Decision(s) Required	To agree proposed financial expenditure for 2026-27 on Catch 22 victim support services.
Financial implications	The financial implications are up to £1,131,685 for 2026-27. This includes the continuation of the Catch22 Case managed support service for victims of all crimes (funded from the MoJ victims grant) and the rollover of a grant for an ASB victim support service (also provided by Catch 22 but funded via the OPCC victims budget). Details are also provided and costed for potential service Enhancements.
Legal implications	No legal implications for the OPCC.
Equalities impact	This is a paper recommending continuing a victim support service which does not require an equalities impact statement.
Freedom of Information Exemption Section if Applicable	None are applicable.

1. Introduction

This paper sets out a proposal to utilise the one year extension to the current four-year contract with Catch22 to provide Beacon Victim Care Service and renewal of the ASB grant funded service both of which end on 31 March 2026 and to agree to additional adjustments to improve the overall delivery of the service.

2. Background

Grant funding for the commissioning of victim support services continues to be provided to PCCs by the MoJ under powers given to the Secretary of State by section 56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. This provides that the Secretary of State may “pay such grants to such persons as he considers appropriate in connection with measures which appear to him to be intended to assist victims, witnesses or other persons affected by offences”. Section 143 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 gives PCCs the power to provide, or arrange of the provision of, support services for victims of crime. These powers do not supersede procurement regulations.

The MOJ have provided funding to PCCs in annual agreements between the two parties from 2014 to 2025.

The MoJ have not yet informed PCCs about their Victim Commissioning Budget for 2026-27. The core Victims grant in 2025-26 is £1,234,639.13 and the DA/SV ring-fenced fund is £984,832. We anticipate that notification of the 26/27 budget will be within the coming weeks and that budgets will remain at similar levels. However, a decision to exercise the extension option must be made as soon as possible to ensure continuity of service and contractual certainty.

The current model of delivery for core victim services is a hybrid partnership with Hertfordshire Constabulary. Catch 22 have been the charitable provider since 2018. The service remit is to provide a multi-crime victim support service to help victims to cope and recover from their experiences. The annual contract and grant value in 2025/26 is £916,701. The total investment over the 4-year contract period is £3,459,681.27. The main funding source is the Ministry of Justice Victims Commissioning Fund plus top-up funds from the OPCC.

2022-2026 - 4-year contract & grant expenditure		
2022-23	£799,976	Beacon Core Contract, Family Hub & DA CYP Support
2023-24	£922,526	Beacon Core Contract, Family Hub, DA CYP Support, Safeguarding Hub & ASB Support
2024-25	£820,478	Beacon Core Contract, Family Hub, DA CYP Support, Safeguarding Hub
2025-26	£916,701	Beacon Core Contract, Family Hub, DA CYP Support, Safeguarding Hub & ASB Support
Total	£3,459,681	

3. Options Considered

a) Extend the current contract & grant without changes

This option would involve simply exercising the extension clause and continuing with the existing service requirements, while applying an uplift to account for cost-of-living pressures on Catch22's staffing costs.

Not recommended – This approach does not address identified service improvements or evolving victim needs.

b) Extend the contract with enhancements & continue the ASB grant

This option would involve exercising the extension clause and amending the contract to incorporate the additional proposals submitted by Catch22, alongside cost-of-living adjustments for staffing and inclusion of current grant-funded elements.

Recommended – This approach ensures continuity of service while improving delivery and addressing provider sustainability.

c) **Go out to tender for a new service and provider**

This option would involve initiating a full procurement process to appoint a new provider for victim care services.

Not recommended – Tight timelines due to late notification of the 2026–27 budget make this approach high-risk. Additionally, the current service is performing well, is well-established, and provides continuity for victims.

4. **Recommended Option: Extend the contract with enhancements**

The commissioning team value the service that Catch 22 provides to victims of all crime and would recommend that the opportunity to utilise the one-year extension opportunity. The case managed service model has produced outstanding results for victims. This would give continuity of service for victims and would give continuity of a well-known and well-liked provision for constabulary & professional partners. It would also offer the opportunity to implement and test service improvements, which are set out below.

a. **Contract Extension Terms:**

The duration of the extension is for one year (01 April 2026 to 31 March 2027). The proposed budget for the contract & ASB grant applying an uplift to account for cost-of-living pressures on Catch22's staffing costs only and with no further service enhancements is £966,120.

This cost would be split between the MoJ Victims Grant (£884,660) and the OPCC victims budget (£81,460 for the ASB support service) as in previous years.

Performance monitoring would continue with monthly reviews.

In consultation with the provider the commissioning team has scoped three potential service enhancements to strengthen victim services in Hertfordshire during the contract extension year. These changes aim to address rising demand, improve inclusivity, and provide tailored support for children and young people (CYP).

b. **Proposed Service Enhancements:**

Beacon Triage Operating Model

Context:

The current single point of contact model is under significant strain due to a sharp increase in referrals—from 2,746 in 2022–23 to 4,345 in 2024–25. This surge is largely driven by Initial Victim Needs Assessments (IVNA) conducted by the Constabulary, which often result in referrals without victim consent or understanding of the service. Consequently, many victims decline support after initial contact,

creating administrative burdens and reducing the time available for meaningful engagement with those who need ongoing assistance.

Benefits:

Introducing two dedicated triage workers will allow initial calls to be handled promptly and professionally, ensuring victims receive clear explanations of the service and can make informed choices. This approach will reduce caseload pressure on support workers, improve the quality of ongoing support, and enhance resilience within the service. It will also create capacity for more face-to-face work with children and young people, which is currently limited due to high demand.

Risks:

One risk is that victims may feel they have to repeat their story to multiple professionals, which could cause frustration or disengagement. This will be mitigated through clear handovers and detailed notes between triage and support workers, as well as transparency with victims about the process. Another risk is potential delays for urgent cases; this will be addressed by ensuring that high-risk referrals—such as those involving domestic abuse, sexual violence, or children—bypass the triage stage and are allocated immediately.

Cost: £76,002 per year.

Timeline:

- Recruitment and vetting January–March 2026
- Onboarding and team briefing April 2026
- Launch of the new model May 2026
- Review September 2026.

Community Partnership & Inclusion Manager

Context:

Currently, outreach and community engagement are handled on an ad hoc basis, which limits the service's ability to build strong relationships with underrepresented groups and respond effectively to local incidents. Events such as the Bushey homicides have highlighted the need for a more structured and proactive approach to community engagement and restorative practices.

Benefits:

A dedicated Community Partnership & Inclusion Manager will enable Catch22 to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with diverse communities, increasing trust and awareness of the service. This role will help boost referrals from groups that are currently underrepresented and ensure a rapid, coordinated response to incidents that affect public confidence and community safety. It will also strengthen the service's online presence and support preventative work with children and young people through workshops and awareness campaigns.

Risks:

Some communities may be resistant to engagement with external organisations, this risk will be mitigated by investing time in building trust through key community contacts and ensuring engagement is culturally sensitive and collaborative.

Cost: £48,654 per year.

Timeline:

- Recruitment and vetting January–March 2026
- Engagement targets set March 2026
- Onboarding and induction April 2026.

Hertfordshire CYP Hub (Rebrand & Expand)**Context:**

Children and young people currently represent a significant proportion of referrals—around 16%, averaging 60 per month, there is an opportunity to strengthen the service to meet their needs more effectively. To achieve this, the existing Family Hub will be rebranded and expanded into a dedicated Children and Young People (CYP) Hub, creating a clear identity and focus for specialist support. This enhanced hub will not only maintain continuity of care but also introduce new elements such as preventative education and digital mental health resources tailored to young people, ensuring a modern, accessible, and holistic approach.

Benefits:

Rebranding and expanding the hub into a dedicated CYP service will ensure continuity and improvement in specialist support for young victims. The new hub will combine in-person interventions with digital mental health resources through Kooth, offering flexibility and accessibility. It will also deliver preventative education in schools and youth settings, helping to reduce future victimisation and empower young people to seek help early. Enhanced data collection will support evidence-based improvements to the service.

Risks:

Staff may resist changes to their roles, and the new brand may not resonate with young people. These risks will be mitigated through early consultation with staff and co-design of the brand with young people to ensure it reflects their needs and preferences.

Cost: £40,909 (including £25,000 for Kooth online mental health support).

Timeline:

- Consultation with young people and staff November 2025–January 2026
- Kooth referral pathway setup January–March 2026
- Launch of the new youth service April 2026.

5. Summary of Proposal & Next Steps

- For the Commissioner to approve the extension of the Beacon contract (including ASB grant) for the financial year 26/27 at a value of £966,120
- For the Commissioner to consider the contract uplift of £76,002 to introduce a Beacon Triage Operating Model
 - If MoJ funding remains at the same level as 2025/26 this uplift will be achievable within the MoJ Victims Grant. Should the commissioner give indicative approval, final approval will be sought once budgets are confirmed.
- For the Commissioner to consider the contract uplift of £48,654 to introduce a Community Partnership & Inclusion Manager
 - If MoJ funding remains at the same level as 2025/26 this uplift will be achievable within the MoJ Victims Grant. Should the commissioner give indicative approval, final approval will be sought once budgets are confirmed.
- For the Commissioner to consider the contract uplift of £40,909 to rebrand and expand the existing Family Hub
 - If MoJ funding remains at the same level as 2025/26 this uplift will be achievable within the MoJ Victims Grant. Should the commissioner give indicative approval, final approval will be sought once budgets are confirmed.

Appendix A – Beacon in Numbers

2022-26 - Highlights and achievements

- Beacon Fraud Hub (Victim Service Team & C22) was declared the winner in the Outstanding Customer Service Initiative category at the December 2020 Tackling Economic Crime Awards (TECA) show where the judging panel observed that *'the work of the dedicated team in this award-winning hub was recognised, as it addresses directly those affected by fraud and enabled the hub with its team members with specialist knowledge to work with victims one-to-one while empowering them to now their rights'*.
- C22 have by managing a referral pathway, providing letter templates, bank contact details and information on the funds recovery process have been able to recover £5,390,478.80 for victims since 2019.
- C22 nominated as a finalist for two Resolve ASB Awards "Best Project and Best Support Worker"
- Held two Beacon annual informative conferences raising awareness of victims' experiences, and key learnings for how professionals should work with victims
- Community presence – attended Herts Pride, freshers' fayres, community fayres, fraud library events, County Lines events in schools and ASB drop ins.
- Criminal justice training videos – C22 created and used videos in training that focus on victims' experience of the criminal justice process. C22 delivered these video packages at training events for external organisations including Police Now and Thames Victim Services.
- Social value charity support – C22 have supported two local charities in the contract period – Food Banks and Small Acts of Kindness.
- Client feedback – C22 continually receive each month predominantly positive and thankful feedback.
- Long term victim support – C22 have supported 54 individuals where appropriate, for example, due to long court delays for over a year during 2022-2025 for over a year.
- Victim assistance fund – Supported by OPCC funds, court funds, and one-off donations, C22 has supplied 152 victims with items since 2022. These include video doorbells, window alarms, safety enhancing items for gardens, work items and public transport vouchers to go to key criminal justice appointments or medical appointments because of the crime.
- Expert speakers – C22 have presented at multiple victim-based events as subject matter experts showcasing the Beacon brand. C22 have been approached by media outlets for comments or to be involved in news pieces as a noteworthy provider.
- Restorative Justice – C22 have delivered RJ conferences, shuttle work and other forms of restorative work that have helped harmers and harmed to move forward on their journeys.

2022-26 - Beacon in numbers

- Catch 22 are funded to provide enhanced support directed at victims of serious crime, those who are persistently targeted and the most vulnerable.
- Referrals have been received across 47 different crime types
- Received from 30 plus different referral sources
- Client Feedback – 95.54% of respondents have been satisfied with support, with 80.95% being very or completely satisfied
- Most requested support type is “Emotional Support”
- 98% of victims’ needs in mental wellbeing are decreased or stabilised
- 97% of victims’ needs in personal safety are decreased or stabilised

2022-26 - value for money

- Contract Spend April 2022 – July 2025 = £2,772,155.52
- 11,635 referrals since April 2022 – July 2025
- Support given to 6,709 victims between April 2022 – July 2025
- Cost Efficiency:
 - Cost per Victim Supported: £413.20
 - Cost per Referral: £238.26
- Benchmark Comparison:
 - IDVA/ISVA Models: £700–£800
 - Trauma-Informed Counselling: £500
 - MoJ Core Services: £450
 - Beacon Victim Care Service: £413.20 → Strong Value for Money