

## PFCC Decision Report

**Please ensure all sections below are completed**

**Report reference number:** 45-23

**Classification** Not protectively marked

**Title of report:** Underwriting of 2023-4 MoJ SV funding

**Area of county / stakeholders affected:** Countywide

**Report by:** Greg Myddelton

**Date of report:** 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023

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### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks approval for the PFCC to underwrite **£359,807** of unconfirmed Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funding from the PFCC's reserves budget to enable the extension of the Synergy Essex Rape Crisis Consortium contract in full for 2023-4. This contract includes services funded by the PFCC and services funded through MoJ annual funding.
- 1.2. The PFCC, in decision report 087-22, has already agreed to extend the Synergy Essex Rape Crisis Consortium core contract for 2023-4 and engage 7F procurement to organise this extension. This was at a cost of £1.1 million.
- 1.3. The Synergy Essex Rape Crisis Consortium contract for 2023-4 also includes the provision of two additional services funded in 2022-23 by the MoJ Male Rape Support Fund and Devolved Rape Support Fund at a cost of **£359,807**.
- 1.4. The MoJ have indicated that this funding will be made available for 2023-24, but no official commitment has yet been made. To ensure the Synergy Essex Rape Crisis Consortium contract for 2023-4 is agreed in good time to allow the continuation of all of the services currently delivered under the contract this decision report seeks agreement from the PFCC to underwrite the anticipated funding from the MoJ so a contract can be drawn up and agreed by 7F.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. Approve the indicative allocation of **£359,807** to enable the extension of the Synergy Essex contract for 2023-4. If and when Ministry of Justice confirms continuation of this funding in 2023-4, this funding will return to our reserves.

## **3. Background to the Proposal**

- 3.1. The PFCC's current funding levels for sexual abuse services are amongst the highest in the country; demonstrating how seriously we take our commitment to support victims of these crimes, and in recognition of the historical disparity between demand for services and provision of high quality, accessible support.
- 3.2. PFCC sexual abuse funding is used to employ around 20 ISVAs across Essex as well as specialist provision of counselling, therapy and peer support services.
- 3.3. In 2022, MoJ moved from a traditional 1-year grant process to longer-term commitments of 3 years for many of its funding streams. This is a welcome development which reduces the previous risk around support services facing an annual "cliff-edge" of funding when grants expire. The PFCC could further reduce this risk to support services by underwriting the funding that is currently due to expire in March 2023 to ensure continuity of funding even if the MoJ do not renew the Male Rape Support Fund and Devolved Rape Support Fund. These are valued at £77,320 and £282,487 p.a. respectively. This would ensure Synergy would be able to retain staff who may otherwise look for alternative employment without the guarantee of continuation funding for their post.
- 3.4. The male rape support fund provides support specifically for males in the form of specialist counselling support. In Essex, we have seen a significant increase in male victims of sexual abuse coming forward to access support – in 2016-17 there were 245 males supported. By 2021-2 this had increased to 631. The Sexual Violence uplift & Rape Support Fund uplift funds provide additional counselling services to enhance the offer through the core contract.
- 3.5. The PFCC will undertake an open, competitive tender process for this service, likely in 2025. It is anticipated that by then we will have a clear understanding of the position with regard to government funding for victim support services, including the current piecemeal funds for domestic and sexual abuse.

## **4. Proposal and Associated Benefits**

- 4.1. The PFCC has an ongoing contractual arrangement with the Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership for the provision of sexual abuse support services including ISVAs, counselling and therapeutic support. The support is available regardless of a victims age, gender, when the abuse happened or whether they choose to report to Police. The current contract commenced in 2018 and is for a term of up to 5 years. The contract included additional services funded by the MoJ Male Rape Support Fund and Devolved Rape Support Fund (DR

175-19). These are service we would want to continue whether we receive MoJ funding or not.

- 4.2. We are currently in the final year of the original contract. The PFCC agreed a one-year extension, in decision report 087-22, to the end of March 2024. The PFCC has the option to extend for a further year to the end of March 2025. The original contract value was £1,056,331 p.a. with an additional **£359,807** p.a. of funding from the MoJ.
- 4.3. The Synergy Rape Crisis partnership is made up of the 3 rape crisis centres in Essex; South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC), Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA) and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SoSRC).
- 4.4. In recent years, Ministry of Justice has increased investment in sexual and domestic abuse support services via grants to P(F)CCs. Specifically, MoJ has supplemented its “core” annual victims’ grant with funding streams for;
  - Sexual Violence Local Commissioning Test (AKA devolved rape support funding)
  - Ringfenced funding for proportion of 700 ISVAs/IDVAs
  - Ringfenced funding for proportion of additional 200 IDVAs/ISVAs (2022-5)
  - Ringfenced DA/SV funding (2022-5)
  - Male Rape Support Funding

## **5. Options Analysis**

- 5.1. The PFCC has primarily sought to use additional MoJ funding to supplement existing support services, eg additional ISVAs and other support through the Synergy partnership. This ensures a consistent pathway of support for victims and clear referral routes for partners. It also helps to embed the “single front door” approach we have built through the current contract. The PFCC has the option to use the funding for other purposes but that risks fragmenting the current offer and potentially duplicating services/pathways which may lead to a reduction in the quality and capacity of support services to victims.

## **6. Consultation and Engagement**

- 6.1. This proposal was discussed at the PFCC’s Senior Management Team meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## **7. Strategic Links**

- 7.1. The PFCC has a statutory requirement to commission services for victims of crime. This funding enables delivery against the Police and Crime Plan, most specifically improving support for victims of crime, reducing violence against women and girls, and protecting vulnerable people & breaking the cycle of domestic abuse. This proposal also delivers against the outcomes in the partnership sexual abuse strategy for Essex.

## **8. Police operational implications**

- 8.1. No operational implications

## 9. Financial implications

- 9.1. The PFCC agreed a one-year extension, in decision report 087-22, to the end of March 2024 at a cost of £1,056,331 p.a. This decision report seeks confirmation that the PFCC will allocate £359,807 funding from 2023 reserves to underwrite the anticipated MoJ funding. The costs are based on the 2022 value of the Male Rape Support Fund (£77,320 p.a.) and Devolved Rape Support Fund (£282,487 p.a.).
- 9.2. This funding will be allocated from the existing victim service reserves (£191,619 at the Q3 outturn report – see table below) and the remainder from the general reserves (£318,454 at the Q3 outturn report). At present there are no plans for this reserve to be allocated this year.

Subjective	Reserves at	Forecast	Forecast
	01/04/2022	Reserve	Reserves at
	£	Movement	01/04/2023
		2022/23	£
CSF	438,758	(438,758)	0
Crime Reduction	247,282	(247,282)	0
Victim Services	260,315	(68,696)	191,619
V&V	471,634	864,336	1,335,970
Safer Streets	1,755,316	986,500	2,741,816
<b>Total Commissioning Reserves</b>	<b>3,173,305</b>	<b>1,096,100</b>	<b>4,269,405</b>
General Reserve Carry forward	115,955	202,499	318,454
<b>Total PFCC specific reserves at year end</b>	<b>3,289,260</b>	<b>1,298,599</b>	<b>4,587,859</b>

## 10. Legal implications

- 10.1 These funds are covered by appropriate contractual and grant agreements.

## 11. Staffing implications

- 11.1. The Synergy contract and associated grants require effective management and monitoring by the PFCC's Commissioning officer. We are required to feedback to MoJ on how the funding has been used on a 6-monthly basis.

## 12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications

- 12.1. The PFCC undertook an EQIA at the commencement of the core sexual abuse contract. We also collect and monitor EDI data through our regular contract reviews and in returns to MoJ. This helps to understand how representative our offer is and consider any additional work we need to do to make the support as accessible as possible.

## 13. Risks and Mitigations

- 13.1. There is a risk that without sufficient resources our support services will be unable to service the demands placed upon them. By maintaining levels of funding and achieving sustainability of funding streams, we aim to reduce the need for delays in providing support, thresholds for those accessing services, or waiting lists.

13.2. There is a risk that MoJ confirm funding for 2023-4 but at a reduced level. The recommendation would then be to top-up the MoJ funding from our reserves and return the value of the MoJ funding to our reserves.

**14. Governance Boards**

14.1. This proposal was discussed with the PFCC's Senior Management Team on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

**15. Links to Future Plans**

15.1 This work supports delivery of the Police & Crime Plan and the partnership sexual abuse strategy.

**16. Background Papers and Appendices**

16.1. None



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

Date redaction carried out: .....

**Chief Finance Officer / 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: .....

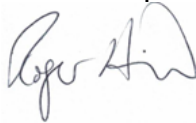
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**Chief Executive / Chief Finance Officer**

**Decision and Final Sign Off**

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign:



Print:

Roger Hirst

**PFCC**

**Date signed: 14th March 2023**

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

.....  
.....  
.....

Sign:

Print:

**PFCC/Deputy PFCC**

**Date signed:**