

DECISION NOTICE

Decision author and proposer: Alison Connelly

Subject:
Greater Manchester Sex Offender Programme (ACCORD)

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

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

<p>The decision is that:</p> <p>As lead commissioner, to award a grant to undertake a pilot sex offender programme with experienced providers We are Survivors and Back on Track. The evaluation from the pilot, led by a PhD graduate, will be used to commission a longer-term contract for a service in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>The cost of the pilot programme is set out below:</p> <p>Total for Year 1 to 3 for delivery</p> <p>GMCA (51%) £219,354.06 HMPPS (49%) £210,751.94</p> <p>Total cost £430,106</p> <p>This will be given to the lead provider, Back on Track, who will divide between Back on Track and We are Survivors.</p> <p>Costings for the PhD student</p> <p>Total for Year 1 to 4 for evaluation (this is a 3.5 year evaluation)</p> <p>Start date</p> <p>March 2024 £97,874.00 September 2024 £100,337.00</p> <p>The Greater Manchester Sex Offender Programme pilot project is developed as an alternative model to supporting people convicted of sexual offences (PCOSOs) in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>This is to contribute to the prevention of sexual re-offending by PCOSOS, who are facing multiple disadvantages, by supporting individuals to process their own trauma</p>

and develop a more pro-social sense of self. The project is solely for people who have convictions for sexual offences (online and contact) and who are still under the supervision of a probation practitioner and police liaison officer.

Agencies involved:

- Greater Manchester Probation Service
- Greater Manchester Police - Sex Offender Management Unit
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority – Justice and Rehabilitation
- Back on Track (BoT)
- We Are Survivors
- Community Services: GMIRS, VCSE

A PhD candidate will provide essential evaluation information which will be used to inform future commissioning on a longer term basis. Focussing on an 'Appraisal of the Value of Therapeutic Community Resettlement for People with Convictions for Sexual Offences in Greater Manchester'. The PhD It will be hosted in the Department of Criminology in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Manchester. The academic research question the studentship will address is:

What should be done to reduce the risks of reoffending among convicted sex offenders whose offending is foregrounded in multiple disadvantage, previous victimisation and/or substance use and poor mental health?

Agencies involved:

- Greater Manchester Probation Service
- University of Manchester
- Greater Manchester Police - Sex Offender Management Unit
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority – Justice and Rehabilitation
- Back on Track (BoT)
- We Are Survivors
- Community Services: GMIRS, VCSE

The reasons for the decision are:

The main national community initiative for PCOSOs is 'Circles of Support of Accountability'. In discussions with the sector, it was identified that there was a lack of desire to deliver the circles model as the accreditation process was considered an unnecessary burden; use of volunteers was not ideal and the small number of interventions that could be delivered. In addition, previously the volunteer model was built on ex or current CJS professionals not strictly community volunteers as such.

Therefore, organisations (Back on Track and We Are Survivors) were identified with the skills and expertise to be able to work with this cohort and they were consulted on a potential model which has been co-designed to provide a more robust and holistic approach.

Greater Manchester has the highest proportion of PCOSOs in the community outside of London. There are over 3,500 PCOSOs in Greater Manchester, which amounts to approximately 75% of people who are being managed through GM MAPPAs. These numbers have increased year on year, particularly for sexual offending, which has seen a 20% increase since Covid-19. The GM SOMU team has expanded too but can still only operate to caseloads of over 100 people. PCOSOs are often excluded from other support and/or resettlement services and face significant additional barriers to accessing mental health provision and finding progression opportunities.

People convicted of sexual offences managed through Greater Manchester's Multi Agency Public Protection Units are known to report disproportionately high rates of neurodiversity; high rates of childhood trauma, victimisation, and child sexual abuse; to typically be generalist offenders; and to be at enhanced risk of re-offending when subject to increased stress and social isolation.

The PhD candidate is sought to work under the supervision of Professors David Gadd and Emma Barret in the Department of Criminology. The candidate will also be advised and accountable to the project advisory group, comprising Mr Duncan Craig OBE (Honorary Research Fellow and CEO of We Are Survivors), Kath Self (Senior Policy & Partnership Officer, Greater Manchester Combined Authority), Dr Polly Turner, Clinical Senior Lecturer, Dr Neil Gredecki, Lecturer in Psychology and Mental Health and Siobhan Pollitt, Chief Executive, Back on Track.

It is a core requirement of the PhD that the candidate work alongside the funder, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, to develop an evaluation framework that will ultimately assess the effectiveness of a new model of intervention. The new intervention – delivered by Back on Track and We Are Survivors - seeks to ensure a subpopulation of sex offenders desist from offending by providing additional support to help those who are also victims to process their own trauma and by providing an intervention that enables the development of core life skills a more pro-social sense of self. All those subject to the intervention will also be under the supervision of Greater Manchester Probation Service.

The PhD is scheduled to start in March 2024, with fees and stipend funded for 3.5 years. The University reserves the right to defer the start date to September 2024.

The PhD candidate will be based in the Department of Criminology, in the School of Social Sciences. Fieldwork for the project is expected to conclude after 2.5 years of full-time study. An annual (pro-rata) Research Training Support budget of £1000 to cover fieldwork and dissemination costs will be made available to the candidate. The candidate will be expected to comply with the University of Manchester's doctoral training requirements. The full range of training and support provided to PhD students in the Dept of Criminology, School of Social Sciences and North West ESRC Doctoral training Partnership will be made accessible to the successful candidate. This will include training in research ethics, data management and security, research methods, research leadership, dissemination and impact.

This decision will contribute to priorities of the Greater Manchester strategy in the following ways:

The vision for the Strategy is to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world “to grow up, get on and grow old”. A key element of delivering this vision is that every community and person in Greater Manchester feels safe and secure in their daily lives.

Links to Police and Crime Plan:

Priority 1 – contributing to reducing victims of violence, increasing feelings of safety, and increasing confidence in community safety.

Priority – Preventing violence, and the precursors to violence such as ASB.

Intervening early to reduce the harm caused by violence.

Priority 3 – Supporting community resilience by investing in local services and people.

Reducing high harm and reoffending forms part of the Gender Based Violence Strategy through a commitment to the development of a Perpetrator Framework for Greater Manchester. The approach to the Greater Manchester Perpetrator Framework is to work collaboratively to **Protect**; victim safety / safeguarding, prevention; **Enforce**; disruption, tactics and specialism, risk of harm assessments and **Change**; relationships and social dynamics, intensity, and frequency. Sex Offending is one of the three priorities areas for the development and evaluation of a GM Perpetrator Framework.

Financial comments:

This is an envelope of funding which has confirmed contributions from HMPSS and the GMCA FIM budget. The total cost Year 1 to 3 will be apportioned as below (51% GMCA and 49% HMPSS) The monies will be Therapeutic Intervention funds and Research Evaluation funds.

HMPSS have for Year 1 given the GMCA £90,000. Further monies will be transferred in the next financial year (2024 – 2025) The three years are indicative only, with only the first year confirmed. A Gateway Review will be undertaken during the first year to assess feasibility and further funding requirements.

The grants to Back on Track and will be managed through a grant agreement.

Costs

Year 1

- £105,761.00

Year 2

- £186,512.00

Year 3

- £79,833.00

Total cost £372,106

Research/Evaluation PhD Graduate

Year 1

- £18,959.00

Year 2

- £22,500.00

Year 3

- £16,541.00

Total cost £58,000

Total for Year 1 to 3 for delivery and evaluation

GMCA £219,354.06

HMPPS £210,751.94

Legal comments:

This is a pilot scheme to further develop our specification for our longer-term contracting arrangements. The project will consist of both a grant agreement (with Back on Track) and a goods and services contract (with University of Manchester)

As noted above, a GFA between Back on Track and the GMCA has been drafted with the support of the Manchester City Council Legal service to award the £430,106.

Grants are excluded from the definition of a Contract in the Contract Procurement Rules, and therefore are not subject to the same requirements, but are now affected by the Subsidy Control Act and as such, a subsidy analysis has been undertaken by the GMCA Team.

Legal advice has been sought from the Shared Legal Service on the preparation of the Grant Agreement and the Agreement is being drafted currently by the Commercial Legal team. The GMCA will need to seek further Legal and Procurement advice for any future grant funding to Back on Track.

The GMCA have sought the support of the Manchester City Council Legal and GMCA Procurement Teams to support with the procurement process and when appropriate the drafting of the necessary Service Contracts for the contract with University of Manchester relating to the PHD programme specified in this Decision Notice. The GMCA

When commissioning contracts for the procurement of goods, services, or the execution of works, the GMCA must comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR) and its own Contract Procurement Rules (CPR), failing which a contract may be subject to legal challenge from an aggrieved provider. The proposed award of the contract is via an exemption which has been agreed by GMCA commercial services; the exemption accompanies this Decision Notice.

GMCA will need to seek further advice from both teams should any changes or extensions be made to the existing contract.

Procurement comments:

The grant element of the decision is not subject to Public Contracts Regulations (2015) or the Contract Procurement Rules within the GMCA Constitution, but due regard should be given to the appropriate Subsidy Control legislation.

The Sole Supplier justification is considered reasonable due to the previous work already under the Justice and Rehabilitation Executive (JRE). This is where the governance will sit. A strategic reform objective of the JRE is to Reduce Harm and Offending. The JRE works to support the delivery of the GM Gender Based Violence Strategy to develop a perpetrator framework.

In relation to the PhD student, Professor David Gadd wrote the gender-based violence strategy and continues to work with GMCA on the Greater Manchester Sex Offender Programme (ACCORD) project. He is working with GMCA to support the development of the perpetrator framework.

Professor David Gadd's knowledge, experience and familiarity with the strategy will support the findings and sourcing of the right student who is interested in this field of work. Professor Gadd has created the job description for this opportunity. The student is not necessarily coming from UoM as the opportunity will be advertised on Twitter, findaPhD.com, LinkedIn and the UoM website. The supervision of the student will be led by the UoM, under the supervision of David Gadd.

The PhD is scheduled to start on 31st March 2024, with fees and stipend funded for 3.5 years. The University reserves the right to defer the start date to September 2024.

Risk Assessment:

A flexible and iterative approach to project management will be taken to allow for the service to be shaped, with continual improvement throughout the two years. The project will also prioritise the sustainability and longevity of any positive impacts for the participants, by building upon the wider service offers and networks of Back on Track and We Are Survivors.

After a mobilisation period, the first year will focus on developing the model. The scale of the project will increase in the second year, including the exploration of additional partnerships and delivery locations. Research, evaluation, and advocacy work will be a strong theme throughout. The third year will consist of exit planning with participants and learning/modelling.

Further, the following risks have been discussed and considered:

- Risk aversion – reputational risks around working with sex offenders. This is mitigated by the care identification of partners who both want to work in this field but also have expertise.
- Cohort identification: work required with GM probation to test a cohort during a pilot period of mobilisation.
- Integration with wider GMIRS provision – once service established to consider referral pathways and communication and awareness.
- Victim Impact – this will be considered at each stage of the process. The programme will be linked to the GM Sexual Violence Harm Reduction Group to ensure the wider support sector is consulted.
- This programme will be governed through the GM Offender Management Partnership Board and The Justice and Rehabilitation Executive. This work also forms part of the Gender Based Violence Strategy through a commitment to the development of a Perpetrator Framework for Greater Manchester.

Data Sharing: work will be undertaken to allow data sharing across the partners to ensure appropriate referral pathways and programme evaluation are in place.

Further, the following risks have been discussed and considered:

- This will be governed through the GM Offender Management Partnership Board and The Justice and Rehabilitation Executive. This work also forms part of the Gender Based Violence Strategy through a commitment to the development of a Perpetrator Framework for Greater Manchester.
- Data Sharing: work will be undertaken to allow data sharing across the partners to ensure appropriate referral pathways and programme evaluation are in place.
- Ensure full University Research Ethics approval or equivalent Health Research Authority Approval is secured for the study, commencing an application for this within the first 6 weeks of registration.
- Routinely attend meetings of the Greater Manchester Sex Offender Management Unit, and partner organisations We Are Survivors and Back on Track, as directed by the PhD steering group, as well as scheduled academic supervisions (typically held fortnightly).
- Ensure all paper and electronic data are stored according to study protocols and data protection procedures, and to update databases accurately and regularly to track data progress.
- Properly manage information of a strictly confidential nature with the project's academic supervisors. It should be noted that breach of confidentiality is a serious offence which may lead to dismissal. Ensure all safeguarding procedures are followed to ensure their own safety and that of any research participants.
- A Gateway Review will be undertaken after year 1 to provide assurance that the objectives are being met and that effective safeguarding is in place. Should the decision be taken to stop the programme at any time, the PHD Student research will be repurposed to support GMP SOMU and/or GM Probation Service

Under the Subsidy Control Act, GMCA will need to demonstrate that they have considered whether this grant funding is considered a subsidy. To assist, in view of the nature of the project, it could be said that the recipient is not an enterprise, they do not offer goods and services on a market, funding is provided for targeted Authorities to support the GMCA, and the financial assistance will not have an effect on competition or investment that is more than incidental or hypothetical. Accordingly, the grant funding would not be considered to be a subsidy.

Any amount not spent under this allocation will be returned to the GMCA and will be lost to implementing effective interventions and activity within the PCC. The GMCA will be seeking to ensure that key outcomes and outputs are achieved as part of this funding.

Is safeguarding of children relevant and has this been considered:

N/A

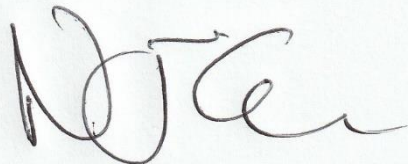
Service providers have well established safeguarding policies and procedures. These will be evidenced prior to the start of the work.

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

Yes

This has been considered and is at the forefront of their proposed approach given the offending profile of this cohort. Both service providers have well established adult safeguarding policies and procedures. These will be evidenced prior to the start of the work. Back on Track & the University of Manchester both have Modern Slavery Statements.

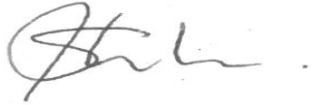
Agreed by Director – Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire



Signed:

Date: 29th Feb 2024

Agreed by GMCA Treasurer



Signed:

Date: 1st March 2024

Agreed by Deputy Mayor

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



Signed:

Date: 5th March 2024

Contact Officer:

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