

CRIME VICTIMS HELPLINE

Strategic Plan 2023-2025



Freephone **116006**

INTRODUCTION

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Using an inclusive participatory approach, the aim was to develop a three-year strategic plan for Crime Victims Helpline. This comprehensive strategic plan includes an overview of the organisation's vision, mission, and purpose - and these drive a series of strategic objectives and key activities.
- The process provided space and time for the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and other key stakeholder to discuss and agree a shared vision and associated objectives for Crime Victims Helpline's next three-years' operations.
- The final output is a three-year strategic plan which is in alignment with Crime Victims Helpline's values, vision, mission and purpose; which is based on a comprehensive analysis of the internal organisational and external sectoral landscape; and which sets ambitious yet achievable goals for the organisation.



APPROACH

- A mixture of consultation workshops, and one-to-one interviews were conducted with the CVH Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and key external stakeholders.
- In these we teased out the overall mission, values and purpose of the organisation and we reviewed a set of proposed strategic objectives and areas of particular focus for the organisation. We also discussed the key strengths of the organisation, the key challenges and areas for development.
- A desk-top review of relevant reports; the sectoral landscape and key legislative development was also undertaken to inform the strategic aims and objectives of Crime Victims Helpline.



WHO WE ARE

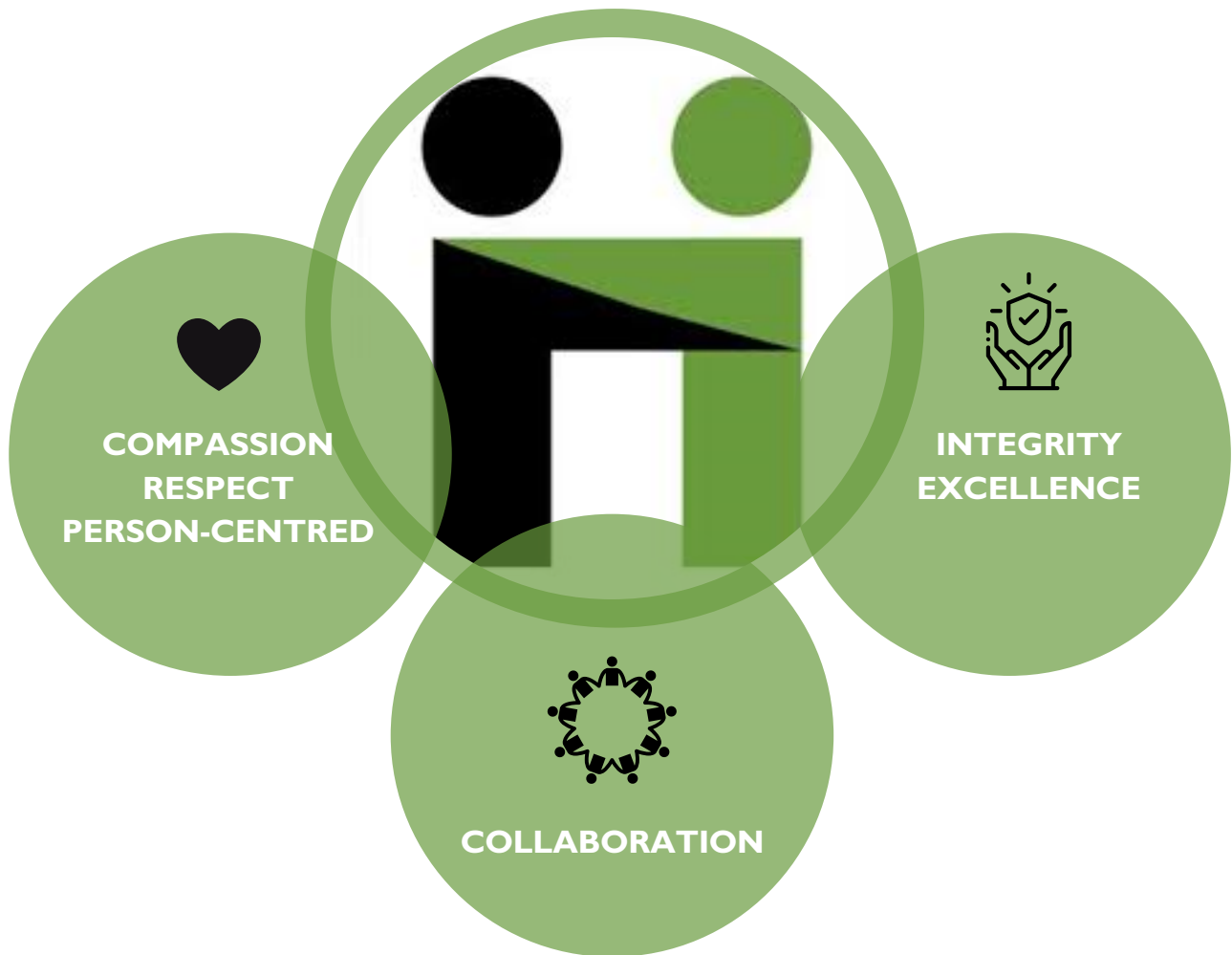
VISION - MISSION - PURPOSE



The Crime Victims Helpline is a national support service for victims, survivors, and anyone impacted by crime in Ireland. Whether the crime happened to you directly, or to a family-member, loved-one, colleague etc. and whether it happened recently or in the past, we are here to support you.

We listen with empathy and without judgement. We provide time and space for you to talk about your experience in confidence. We can answer your questions about the criminal justice system, provide information about your rights, and guide you to local and specialist victim support services.

OUR VALUES



Compassion - Respect - Person-Centred

At Crime Victims Helpline, everything we do is guided by our key values of compassion and respect for all who use our service, and all who we work with both internally and externally. Our key aim is to provide a supportive, empathetic service for anyone who has been impacted by a crime - being person-centred in our approach is key to that. We focus on the individual, their needs and what we can do to support them.



Integrity - Excellence

Integrity and excellence are the foundation upon which our services are built. We aim to provide a best-practice, evidence-informed service which is underpinned by the highest standards of ethical governance.



Collaboration

We seek to collaborate in a real and meaningful way with all of our partners within the criminal justice system and within the victim-support sector to ensure that all who have been impacted by crime can receive integrated support from organisations that are working in harmony with one another.



WHAT WE DO

EMPOWER

INFORM - SIGNPOST

WELCOME - SUPPORT - LISTEN

✔ Provide meaningful, person-centred support at the point of need

- At Crime Victims Helpline we provide people who have been impacted by crime with the space and time to speak with someone who can offer a listening ear; and we provide information, guidance and signposting to relevant services. Through these supports, we aim to empower people who have been impacted by crime.
- We provide a service which is easy to access, which is free, independent and confidential.
- We simplify and streamline a complex criminal justice system and victim support sector.
- As a service we pride ourselves on providing a responsive person-centred service. As such we are dynamic, flexible and adapt our service to meet the changing nature of the criminal justice system, the changing nature of crime, and the needs of victims.

HOW WE DO IT



HELPLINE

CVH is responsible for running Ireland's national 116006 Freephone helpline for Victims of Crime. Services are also available over text, email, and webchat. Extensive information for victims is available at www.crimevictimshelpline.ie



INFORMATION & SIGNPOSTING

CVH provides people with information on their rights, and how to navigate the Criminal Justice System. We also signpost people to specialist services and supports (e.g. services for victims of sexual violence).



ADVOCACY

CVH advocates on behalf of Victims of Crime at a policy level. We submit consultation responses, and publish our statistics and insights on the needs and requirements of Victims of Crime in Ireland.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

& KEY ACTIONS

EXPANSION -- COMMUNICATION -- TRAINING

CURRENT

FUTURE

Position in Sector:



- Fulfilling a strategically important function on behalf of the Department of Justice.
- However public brand awareness is low.



- The Crime Victims Helpline is well-known to the public. It is a respected high-profile service.

Service Provision:



- Support at a distance - 116 006 helpline, email, text, and webchat with limited hours.
- Provide victim awareness training and events.



- Move to increase accessibility of services through expanded hours and explore viability and benefits of face-to-face meetings with victims who are not currently supported by existing services.
- Research/policy (collective advocacy).
- Expand training scope and expertise.

Organisational Structure:



- Company limited by guarantee/registered charity.
- Overseen by Board of Directors.
- Volunteer-base supported by small team of staff.



- Strengthen and expand volunteer programme.
- Add staff and increase specialisation to ensure high level of service to victims of crime.

Funding Model:



- Department of Justice (DoJ)- sole funder.



- Expanded agreement with DoJ + multi-year funding secured to support that.
- Diversification and supplementation of funds (such as through EU grants, sponsorships, corporate donations, etc.).

KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2023 - 2025

1

Enhance our service to victims of crime - improving quality and access.

2

Increase public awareness of the Crime Victims Helpline.

3

Strengthen and build connections with our national and international partners. Position CVH as a sector-leading organisation.

4

Key Resources: Invest in attracting, retaining and developing our people (staff/volunteers). Ensure reliable, cost effective, and secure technology infrastructure in place to support our work and goals.

5

Maintain a robust governance structure and organisational operating model that aligns with our strategic aims, can deliver on our strategic objectives and embodies the fundamentals of good governance - transparency, integrity, equality and fairness.

6

Grow and sustain a strategically aligned multi-year funding model for the organisation - in keeping with our values.

1

Enhance our service to victims of crime - improving quality and access.



1.1 ACTION: Continued development and enhancement of Crime Victims Helpline victim support offerings.

- Explore and cost potential expansion of access to CVH services:
 - Increase phone-line opening hours.
 - Provision of face-to-face support - for victims not served by current victim support services.
 - Targeted recruitment of volunteers to ensure geographic coverage nationally, and diversity of backgrounds and experiences.
- Explore potential areas of unmet need, which may include:
 - Marginalised populations (e.g. refugees, Travellers), victims of particular crimes (e.g. hate crime) or mass casualty events (e.g. terrorism).
- Produce proposal/business case for potential funders to secure agreement and resources for expanding access to CVH services.

1.2 ACTION: Formalise, professionalise and expand Crime Victim Helpline's role as the 'go-to' trainer in Ireland when it comes to understanding victim's needs and how to support them.

- Develop Crime Victims Helpline external training programme to become the 'go-to' organisation for those seeking training in “victim awareness” and other related training.
- Create and cost a proposal for the expansion of the training capacity of the organisation - identifying potential clients and the resource requirements to deliver on a comprehensive training strategy.

2

Increase public awareness of the Crime Victims Helpline.



2.1 ACTION: Develop Crime Victims Helpline Communications Strategy

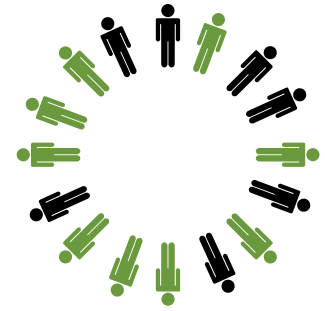
- Develop and cost a comprehensive communications strategy for raising Crime Victims Helpline external brand awareness amongst the general public. Clearly showing people what the organisation provides.
 - Review and develop an external media strategy - identifying the best use of social media platforms and more traditional media.
 - Explore potential funding for communications support – to communicate what Crime Victims Helpline does through infographics, reports, consultations and so forth.
 - Liaise with key partners within the sector to ensure victims of general crime are sign-posted effectively to Crime Victims Helpline.

2.2 ACTION: Expand Crime Victims Helpline Research and Policy Strategy

- Review Crime Victims Helpline's current collective advocacy work (i.e. research - nationally and at EU level, policy-insights, consultation submissions) and identify areas for expansion, growth and professionalisation.
- Expansion may include the development of an annual Crime Victims Helpline-sponsored survey of crime and its impacts on the general public; and/or an annual insights report which gathers both the quantitative and qualitative data from Crime Victims Helpline in terms of caller statistics and volunteer experiences regarding the yearly trends, changes in needs etc. amongst victims of crime. These would serve to both advocate and to raise the brand profile of the organisation.

3

Strengthen and build connections with our national and international partners. Position CVH as a sector-leading organisation.



3.1 ACTION: Strengthen relationships with key stakeholders nationally and internationally.

- Maintain memberships in Victim Support Europe and the Victims Rights Alliance and seek opportunities to take on leadership roles.
- Continue to forge strong working relationship with Garda Victim Liaison Office, other members of An Garda Siochana, and other relevant statutory organisations.

3.2 ACTION: Position CVH as a sector-leading organisation.

- Continually seek opportunities for collaboration with departments within the criminal justice system, and with other victim support service providers and beyond.

4

Key Resources: Invest in attracting, retaining and developing our people. Ensure reliable, cost effective, and secure technology infrastructure is in place to support our work and goals.



4.1 ACTION: Ensure healthy, inclusive and productive organisational culture is sustained.

An expansion of the Crime Victims Helpline service will require that both the people and technology resources are in place to support it.

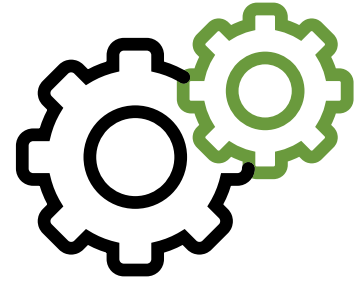
- Staff development.
 - Work closely with existing team to develop strategic approach to potential expansion - identifying training and other support needs, and ensuring that the supports are in place to allow staff to do their jobs effectively.
- Volunteer recruitment and development.
 - Ensure there are consistent training opportunities and events where volunteers can connect and share their experiences and insights.
 - Ensure that there is a planned and realistic approach to recruitment of volunteers - fostering links with relevant university courses and so forth.
- Fostering intentional culture.
 - Ensure that the organisational values of respect, compassion and person-centred-ness are enacted amongst all staff and volunteers.
 - Ensure staff, volunteers and Directors are diverse in background, experience and are nationally representative.

4.2 ACTION: Ensure technology is in place to support Crime Victims Helpline to succeed.

- Review current technology - ensure it is fit for purpose, and develop a plan to ensure that the future technology needs of the organisation are understood, costed and planned for.
- Technology should be tailored to the needs of the organisation to allow efficient, collaborative and confidential service delivery.

5

Maintain a robust governance structure and organisational operating model that aligns with our strategic aims, can deliver on our strategic objectives and embodies the fundamentals of good governance - transparency, integrity, equality and fairness.



5.1 ACTION: Ensure current governance excellence is fostered and maintained.

- The current governance model is working very effectively, with robust practices and policies in place. It is a key strength of the organisation which needs to be fostered and maintained.
- In order to ensure continued excellence in Crime Victims Helpline governance, succession planning needs to be ensured. Board of Directors in consultation with the Executive team will develop a Board of Directors succession plan.

6

To grow and sustain a strategically aligned multi-year funding model for the organisation - in keeping with our values.



6.1 ACTION: Develop multi-year strategic funding model.

- Have adequate resources in place to plan and execute an effective multi-year funding strategy.
- Develop a clear business plan for funders. Set out multi-year targets for funding requirements based on proposed service enhancement, and on communications plan requirements.
- Consider whether the current one-funder model is the most appropriate model for the success of the organisation, or whether corporate sponsorship and/or public-fundraising are strategically aligned with the organisational goals.
- Explore additional project-based funding from sources such as the EU or philanthropic organisations.

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

2023 - 2025

PHASE 01 EXPLORE

- Year one of the strategic plan implementation will include a variety of exploratory actions which focus on investigating ways to best enhance CVH's victim support services. This includes the following:
 - Explore and cost potential expansion of access to CVH services.
 - Explore potential areas of unmet need.
 - Produce proposal/business case for potential funders to secure agreement and resources for expanding access to CVH services.
 - Develop and cost a comprehensive communications strategy.

PHASE 02 ENHANCE

- Year two will build on year one exploratory phase, taking action where appropriate on service enhancement, with a focus on strengthening funding communication and collaboration as required to support service enhancement.
 - Create and cost a proposal for the expansion of the training capacity of the organisation - identifying potential clients and the resource requirements to deliver on a comprehensive training strategy.
 - Review Crime Victims Helpline's current collective advocacy work & identify areas for expansion, growth and professionalisation.
 - Take on leadership role within national and EU victim support alliances.

PHASE 03 CONSOLIDATE

- A focus on ensuring a healthy, inclusive organisational culture is supported by the right resources of people, technology, governance and funding will be an ongoing endeavor for CVH.
- This provides the foundational support required to enhance services to victims of crime.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Continued commitment from the Board and Executive teams to the strategic planning process. Ensuring that the strategic plan is a living document which drives yearly objectives, funding and work-plans.
- Resources of people, money, time and expertise available - many of the actions set out herein require resources beyond the current day-to-day running of the organisation.
- Continued and increased funding from the Department of Justice in the short-medium term at least, and support from them for the proposed expansion plans.