

PFCC Decision Report

Please ensure all sections below are completed

Report reference number: 085-21
Classification (e.g. Not protectively marked/restricted): Not protectively marked
Title of report: Domestic Abuse Case Consultant for ERMS team
Area of county / stakeholders affected: Countywide
Report by: Greg Myddelton Date of report: 28/05/2021 Enquiries to: greg.myddelton@essex.police.uk

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To approve the allocation of funding for a consultant restorative justice (RJ) practitioner to work with the team on two domestic abuse referrals, supporting the development of the Essex Restorative Mediation Service (ERMS) in complex and sensitive cases.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Approve the allocation of £500, plus any travel expenses, from the 2021-22 MoJ Victims Grant, via the ERMS 2021-22 budget, to pay Helen Calvert from Kiwi Communities to co-work two complex domestic abuse cases with ERMS facilitators.

3. Benefits of the proposal

- 3.1 Two domestic abuse cases will be facilitated by a practitioner with lots of experience in this area, which is fairly new to ERMS.
- 3.2 A more experienced practitioner will improve the likelihood of a positive outcome for the victim and perpetrator in these cases.
- 3.2 Helen's experience will enhance and support the training already received in this area by the ERMS team, supplementing formal training with practical experience.
- 3.3 Helen will co-facilitate with ERMS paid staff, rather than volunteers, so that skills and lessons learnt can be passed to the volunteer team in a formal training session.

4. Background and proposal

- 4.1 ERMS has been working to increase the use of RJ with domestic abuse cases. This has led to an increase in referrals in this area and we have seen some very positive results. To put this into context, throughout the whole of 2020, the team received 8 referrals relating to domestic incidents. In 2021, we have received 7 referrals of this nature in the first 4 months.
- 4.2 Due to the successes that we have seen, and a greater awareness of the Victims Code of Practice, changes have been made to Essex Police policy to allow young people to be referred for RJ in domestic cases. Discussions are currently underway to look at amending policy further so that all domestic cases can be referred for a restorative outcome by Essex Police. This positive work will increase the need for confident, skilled, and experienced practitioners with ERMS.
- 4.2 ERMS has trained 3 staff members and 5 volunteers to work with cases involving domestic and sexual abuse and is aiming to upskill at least 4 more volunteers in these complex and sensitive skills by the end of the year.
- 4.3 Over the past 2 weeks, the team have received 2 domestic abuse referrals which include a higher level of complexity. As working on domestic cases is still relatively new to the team, this represents an opportunity to learn from a facilitator who has lots of experience in this area. Any learning from co-facilitating a case with a practitioner who has expertise in this area will be viewed as a practical 'train the trainer' exercise and will be passed to the rest of the team in a formal training session.
- 4.4 ERMS approached Helen Calvert, who has spoken at a previous ERMS team meeting about her work facilitating domestic abuse cases. The team felt that Helen's expertise could provide a fantastic learning opportunity and improve our confidence in facilitating these complex cases effectively. Helen is a registered practitioner with the Restorative Justice Council (RJC).

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

- 5.1 The PFCC has the option to reject the proposal to pay Helen to work with ERMS on the domestic case referrals. This option would be detrimental to the team in denying a hands-on, practical training and coaching opportunity which would benefit the current and future caseload. It also would be detrimental to the victims and perpetrators of the referred cases as they wouldn't benefit from the extra experience and knowledge brought in by Helen.

6. Police and Crime Plan

- 6.1 The Police and Crime Plan extension pledges to increase the use of restorative justice as a proven way to prevent domestic abuse reoffending and help victims cope and recover. Supporting this decision sheet will allow the ERMS team to develop and offer a more effective service to victims of domestic abuse.

7. Police operational implications

- 7.1 No operational implications identified.

8. Financial implications

8.1 The PFCC will pay Kiwi Communities £500, plus any travel expenses incurred, from the 2021-22 ERMS budget (funded from the MoJ's Victims Grant). Kiwi Communities will issue an invoice for payment.

9. Legal implications

9.1 Helen will provide one-off support for these ERMS cases as a consultant. There will be no employment liabilities placed on the PFCC as a result of this arrangement.

10. Staffing implications

10.1 ERMS staff would facilitate these cases alongside Helen.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

11.1 No equality and diversity implications identified.

12. Risks

12.1 There is always a risk when facilitating highly complex and sensitive RJ cases, though we feel that this risk is reduced by using an experience practitioner in this area.

13. Governance Boards

13.1 This proposal has not been discussed at any governance boards.

14. Background papers

14.1 No background papers are required for this proposal.

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: *DHorsman*

Print: Darren Horsman - Deputy MO

Date: 10.6.2021

Chief Finance Officer / Treasurer

Sign: *JBerry*

Print: Julia Berry

Date: 10 June 2021

Publication

Is the report for publication?

YES X
NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'None' if applicable)

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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 X
2. Of Appendix? YES NO

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

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Date redaction carried out:

Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is 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: 

Print: ROGER HIRST

PFCC

Date signed: 28 June 2021

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: