

PFCC Decision Report

Please ensure all sections below are completed

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| <p>Report reference number: 175/19</p> <p>Classification Not protectively marked</p> |
| <p>Title of report: Sexual Abuse support service contract 2020-2025</p> |
| <p>Area of County/Stakeholders affected: Countywide</p> |
| <p>Report by: Kirsty Smith</p> <p>Date of report: 11 December 2019</p> <p>Enquiries to: Kirsty.smith@essex.police.uk</p> |

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To seek approval for a contribution of up to £5,281,657 from the PFCC over 5 years to Synergy (Essex Rape Crisis Partnership). This is in the form of a standard contract with NHS England. The full contract value, inclusive of NHS England's contribution, is £5,544,157. The PFCC's allocation will be provided from the Victims' Commissioning Fund for the provision of Sexual Violence and Abuse Support services.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the PFCC approves the allocation of £5,281,657 from the Victims' Commissioning Fund to Synergy to deliver sexual violence and abuse victim support services, which include Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) and community based support.

3. Benefits of Proposal

- 3.1. The sexual violence and abuse support services will ensure compliance with the Victims Code of Practice, ensuring victims of sexual violence and abuse are supported in order to cope and recover from the impact of the crime.
- 3.2. Working with colleagues in collaboration with NHS England, the new service will ensure that:
 - Support services are easily accessible for all victims. Synergy provides coverage across the whole of Southend, Essex and Thurrock with a single

phone number and website for victims to contact and receive immediate support. There is also a direct referral mechanism from Essex Police following any new crime to ensure victims receive the offer of support as early as possible

- Services are of high quality to meet the complex needs of all victims. The new contract provides a variety of services including Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs), specialist counselling, therapeutic support, peer support groups, child and family support and general advocacy. Support is victim-led, with individuals given access to a suite of support services that can be tailored to their needs
- Services are flexible to respond to changes in demand. The demand for sexual violence support services has continued to increase year on year for the past 3 years and there is an expectation that this trend will continue due to improved awareness. Additional media attention results in more victims having the confidence to come forward and seek support. The new service has the ability to be flexible in response to the changing nature and volume of demand.

4. Background and proposal

- 4.1. The Synergy Essex Rape Crisis Partnership is a consortium of 3 rape crisis centres; Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA), South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC) and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis Centre (SoSRC). The PFCC has had a contractual arrangement with Synergy since 2016. This contract is due to expire on 31st March 2020. Over this time the PFCC has seen the volume of demand for support increase, and has, as a result, invested in new pilot services to respond to changing demand and complexities via individual grants. The PFCC has also developed relationships with NHS England which has supported with additional funding.
- 4.2. In February 2018 the PFCC held a Sexual Violence Round Table. Recognising the increase in the demand and profile of sexual abuse, the Round Table brought together partners from across the county to review and discuss how the issue could be tackled. Following this, the Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership (SASP) was developed. The SASP has been learning and understanding the current activity and support on offer and developing an Essex Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy (due to be launched in 2020).
- 4.3. The increased focus on sexual violence in Essex is mirrored nationally and recognised by the Home Office, Ministry of Justice and NHS England, amongst others. The NHS developed its "Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse" in 2018 which recognised the need for long-term victim support. Central government also developed its Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy recognising the need to provide good quality support to victims. The Ministry of Justice has also increased investment in support in recent years, reflecting the increasing scale of demand on services. Essex was successful recently in applying to be a test area for the devolution of national Rape Support Funding from the Ministry of Justice which seeks to recognise the importance of local commissioning and give greater responsibility to local areas for the development of services.

- 4.4. This contract is a result of an open OJEU tender process for the sexual violence and support service which was launched in summer 2019. The objective of the tender was to bring together all the learnings gathered over the last few years from the contract and associated small grants into one contract and one service ensuring there is a seamless level of support for victims. The tender process was managed by the Kent and Essex Police Procurement team and was assessed by an evaluation panel that included representatives of the PFCC, NHS England, and Essex Police. The tender also requested that participating organisations include case studies. The cases studies were evaluated by a group of local victims / survivors of sexual abuse as part of the tender evaluation.
- 4.5. The tender process identified the Synergy partnership bid as the most economically advantageous; satisfying the financial requirement and achieving a compliant quality score. The Synergy bid demonstrated extensive experience in supporting victims of sexual abuse and strong partnership working. The new contract award is for a 3 year term with the option to extend for another 2 years.
- 4.6. Quarterly performance monitoring is already in place between Synergy and the PFCC to ensure key performance indicators are met. These arrangements will continue with the new contract.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

- 5.1 The PFCC could choose not to invest in this service but that would mean there would be no specialist support available to victims of sexual violence and abuse in Essex. This would have a significant impact on victims of Essex as it is well documented nationally through the NHS strategic direction and VAWG Strategy that, for this particular crime type, victims' needs are complex and require a specialist response. There is an increase in demand and an increase in complexity and in order to respond sufficiently an experienced specialist provider is required.

6. Police and Crime Plan

- 6.1 This service will enable the PFCC to deliver against the priority in the Police and Crime Plan to place victims at the heart of the criminal justice system and to reduce serious violence

7. Police Operational Implications

- 7.1 There is no direct operational impact of this funding however the new service will build and strengthen relationships with Essex Police and with victims reporting crime in order to support them through the criminal justice system.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The PFCC is contractually committed to fund up to £5,544,157 over 5 years to Synergy (Essex Rape Crisis Partnership) from the Victims' Commissioning Fund. The PFCC's contribution to this is £5,281,657. This funding is made up of the following annual grants received from the Ministry of Justice:

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| Devolved Rape Support Funding | £269,500 p.a. |
| Child Sexual Abuse uplift | £55,000 p.a. |
| Victims' Grant | £731,831 p.a. |

8.2 NHS England will provide a contribution for the provision of a Young Person's ISVA (£35,000) and Talking Therapies service (£87,500). Talking Therapies is still in a pilot stage and the service and funding is only committed for the first year.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 All legal obligations are identified within the contract, drafted on the PFCC's behalf by the Kent and Essex Police Procurement team.

10. Staffing and other resource implications

10.1. As part of this contract, the Synergy Partnership will be responsible for the staffing of the service as outlined in its tender response. There are no operational implications of this contract on the PFCC or Essex Police.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

11.1. Accessibility to all victims was included within the evaluation of the tender. Synergy, within its response, provided a comprehensive equality and diversity policy and evidenced data that identified a focus on ensuring the service was accessible to all.

11.2. Demographic information is sought from those engaging with the service and is monitored to measure the effectiveness of reaching all victims.

12. Risks

12.1. There are no high risks identified with the award of this contract. The current supplier was successful in bidding for the contracted service through an open and transparent procurement process.

12.2. There is no risk of victims feeling an impact of transition due to the incumbent provider being successful in retaining the service.

12.3. As with all services funded through public funding, there is a risk of grants currently received from the Ministry of Justice which fund the service being reduced or withdrawn going forward. In the event of any changes to funding arrangements from the Ministry of Justice, break clauses are included as standard within the contract to mitigate the risk.

13. Governance Boards

13.1. This decision follows an open, transparent and thorough procurement process evaluated by representatives of Essex Police, the PFCC for Essex, NHS England and a group of survivors. The process has been undertaken with the support of the Essex Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership.

Report Approval

The report will be signed off by the OPFCC Chief Executive and Treasurer, prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC .

Chief Executive/M.O

Sign: [Signature].....

Print: P. BEANT - SHREWOOD.....

Date: 23 DECEMBER 2019.....

Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Sign: [Signature].....

Print: ASBEY GORIN.....

Date: 24/12/19.....

Publication

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (state 'None' if applicable)

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..... N/A

If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet YES
NO

2. Of Appendix YES
NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

.....
..... N/A

Date redaction carried out:

Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only

If redaction is required, Treasurer or Chief Executive are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign:

Print:

Chief Executive/Treasurer

Date signed:

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report;

Sign: J Gardner

Print: JANE GARDNER

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: 24 December 2019

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because;

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: