

**DECISION NOTICE**

**Decision author and proposer:** Matt Berry – Senior Partnership Policy Officer / Alison Connelly – Principal Offenders and Criminal Justice

<b>Subject/ Title:</b>
2023-24 Support Services costs to St Mary’s SARC for Victims of Rape and Sexual Assault in Greater Manchester

<b>Type of decision:</b>			
<b>Deputy Mayor’s decision</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>Chief Officer’s decision</b>	

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

<p><b>The decision is that:</b></p> <p>To allocate £3,003,594 to Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust for the provision of support services by the St Marys Centre to victims of rape and serious sexual offences to cover the period of 1st April 2023 - March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. This encompasses the full and complete costs for the service including quarterly contract payments, baseline of ISVA provision, therapeutic support, and also costs of the Forensic Medical Examinations. The fixed annual price has been pre agreed by the GMCA, NHS Integrated Care and the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust.</p> <p>The SARC service is jointly funded by Greater Manchester NHS Integrated Care on a 50/50 basis and as such, the amount indicated above is the total SARC budget. The GMCA/PCC contribution is half of this. (£1,501,797.40).</p>
<p><b>The reasons for the decision are:</b></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> <p>In Greater Manchester, these support services are provided at the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, based at the St Mary’s Centre, NHS Manchester University Foundation Trust. The provision is an all-age service which provides support for victims of rape or sexual assault in terms of a forensic examination and crisis support, support for people going through the criminal justice process and therapeutic/counselling support. The service</p>

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.

#### Demand

There were nearly 12,000 sexual offences reported to GMP in 2023, of which 37% were rape. 58% 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. In 2023, SARC carried out 854 forensic medical examinations and 214 counselling cases were closed.

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

Over the course of 2022/23 the GM PCC 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 formal contracted position which will run until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2026. The first step in this process has been the GMCA, NHS Integrated Care and the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust agreeing a price for the service.

We have been documenting SARC's services based on the segregation of the service into the below 4 pillars:

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

We have moved to a position where we have agreed the service specification and fixed price for pillars 1,2 and 3 and are in the process of finalising a formal contract with the Trust for this provision which will run until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2026.

Pillar 4 The Therapeutic counselling support has inherent complications as demand has stripped capacity at SARC. We will seek procurement advice on meeting commercial compliance regulations with any agreed way forward for this work.

**This decision will contribute to priorities of 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 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.

**Procurement comments:**

It is recognised that the current position of operating without a formalised contract is not fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations (2015). Work is underway in collaboration with Commercial Services and Legal colleagues to let a new contract, potentially using the provisions of the NHS's Provider Selection regime (PSR). Once complete this work is anticipated to result in a fully compliant and operationally functional contract. It is accepted that this process will take some time to complete. Commercial Services look forward to supporting the directorate in moving forward to a compliant Procurement solution.

**Commercial Services file ref: GMCA 945**

**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.

4905 SARC contract

**Legal comments:**

The Legal team are actively engaged in this work. They were brought in to guide and advise as we draw up a service contract for the SARC service. They are across the current situation and agree the procurement position as documented above.

**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 year on year, emphasising the need to formalise a contract
- There is an acknowledged capacity issue for therapeutic support for both adults and children which has resulted in waiting lists and protracted times in victims receiving support. Options for diverting this pressure to other providers is being scoped.

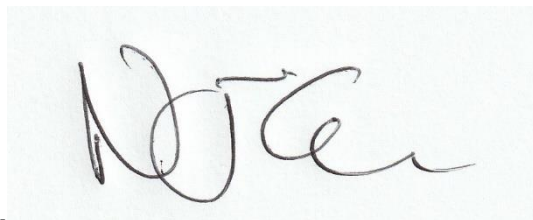
**Is safeguarding of children relevant and has this been considered:**

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**

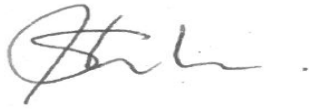


Signed.....

.....

Date...3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024.....

**Agreed by GMCA Treasurer**



Signed:

Date: 03/04/2024

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



Signed: ...

.....

Date: ...4<sup>th</sup> April 2024.....

**Contact Officer:**

Matt Berry  
Senior Partnership and Policy Officer  
Mobile: 0797 656 0954  
[Matt.berry@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Matt.berry@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)