

DECISION NOTICE

Decision author and proposer: Alison Connelly, Principal, Criminal Justice and Devolution

Subject/ Title:
Provision of Forensic Medical Examinations and Associated Costs for Victims of Rape and Sexual Assault in Greater Manchester

Type of decision:			
Deputy Mayor's decision	X	Chief Officer's decision	

In all cases this will need to be approved by the Director Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire.

<p>The decision is that:</p> <p>The Greater Manchester Combined Authority will invest up to £750,000 with St Mary's Sexual Assault and Referral Centre (SARC) for the provision of forensic medical examinations for victims of rape and sexual assault in Greater Manchester, and also for the forensic consumables required to operate the service This is for the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023.</p> <p>The SARC service is jointly funded by the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership on a 50/50 basis and as such, the amount indicated above is the total SARC budget. The GMCA contribution is half of this. (£375k).</p> <p>It is important to note that actual costs for the SARC service for 2022-23 are still being finalised. This decision notice has been estimated to cover expected costs, however with some shortfall possible. This will be funded by reserves where necessary.</p> <p>£670k Doctors Fees £70k Consumables required to undertake FME TOTAL £750k</p>
<p>The reasons for the decision are:</p> <p>The Deputy Mayor for Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire has a responsibility to provide services for victims of crime, including victims of rape and sexual assault.</p>

This budget is allocated to the Greater Manchester Sexual Assault Referral Centre, based at the St Mary's Centre at Manchester Foundation Trust. A 24-hour rota is staffed by forensic medical examiners to provide an all-age service which provides support for victims of rape or sexual assault in terms of a forensic examination and crisis support. The service can be accessed by a referral from an agency, including but not exclusive to Greater Manchester Police, or victims can also choose to self-refer. The service currently supports anybody who lives in Greater Manchester in addition to providing support for individuals who were assaulted in Greater Manchester, but do not reside in the area. Approximately 950 forensic medical examinations are undertaken by SARC each year

It is extremely important that when individuals do report an assault or sexual abuse against them that the right support is in place. The SARC funding, allocated to services for victims of rape and sexual assault, enables this.

Demand

There were just over 11,000 sexual offences reported to GMP in 2021-2022, of which 36% were rape. 55% of these offences were committed against adults whilst over 5000 sexual offences were committed against children. This included 1400 offences which were rape against a child.

Progress towards agreeing a full Service specification for SARC and Implementing a 3 year contract

Over the course of 2022/23 we have been working with SARC to both document the service provision with the associated costings, and also outline the service needs to improve operational delivery to meet demand. This is with a view to move to an agreed position over a fixed rate contract until 2026.

In order to progress this work, we have been documenting SARC's services based on the segregation of the service into the below 4 pillars: Pillars 1 and 2 relate to this decision notice.

1. **Forensic medical examinations for adults**
2. **Forensic medical examinations for children / young persons**
3. ISVA provision
4. Therapeutic counselling support

We are fully confident that we can agree a contract position with St Marys for the SARC service for pillars for the forensic medical support element

(pillars 1, 2) which are drawing very near to completion, and will be in place for financial year 2023/24 onwards.

This decision will contribute to priorities of the ‘The Greater Manchester Strategy’ in the following ways:

SARC services delivered by St Marys contributes to the delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy. The core purpose of this service is to support individuals to help them cope and recover from being a victim of crime, specifically rape and sexual assault, and to feel safe and secure in their homes and communities they live in.

Specific Key priorities include:

- **Safer and Stronger Communities** – the SARC provides the baseline of support that rape and serious sexual assault victims of crime in GM receive
- **Young people** – ensuring young victims of crime have access to support to help the cope, recover and move on from the crimes committed.
- **Healthy lives** – improving pathways to health for those who have been a victim of crime.

Financial comments:

SARC invoices to be paid from CC3029 and allocated against the following account codes where there will be sufficient funding to cover costs.

4904 Doctors retainers / claims

Procurement comments:

Commercial Services have been consulted on the proposed contracting approaches in relation to the 4 pillars of this work. While the current position of operating without a formalised contract is not compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations (2015), it is important to note that the move to institute a 3-year contract via the ongoing process of negotiation will be no more compliant with those Regulations, and it is important for decision makers to understand this.

However, it is recognised that new arrangements will be a significant step forward in regularising contracting provision in this service area. Commercial Service look forward to supporting the directorate in moving forward to compliant Procurement solutions.

Legal comments:

On completion of agreements on the SARC service specification and a final contract value, legal colleagues will be consulted on the contract drafting process to ensure compliance.

Risk Assessment:

- It is recognised that the continued absence of a formal contract with St Marys for SARC services represents risk in potential lack of full compliance with commercial regulations. Procurement colleagues have been consulted to find the most suitable rationale for progressing payment in the stop gap until a contract is agreed in the coming months.
- It has been noted that operational costs at SARC have generally been increasing on year, addressing a need to formalise a contract

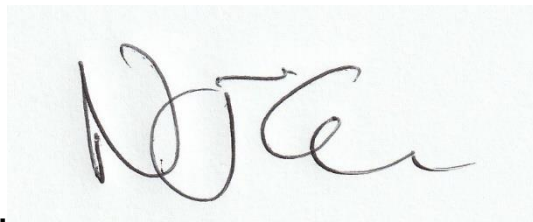
Is safeguarding of children relevant and has this been considered:

St Mary's Centre has policies and procedures in place in relation to safeguarding children and adherence to these is monitored at the quarterly contract monitoring meetings.

Is safeguarding of vulnerable adults relevant and has this been considered:

St Mary's Centre has policies and procedures in place in relation to safeguarding adults and adherence to these is monitored at the quarterly contract monitoring meetings.

Agreed by Director – Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire



Signed.....

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Date.....3rd March 2023.....

Agreed by GMCA Treasurer



Signed

Date: 07/03/2023

Agreed by Deputy Mayor
Only required for a Deputy Mayor Decision on amounts of £50,000+

Signed: ... 

Date: 8th March 2023.....

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