

Commissioning Strategy

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) for Essex' has developed this strategy to set out the principles, strategic approach, and the framework within which we will commission services to support the delivery of the outcomes and priorities in the Police and Crime Plan. This strategy also describes the different types of funds and how they will operate.
- 1.2. **Our Objective** the PFCC will commission victims' services in Essex, with the objective of allocating funding and overseeing delivery to make sure victims of crime are getting a quality service. We will ensure victims in Essex have access to the best and most appropriate support and advice available. Through our commissioning we will develop a strong community of voluntary services and effective partnerships with statutory agencies in Essex; building their capacity and growing the market to provide services that respond flexibly to meet the needs of our local residents. We will achieve the longer-term impact in Essex by offering sustainability, durability, and a shared commitment to achieving impact through commissioning.
- 1.3. At the forefront of our commissioning is understanding the needs of our community. We aim to commission services to those that need them the most, whilst still maintaining flexibility so that we can redirect our commissioning, allowing us to service variations in demand and develop opportunities for collaboration with partners and the third sector.
- 1.4. Under the terms of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the PFCC must
 - a. secure efficient and effective policing for their area.
 - b. appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the force, and if necessary, dismiss them.
 - c. set the police and crime objectives for their area through a police and crime plan.
 - d. set the force budget and determine the precept.
 - e. contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary; and
 - f. bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up.
- 1.5. To do this the PFCC holds a crime and disorder reduction grant, a grant which can be allocated to secure, or contribute to securing, crime and disorder reduction in Essex, the PFCC is able to utilise the budget to:
 - a. Commissions local victim support services
 - b. Fund crime prevention services
 - c. Work with partners to create a joined-up response to local problems

- d. Work with national and local policing and criminal justice partners to reduce crime and help make communities safer
- 1.6. The crime and disorder reduction grant has previously been allocated in Essex, through three main budgets:
- a. A small grants fund which is known as the Community Safety Development Fund (CSDF)
 - b. The Community Safety Fund (CSF) which supports delivery of; the PFCC's statutory duties, the police and crime plan and partnership & collaboration, including the Violence and Vulnerability Partnership
 - c. The Victims Fund which supports victims of crime, including the provision of Restorative Justice
- 1.7. The PFCC receives funding for the provision of policing services to keep the communities of Essex safe. The main funding streams are:
- a. Central government grants
 - b. The precept (police proportion of the council tax)
 - c. Other income.
- 1.8. Most of this funding is allocated to operational policing, however part of the funding is assigned to the PFCC commissioning budget for services to support the Police and Crime Plan and to deliver upon the PFCC statutory duties. The PFCC also can receive or be able to bid for additional funding from the Ministry of Justice and Home Office and receive additional income through working with our strategic partners such as NHS England and Local Authorities.
- 1.9. The PFCC deploys a mix of funding approaches, which will comply with the PFCC Financial Regulations ([Financial-Regulations-with-7F-Update.pdf](#) (pfcc.police.uk)) These approaches include formal, multi-year contracts as well as small, one-off grants. This recognises the benefits that each approach can deliver; formal contracts give long-term certainty to providers to enable services to plan and invest in delivery, while grants provide flexibility and enable small groups to undertake activity or try new approaches that may not immediately be able to robustly demonstrate outcomes. The PFCC will continue to use a mixed-method approach to funding, judging each project on its own merits and seeking the most appropriate and proportionate mix of funding mechanisms. Whilst recognising the value of local knowledge, the PFCC will always strive for contracting processes that are transparent and fair, facilitating the involvement of the broadest range of suppliers, including considering sub-contracting and consortia building, where appropriate.
- 1.10. Decision sheets on all PFCC funding allocations over £2,000 are reviewed and signed by the PFCC, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.

They are then published on the PFCC's website and reported to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

- 1.11.** The PFCC uses key information to develop well-rounded, proportionate outcomes and key performance indicators with support agencies to demonstrate the impact each commissioned service has. This includes using quantitative and qualitative data such as case studies or service user feedback to demonstrate the effectiveness of services.
- 1.12.** Performance monitoring is set out within individual grant agreements and contracts. Most grants are monitored annually except for contracted services which are monitored quarterly. Included within contract monitoring, demographic information is captured as well as information on sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, age, and gender. Within the performance monitoring outcomes for the service users is monitored
- 1.13.** The PFCC for Essex has adopted an outcomes-based approach to the commissioning of victims' services. Commissioned services are expected to deliver the overarching outcome of enabling victims to cope with the immediate impact of crime and to move on from the harm experienced.

2. Our commissioning principles

- 2.1 This commissioning strategy operates within a framework with the following overarching principles:
- a. **Outcomes** are at the heart of our commissioning strategy, which will be focused on victims and our communities
 - b. Wherever possible commissioning will be; undertaken on a county wide basis; consistent across Essex, **accessible and inclusive** for those that need them, and equality and diversity will remain as a focus of the commissioning process.
 - c. Where appropriate **multi-year contracts** will be awarded.
 - d. Commissioning needs will **be evidence based**
 - e. All services procured must represent **value for money**. We will commission services that efficiently and effectively deliver positive outcomes for victims
 - f. We will actively seek joined up and **collaborative approaches**, co-commissioning where possible with local partner agencies and the third sector (such as local authorities, emergency service partners or charitable organisations).
 - g. There will be **robust governance** in place for managing our commissioning budgets, including following the principles of HM Treasury's 'Managing Public Money'
 - h. Our commissioning will be clear on expected performance outcomes, and transparent and open to scrutiny.
 - i. We will measure whether outcomes have been delivered and **hold providers to account**.
 - j. We will seek feedback from service users, communities, and providers, allowing us to review the **effectiveness of commissioning** in meeting local needs

3. Grants, contracted services, and PFCC provided services

3.1 The commissioning budget is allocated through three main funds:

- a. The Community Safety Development Fund
- b. The Community Safety Fund
- c. The Victims Support Fund

3.2 **Community Safety Development Fund** the Community Safety Development Fund (CSDF) enables the PFCC to engage with local voluntary and community groups who may have identified: hidden pockets of need: novel approaches to addressing known issues: or the need for investment in innovative pilot projects. The intention of the CSDF is to identify successful projects which might then be funded through the Community Safety Fund. This enables us to make best use of the knowledge and experience of the local charitable sector which often brings valuable additional insight and an understanding of the needs and experiences of local victims and communities.

3.3 Applications that meet the criteria will be shared with a decision panel, which is formed of partner organisations, including the voluntary sector, who support the PFCC in evaluating the applications. Those that are successfully recommended by the panel and pass due diligence checks, will be subject to the PFCC decision making process. In addition, we contact the unsuccessful applicants and provide clear rationale for our decision.

3.4 For each awarded project a grant agreement is put in place signed by the PFCC and the provider. The grant agreement outlines the services being delivered and the outcomes expected to be achieved, any legal obligations including compliance with data protection and equality laws, monitoring arrangements and details on how to claim the grant.

3.5 **Community Safety Fund** the Community Safety Fund (CSF) commissions services that support delivery of the PFCC's priorities set out within the Police and Crime Plan. The majority of the Community Safety Fund is commissioned annually although we also maintain a smaller proportion for commissioning of ad-hoc services, in addition part of the fund is used as a contribution to the Violence and Vulnerability Partnership. Within the Community Safety Fund, most of the funding is provided to organisations and partnerships to support the PFCC's statutory duties annually including

- a. Community Safety Partnerships
- b. Safeguarding Boards
- c. Youth Offending Teams
- d. Domestic Abuse Partnership (including Domestic Homicide Review Provision)
- e. Drug and Alcohol Teams

- f. Domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- g. Crime Stoppers

- 3.6** The remainder of the CSF funding is issued as smaller grants for specific ad-hoc services, responding to an identified initiative, typically identified through collaborative working with partners, needs assessments or responding to changes in legislation, regulations, or current events. All grants awarded are subject to a grant agreement. In addition, part of the budget within the Community Safety Fund is allocated to the work of the Violence and Vulnerability Partnership through the PFCC Partnerships and Collaboration team
- 3.7** The Violence and Vulnerability Partnership aims to support a reduction in serious violence and protect children and vulnerable people from harm. The Partnership pulls together resources to tackle serious violence collaboratively in Essex. They also receive and can bid for additional funding from the Home Office. The activities of the partnership are shared within the violence and vulnerability annual report. The PFCC funding is commissioned and reviewed annually, which includes consideration of the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of these resources in supporting vulnerable people.
- 3.8 The Victims Fund** The majority of the Victims Fund is funded from a core restricted grant received from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The Responsibility for commissioning most local victim support services transferred from the MoJ to locally elected Police and Crime Commissioners in April 2015. In addition to the core funding received from the MoJ there are opportunities for the PFCC to bid for additional funding during the year. The PFCC is informed of opportunities for additional funding through either the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and/or the Home Office and MoJ.
- 3.9** The PFCC works with service providers, service users and other partners to ensure that support packages are appropriate, robust, and tailored to the needs of individual victims. The PFCC will also conduct bespoke victims needs assessments, reviewing the performance of current services and seek feedback from service users. These reviews help to develop the PFCC's requirement for victim support service provisions and enables the commissioning of the appropriate long-term packages. The Victim's Fund is mostly commissioned through multi-year contracts of up to five years through the 7 Forces (7F) procurement teams. The 7F Governance and Standards team ensures that all contracts tendered, comply with procedures and current legislation.
- 3.10 Restorative Justice** the PFCC can commission restorative justice services to comply with the Victims Code and give victims access to Restorative Justice, which brings together victims with those responsible for the harm that they

have suffered, to hopefully find some restoration. In 2016 the PFCC launched an internal Restorative Justice service. This Service has successfully demonstrated an efficient and effective use of resources with positive engagement and outcomes. The service is delivered by a team of PFCC employees, as well as trained volunteers who provide direct and indirect restorative interventions between victims and offenders.

3.11 Partnership We work closely with our local partners to make a real difference to the lives of the people of Essex.

3.12 The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act set out the statutory requirement for responsible authorities to work together with other local agencies, organisations, and people, to develop and deliver strategies to tackle crime and disorder and help create safer communities, these are known as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) Under the 2011 Police Reform and Social responsibility act PCCs should have regard to the priorities set out by the CSPs.

3.13 The PFCC's Partnerships and Collaboration team is responsible for monitoring and engaging with Community Safety Partnerships (CSP). They are also responsible for Restorative Justice and Violence and Vulnerability.

4. The process followed by the PFCC to offer grants

- 4.1 The process that we follow for offering grants includes the PFCC inviting applications based on specific criteria, for the relevant fund, by publishing the invitation on the PFCC website and newsletter as well as issuing a press statement.
- 4.2 The fund will generally offer grants of up to £20,000 for community projects and we will invite groups who have a project which delivers against the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan to apply by a specific deadline.
- 4.3 The criteria and a downloadable application form will be made available and will explain that applications to the fund must demonstrate a positive impact on at least one of the PFCC's Police & Crime Plan priorities.
- 4.4 Projects should not duplicate or compete with existing activity, and funding will not be allocated for projects that are unable to demonstrate effective impact upon the Police & Crime Plan priorities. Grants should not be used as a substitute for statutory funding.
- 4.5 Typically, the PFCC will not require applicants to generate match-funding, however, evidence of match-funding is likely to improve the likelihood of the bid being recommended as this will demonstrate support for the project and improves value for money for the PFCC's investment.
- 4.6 Whilst the PFCC will seek to establish local need and support for individual initiatives, applicants are required to obtain support for their bid from relevant partners, including Police and local Community Safety. This offers reassurance to the PFCC that the project has the backing of key stakeholders and is therefore more likely to be delivered successfully.
- 4.7 The Fund should not be used as a sustainable source of funding and therefore applicants will need to demonstrate how the project, or its outcomes, will be continued after PFCC funding has expired.
- 4.8 Whilst continuation funding will be considered, however, applicants would need to clearly demonstrate that previous funding opportunities have delivered against the Police and Crime Plan Priorities and demonstrate how further funding will develop the project further.
- 4.9 Applications must be completed in full and must be submitted on the application form via the PFCC's Office pfcc@essex.police.uk by the specified deadline

- 4.10** Decisions will be made using available evidence that demonstrates the initiative's likely impact on the PFCC's priorities. The PFCC uses a panel of independent local representatives to ensure proposed activity reflects local priorities, links-in with existing commissioned or grant-funded activity and provides the PFCC with value for money.
- 4.11** The PFCC aims to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of funding across Essex including the unitary authorities of Southend and Thurrock, and between the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.
- 4.12** Funding will be released upon receipt of a signed funding agreement and transferred via BACS. Unless otherwise stated within the funding agreement, grants will normally be restricted to one year from release of funding.
- 4.13** Those who are awarded grants will be asked to provide formal reports at the mid-year and end of year stages, using the standard report template. Performance information will need to demonstrate impact articulated in the application. Financial information presented will need to demonstrate the funding has been spent on the agreed initiatives within the Funding Application
- 4.14** The PFCC may ask for progress updates at any time, especially for those projects considered to be innovative and have wider potential application
- 4.15** Successful recipients are expected and encouraged to undertake proactive publicity to demonstrate the positive impact that their initiatives have had on the PFCC's priorities. This may be in the form of videos, press releases, visits from the PFCC or social media activity.
- 4.16** Potential applicants should consult the Police & Crime Plan for Essex to ensure their proposed activity meets the PFCC's objectives
- 4.17** Detail provided within the application form should be proportionate to the amount of funding requested
- 4.18** Applicants are invited to seek support from their local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) for assistance in bidding for grant-funding, or support in presenting a positive application
- 4.19** Where appropriate, we ask applicants to secure endorsement from local Community Safety Partnerships; the PFCC may consult other local stakeholders when considering applications for funding
- 4.20** Applicants must submit their information in an application form, provide full details of their proposal including costs and benefits. Any personal information that is provided in the application are shared with the independent evaluating

panel and used only for the purpose of reviewing the grant application and the ongoing administration and management of any grants that are awarded.

- 4.21** To uphold the standards set out in the PFCC Ethic and Integrity Framework all PFCC decisions including grant awards are published on the PFCC website. Information disclosed on the PFCC website will include Organisation name, short description of project and value of award.
- 4.22** All applicants whose projects are likely to include children or vulnerable adults are expected to have robust safeguarding policies to protect those client groups according to legislation. All applicants who are likely to include children or vulnerable adults are to demonstrate a safeguarding policy.

5. Commissioning aims and future plans

5.1 The commissioning programme aims to

- a. support victims of crime
- b. support the delivery of the priorities in the police and crime plan
- c. Ensure compliance with the Victims Code of Practice

5.2 To deliver the aims we will

- a. Collaboratively work with local authority partners to deliver requirements within the Domestic Abuse Bill - and any new commissioning arrangement
- b. Implement, monitor, and review the funding for additional Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) / Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs)
- c. Target grants for specific identified police and crime plan priorities
- d. Launch funds to improve safety within Essex streets
- e. Support the development and review opportunities for the police and crime plan

6. Commissioning cycle

6.1 The PFCC is committed to continually reviewing and improving the services available. This is done by understanding and analysing the need of communities by utilising performance data, planning, and obtaining services, and reviewing the success of services to adapt and improve, as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1



7. The Victims' Code

7.1 The PFCC commissions victim services in accordance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (also known as the Victims' Code). The code is a statutory instrument that sets out the minimum standards a victim can expect from the local criminal justice system in the event of a crime. The code provides a robust framework for providing evidence-based, effective support to victims. Amongst other things it entitles victims to:

- a.** Be kept informed and updated about their case
- b.** Access appropriate support services to enable them to cope and recover from harm
- c.** Make a Victim Personal Statement (VPS) to explain how a crime has affected them, which can be read in court and considered when sentencing offenders
- d.** Be informed about local restorative justice services

7.2 The PFCC works through the local Criminal Justice Board and its subgroups to ensure compliance with the Code from all relevant criminal justice agencies. By giving victims a voice and ensuring they receive their entitlements, the PFCC aims to place victims at the heart of the criminal justice system. In February 2019 the MoJ formalised the PFCC's responsibilities in ensuring compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice. It stated that at a local level PCCs/PFCCs will be responsible for regularly monitoring and identifying issues in relation to code compliance through local criminal justice partnership arrangements so they can determine effective local intervention. PCCs/PFCCs will be required to provide reports to the Criminal Justice Board and responsible Ministers so they can monitor delivery at a national level and address cross-cutting issues with national service providers. These responsibilities have been adopted by the PFCC for Essex.

7.3 The Victim Code makes it clear that support services for victims of crime should be made available to victims, and their family members, and that they should be confidential and free of charge. Services should provide information and advice, emotional and psychological support, and practical assistance, as appropriate. The PFCC seeks to ensure that appropriate information about victims' rights and support services is made available at the earliest possible opportunity after a crime has been committed, irrespective of whether it has been reported to Police or not.

8. Joined-up response

- 8.1** The PFCC values a collaborative approach to commissioning. We recognise that support for service users represents a complex mix of existing support structures, as well as commissioned interventions and services, funded and delivered by a range of agencies. The services commissioned by the PFCC are complimented and supplemented by national services, local grant-funded services, voluntary sector initiatives, and other public sector commissioned support.
- 8.2** The PFCC commissioning approach works closely and supports the priorities of Essex Police. Essex Police main objective is to deliver the best possible service that promotes satisfaction and confidence. They put victims first and at the heart of all that they do. The PFCC commissioned services aims to provide an independent service that supports victims but also encourages a positive experience of the criminal justice system, and where appropriate encourage and support victims of crime to report and engage with investigations to seek a positive outcome.
- 8.3** The PFCC seeks integrated solutions to individuals needs that place the victim at the heart of the system and deliver economies for providers and commissioners. The PFCC is committed to working with local and national partners to ensure support and recovery systems are mapped and understood to prevent duplication or confusion, and to deliver timely and appropriate support. An example of this integrated model can be seen within figure 2, which demonstrates our systemic approach to domestic abuse through the SETDAB partnership

Figure 2



8.4 With commissioning interventions, the PFCC recognises the role and responsibilities of other statutory partners as well as other non-statutory funders and stakeholders who have an interest or responsibility to support vulnerable individuals. To minimise duplication and ensure an aligned and complimentary approach to commissioning, the PFCC is an active member of a range of partnership boards including:

- a. The Essex Domestic Abuse Strategic Board, and its development sub-group
- b. The Essex Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership Board
- c. The three Adults and three Children’s Local Safeguarding Boards across Essex, Southend-on-Sea, and Thurrock
- d. Essex Criminal Justice Board
- e. Essex Reducing Reoffending Board
- f. Safer Essex Roads Partnership
- g. Essex Integrated Health and Justice Commissioning Group

- 8.5** In addition, to being an active member of these groups the PFCC recognises and will pay due regard to other partnership strategies and plans published, adopted, or endorsed by these groups.
- 8.6** The PFCC would like to acknowledge the critical and valued role played by the providers of formally contracted and grant-funded victim services across Essex. The PFCC's ambitions as stated in this strategy and the Police and Crime Plan for Essex could not be delivered without the positive engagement and tireless effort of these groups.

9. Due Diligence

9.1 For new commissioned services and contract extensions, checks are conducted by the 7 Force procurement team to fulfil the PFCC public duty to ensure funding is awarded responsibly and that it will be of good value to taxpayers. The process for the small grants fund requests documents to be submitted to conduct due diligence checks which includes

- a.** Finance check ensuring there are no irregularities within accounts that have been submitted and show financial health and a positive cash position
- b.** Non-Financial check to include policy documents, in particular safeguarding and handling of data (GDPR)
- c.** Likely effectiveness and efficiency of the application
- d.** The PFCC may seek the views of key partner agencies to qualify any statements or statistics quoted within an application e.g., Police, local authority, and strategic commissioned providers.

10. Monitoring

- 10.1** Performance monitoring is set out in individual grant agreements and contracts. The PFCC monitors most grants annually except for contracted services which are monitored quarterly. Contract monitoring captures demographic information including sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, age, and gender. This is used to ensure the PFCC funded services are proportionate and delivering against the PFCC Public Sector Equality Duty. Our commitment to ensuring our services are equal and proportionate is an area we continue to review and seek opportunities to develop further
- 10.2** The PFCC for Essex has adopted an outcomes-based approach to the commissioning of victims' services. Commissioned services are expected to deliver the overarching outcomes of enabling victims to cope with the immediate impact of crime and to move on from the harm experienced. Within the performance monitoring outcomes and outputs is monitored by providers.
- 10.3** The PFCC has sought to ensure victim support providers can evidence outputs based on victim perception measures such as improvements in quality of life, feelings of safety or empowerment, and being in control of their lives. Services are also asked to capture 'satisfaction' measures with the service – this helps the Commissioner understand whether services are delivered in an appropriate way that meets the expectations of the service user.
- 10.4** The PFCC looks to develop performance monitoring further seeking opportunities to understand the long-term outcome for service users. Measuring outcomes can be complex but by collecting a range of data we believe that commissioners and service providers can build-up a picture of service users' needs and experiences that can evidence effectiveness of interventions and identify possible gaps in provision.
- 10.5** We also anticipate that delivery of effective support services to victims will help to increase victim satisfaction in policing and the criminal justice system. This is measured through a PFCC, and Essex Police jointly commissioned, bespoke survey, delivered through an independent survey provider.
- 10.6** The performance of commissioned services is shared and scrutinised by the PFCC Management Team, and they can also be subject to review by internal audit. Any findings from auditors will be published through the PFCC website. In addition, key successes of the commissioning programme are shown within the PFCC annual report.

Contact details

If you would like to contact our office about any of the detail covered within this strategy; or would like to know more about how to apply for funding, please visit our website or contact our office using one of the below options:



<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/>



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