OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR THAMES VALLEY

Decision Report

Title: GRANT FUNDING FOR COUNTY-BASED PILOT PROJECTS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS WITH COMPLEX AND/OR SPECIALIST NEEDS FOR THAMES VALLEY

Executive Summary:

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) commissioned a Domestic Violence (DV) needs assessment report to inform the future service commissioning strategy. A report by Karen Morton (Commissioning Domestic Abuse Services) highlighted the need for further support in the following key areas:

1. Support for children and young people.
2. Support for DV victims with complex needs (e.g. mental health problems, self-harming, drug misuse, offending).
3. Support for minority groups (e.g. black and minority ethnic (BME); lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans-gender (LGBT), disabled women).
4. Legal services.
5. Therapeutic counselling.

Taking into consideration the findings of the report, the PCC has agreed to fund support for DV services in the following ways:-

1. The PCC invited bids for 3 x county-based pilot projects, which will subsequently receive grant funding for a period of 18 months, to support DV victims with complex and/or specialist needs. The invitation requested either single bidders or consortia to provide support across the following areas:-

2.
   o Oxfordshire (maximum funding - £140,000 for 18 months)
   o Buckinghamshire, including Milton Keynes (maximum funding - £140,000 for 18 months)
   o Berkshire (maximum funding - £170,000 for 18 months).
Following consideration of the bids it is recommended that grant funding of £424,519 be awarded, with £139,998 going to time-limited pilot project services in Oxfordshire, £138,082 to Buckinghamshire and £146,439 to Berkshire.

In addition to this, the following services are being commissioned separately:-

1. A feasibility study, undertaken by Circles South East, was commissioned by the PCC to explore the feasibility and options relating to a 'referral and triage' model for victims of crime (including DV) in the Thames Valley who require access to counselling. Findings recommend a centralised counselling 'hub' model for victims of crime that existing victims' service providers across Thames Valley (including all DV providers) can refer into, access funding and refer victims into appropriate counselling providers. The counselling hub will be trialled for 12 months initially.

2. A (generic) Young Victims Service, involving a 3-year contract (with the option to extend for up to 2 years). This service contract is outside of, and in addition to, the above time-limited pilot projects. The contract was advertised via an open tender process. While this service will provide support for many different types of young victims of crime, the specification contains a requirement for priority support to be provided for young victims of domestic violence (aged 8-17).

Recommendation:

This paper recommends that the PCC awards grant funding amounting to £424,519 for county-based pilot projects for domestic violence victims with complex and/or specialist needs for Berkshire and Oxfordshire to the Berkshire Women's Aid Consortium, and for Buckinghamshire (including Milton Keynes) to SMART.

Police and Crime Commissioner

I hereby approve the recommendation above.

Signature

Date 5.7.15
PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL

1 Introduction and background

1.1. The Office of the PCC (OPCC) commissioned a Domestic Violence (DV) needs assessment report to inform the future commission strategy as part of a suite of specialist victims’ services guided by the Victims’ Services Commissioning Framework (2013), and communication from the Rt Hon Damian Green to PCCs on 9 December 2013 on ‘Future Commissioning of Victims’ Services’.

1.2. The Government consultation, “Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses”, concluded that PCCs should become responsible for commissioning the majority of emotional and practical support services for victims in their local areas from October 2014. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which came into force in March 2014 widened the commissioning powers available to PCCs, including those that PCCs will use in commissioning services for victims. At a national level, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will continue to commission certain key services including a witness service; a homicide service; support for victims of human trafficking, support for victims of rape through rape support centres, and some national telephone helplines for victims.

1.3. From October 2015, the UK along with 26 other Member States of the European Union (EU) will be bound by the obligations of the EU Victims Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime. The Directive aims to ensure that a victim of crime anywhere within the EU receives a minimum standard of support and protection. The Directive sets out the requirement that support services must be available to victims and, in some instances, their families, in accordance with their needs and the harm caused by the crime. All services commissioned by PCCs will be required to comply with the EU Directive (particularly Articles 8 and 9). In summary, services commissioned or provided by PCCs must be in the interests of the victim and be:

- Free of charge,
- Confidential,
- Non-discriminatory,
- Available whether or not a crime has been reported to the police, and
- Available before, during and for an appropriate time after any investigation or criminal proceedings.

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1 While it is acknowledged that some individuals prefer the use of alternative phrases, such as ‘survivor’, the term ‘victim’ is used throughout this document. Under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (2013) a “victim” is defined as ‘a person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss which was directly caused by criminal conduct or; close relatives of a person whose death was directly caused by criminal conduct’. The Code further defines “criminal conduct” as ‘behaviour constituting a criminal offence under the National Crime Recording Standard’. 

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1.4. The cross Government definition of Domestic Violence is:

‘any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality’. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

1.5. There is clear evidence to show that the majority of DV and abuse is perpetrated by men against women. Violence perpetrated against women and girls has received more research and is better understood, with national and international strategies focused on DV against women. However, this does not diminish the real impact of DV experienced by men and boys.

1.6. In 2014, the Government set out an Action Plan strategy to end violence against women and girls. The underlying principles of the strategy - prevention, provision of services, partnership working, justice outcomes and risk reduction - continue, not least in the arena of local commissioning, with a specific focus on supporting the voluntary sector to develop the capacity and expertise to be successful in a competitive commissioning environment.

Scope

1.7. The OPCC developed the ‘Invitation to Grant Competition’ guidance which stipulated the requirements for grant funding for county based pilot projects for DV victims with complex and/or specialist needs. The OPCC conducted significant market engagement and research prior to going to tender, including a consultation workshop.

1.8. The pilot projects shall be free to service users who have been victims of DV and have complex and/or specialist needs. Service users shall be resident within the contract area (Thames Valley), including temporary residents (e.g. students), or visiting the contract area when the offence took place. The service shall be offered regardless of:

- Age, gender, culture, religion, ethnicity or sexuality;
- Where or when the offence took place;
- Whether the crime was reported to the police or not.

1.9. The pilot projects shall not be a stand-alone service, but must link with, and support access into, other support services, provided via both statutory and voluntary organisations in the wider community.

**The Service Requirements**

1.10. The service proposed will deliver services to adult victims of DV (aged 18 years and over) who also demonstrate:-

- complex needs (e.g. mental health/substance misuse issues)
- AND/OR
- one or more specialist needs (e.g. disabled clients, BME groups, LGBT groups, males).

1.11. Bids for funding should also demonstrate:-

- rationale for the target populations identified as requiring a service (if possible, bidders should provide evidence of potential demand in the county-area for the service proposed);
- details of the proposed delivery model, including how the service will support clients across the county-area;
- how the service developed during the course of the pilot project will dovetail with existing DV services in the county area;
- details of the organisation(s) which will deliver the service across the county;
- the total cost of the service (i.e. 18 month costs); and
- a single nominated point of contact for each county-based pilot project (consortia will be required to nominate a lead agency/person).

2. **Overview of the grant award process**

2.1 An open grant application process was followed in accordance with TVP’s Financial Regulations and the legal requirements for grant awards.

2.2 A grant advertisement was placed on the PCC website and those engaged in the consultation were informed. Applications for grants were invited between 2nd April 2015 and Friday 1st May 2015. Six organisations submitted applications:-

1. BWA Consortium
2. Support U
3. Buckinghamshire County Council
4. SMART
5. PACT
6. Sign Health
2.3 The evaluation considered cost of service and quality of service (including past experience in delivering similar support services, geographical areas of the service project, and project activity approach). The evaluation process and the outcomes are set out below.

**Evaluation Process**

*Initial evaluation*

2.4 The applications were evaluated separately by 2 OPCC officers.

2.5 An evaluation meeting was held to identify any significant differences of opinion and whether there was a need for further clarification questions to applicants.

2.6 Both evaluators reached similar conclusions. They were broadly in agreement across all elements of the applications, and had formed similar opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of each application.

**Outcome**

2.7 The grant funding for Oxfordshire and Berkshire county pilots is awarded to a consortium of organisations made up of existing domestic violence providers in those two areas (including Berkshire Women’s Aid, the DASH charity, A2Dominion, and Reducing the Risk). One charity would lead in each county. Furthermore, for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, the grant funding is awarded to SMART.

3. **Issues for consideration**

3.1 The UK along with 26 other Member States of the EU will be bound by the obligations of the EU Directive which comes into force from October 2015. The aim of the EU Directive is to ensure that all victims of crime anywhere within the EU receive a minimum standard of support and protection.

3.2 In 18 months time, the two pilots will be evaluated, with consideration given to best overall value in terms of cost and benefit.

3.3 The pilot projects will be used to scope and inform the PCCs future commissioning priorities and approach regarding DV services and delivery. To ensure the purpose of the grant is fulfilled, the successful pilot project providers, therefore, will be required, as part of the grant conditions, to comply with a standard performance reporting framework (to be agreed with providers after the award), and attend a regular steering group with officers of the Office of the PCC (and other pilot project providers).
4. **Financial comment**

4.1 The Ministry of Justice has indicated that it will grant the PCC for Thames Valley £2,562,712 in 2015/16 for the provision of Victims and Witnesses services.

4.2 The cost of the 3 x county-based 18 month pilot projects for DV victims with complex and/or specialist needs in Thames Valley will be as follows:

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<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxfordshire</td>
<td>£93,332</td>
<td>£46,666</td>
<td>£139,998</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buckinghamshire</td>
<td>£92,055</td>
<td>£46,027</td>
<td>£138,082</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berkshire</td>
<td>£97,626</td>
<td>£48,813</td>
<td>£146,439</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>£283,013</strong></td>
<td><strong>£141,506</strong></td>
<td><strong>£424,519</strong></td>
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5. **Legal comments**

5.1 This grant funding has been made available for specified purposes to further the objectives of the PCC in providing Victim Support services. The recipients of the funding will only be permitted to use the grant monies for the specific purposes for which they are made available. A right to claw back the monies will be in place if the funding is not used for the specified purpose or if it is misused.

6. **Equality comments**

6.1 All specified purposes for the available grant funding must meet the Equality Duty legal obligations for public bodies set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. When evaluating the grant applications, Milton Keynes Equality Council demonstrated compliance with statutory regulations regarding equality and diversity.

6.2 OPCC and the BWA Consortium and SMART will conduct regular reviews of equality issues to highlight and address areas of need and to ensure the service is responsive to the needs of specific communities.

**Public access to information**
Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the website as soon as practicable after approval. Any facts and advice that should not be automatically available on request should not be included in Part 1 but instead on a separate Part 2 form. Deferment of publication is only applicable where release would compromise the implementation of the decision being approved.

Is the publication of this form to be deferred? NO
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<th>Name &amp; Role</th>
<th>Officer</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Head of Unit</strong></td>
<td>Shona Morrison</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is proposed that the grant funding for 3 x county-based pilot projects for DV victims with complex and/or specialist needs for Thames Valley be awarded to the BWA Consortium for Oxfordshire and Berkshire and to SMART for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.</td>
<td>Jacob Rickett</td>
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<td><strong>Legal Advice</strong></td>
<td>Ian Thompson</td>
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<td>The PCC has the legal power to award grant funding for the purpose of supporting victim services and these awards are being made in compliance with the legal requirements for grant funding.</td>
<td>Shona Morrison</td>
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<td><strong>Financial Advice</strong></td>
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<td>This contract is fully funded by the MoJ grant in 2015/16</td>
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<td><strong>Equalities &amp; Diversity</strong></td>
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<td>All applications effectively complied with the Equality Duty and would be capable of meeting Equality and Diversity to the satisfaction of the PCC.</td>
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**STATUTORY CHIEF OFFICERS' APPROVAL**

We have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that financial and legal advice have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

We are satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

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<th>Chief Executive</th>
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<tr>
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<th>Chief Finance Officer</th>
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