

**ORIGINATOR: HEAD OF COMMISSIONING**

**DECISION NO. 19-2021**

**REASON FOR SUBMISSION: FOR DECISION**

**SUBMITTED TO: POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**SUBJECT: NATIONAL ISVA AND IDVA FUND – SUFFOLK ALLOCATION**

**SUMMARY:**

1. The Ministry of Justice have confirmed new funding of £472,560 to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Suffolk following a successful application to the National Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Fund.
2. The National ISVA and IDVA fund was announced by the Ministry of Justice in February 2021 to provide emotional and practical support to victims of rape and domestic abuse (DA) and guide them through the criminal justice process. The fund aims to increase the number of IDVAs and ISVAs in England and Wales, expanding service capacity and increasing the number of specialist advisors available to victims.
3. The Ministry of Justice funding is for the period 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2023 and will be used to:
  - a. employ 4 additional IDVAs in the Suffolk IDVA service to respond to an increase in the number of high risk cases and provide specialist support to young people, male victims, victims from minority backgrounds and victims whose cases go to court;
  - b. undertake a pilot with East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) for an IDVA specialising in supporting elderly victims of DA in a health setting;
  - c. employ a new lead ISVA in the Sexual Assault and Referral Centre.
4. The PCC is recommended to award further funding of £81,700 to support the continuous employment of the additional IDVAs in the Suffolk IDVA service from 1 April 2023 until 30 September 2023, so that their employment is coterminous with the existing contract.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the PCC:

1. Approves the award of Ministry of Justice funding to employ additional IDVAs and a lead ISVA in Suffolk until 30 March 2023.
2. Awards £81,700 to Leeway Domestic Violence and Abuse Services to continue the employment of the additional four IDVAs from 1 April 2023 until 30 September 2023.

**APPROVAL BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

The recommendation set out is agreed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Parry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

**Signature**

**Date 18.06.2021**

## **DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION**

### **1. THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE NATIONAL ISVA AND IDVA FUND**

- 1.1 In February 2021 the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) notified PCCs of the National ISVA and IDVA Fund, to be distributed through Expressions of Interest (EOI). The funding was announced in response to the increases in volume of cases to support services during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Fund is to increase advocacy support for victims and survivors of sexual violence (SV) and domestic abuse (DA) across England and Wales, including children. The focus is to increase the number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) across local areas to expand service capacity in response to the pandemic. The MOJ also set out an expectation that bids should include one bid from each PCC area for a child and young person ISVA or IDVA.
- 1.3 The funding is committed for two years from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2023. Existing ISVA grants held by PCCs will be extended to 31 March 2023.

### **2. INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE ADVISOR SERVICES IN SUFFOLK**

- 2.1 A key part of the Police and Crime Commissioner's role is to commission services that help reduce demand on the Constabulary and support victims of crime to cope and recover.
- 2.2 The provisions in the [Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#) allow the Police and Crime Commissioner to arrange for the provision of services that are intended to help victims or witnesses of, or other persons affected by offences. In arranging for the provision of these services, grants may be made and may be subject to any conditions (including conditions as to repayment) that the PCC thinks appropriate.
- 2.3 A number of services are already in place in Suffolk to support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. The PCC has a long term contracts in place for the IDVA service (supporting high risk victims of domestic abuse) and Norfolk and Suffolk Victim Care (supporting standard risk victims of DA) and commissions other services for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence through the award of grants. The Suffolk ISVA service operates within the Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (the Ferns) commissioned by NHS England (Health and Justice) and Suffolk Constabulary.
- 2.4 In preparing the Expression of Interest to apply for funding, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Suffolk liaised with Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk County Council, Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and West Suffolk CCG to assess priority areas for further investment and ensure alignment with the Suffolk Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) action plan.
- 2.5 The PCC has indicated that there will be a continuing focus on victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence in the new Police and Crime Plan.

### **3. SUFFOLK ISVA AND IDVA PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The Expression of Interest submitted to the MOJ contained a local assessment of need. This covered an analysis of current unmet need for advocates in Suffolk, gaps in provision for under-represented victims (such as those with protected characteristics and males) and how the proposal would align with existing provision.
- 3.2 The analysis showed:
- A 20% increase in the number of DA crimes reported to the police, an increase of 16% in MARAC cases and of 29% in referrals to the IDVA service in 2020.
  - Safelives (the UK DA charity) recommend an average 100 referrals a year per IDVA and advise there should be 18 (full time equivalent) IDVAs in Suffolk. Suffolk had 188 referrals per IDVA in 2020 and 11.7 FTE IDVAs.
  - Cases supported at court rose from an average of 41 in 2019 to 51 in 2020.
  - Data shows increases in male, black and minority ethnic and elderly referrals to the IDVA service in 2020 but these groups remain under-represented.
  - There is currently no specialist provision to encourage victims to seek support or spare capacity for specialist training.
  - Partners and advisors identified a gap in referrals from health, particularly for the elderly and were concerned with the rising number of young people seeking support.
  - ISVAs dealt with 34% more referrals in 2020 but the number of male, ethnic minority, LGBT+ and non-English speaker clients remains low.
- 3.3 In the last year the IDVA and ISVA workforce in Suffolk have dealt with increased referrals and complexity of cases (including greater mental health needs, addiction and more victims with learning difficulties). The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was mentioned by all services as a contributory factor in the complexity of cases and as a barrier to accessing support and the ability of victims to cope and recover. Services were able to cope by spending less time travelling and working remotely during the pandemic however it is expected that more clients will want face to face support when pandemic restrictions are eased, increasing pressure on the capacity of existing services.
- 3.4 On the basis of the analysis the OPCC requested funding for:
- **4 additional IDVAs in the Suffolk IDVA service** (provided by Leeway Domestic Violence and Abuse Services) with specialist skills in supporting young people, male victims, victims from minority backgrounds and victims whose cases go to court. IDVAs will:
    - better understand the needs of under-represented victims to reduce risk and support recovery;
    - raise awareness within under-represented groups and communities through positive outreach, building trust;
    - work across the Suffolk system to ensure joined up support across risk pathways;
    - have specialist training and link to national organisations for best practice to be disseminated system wide;
    - increase capacity by holding a caseload.
  - **1 IDVA in a health setting** employed by East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust. This IDVA would support elderly victims and liaise with current DA nurse leads and the Suffolk IDVA service providing a co-ordination point for practitioners and elderly victims.
  - **1 Lead ISVA** in the existing ISVA service who will hold some cases but have capacity to actively engage all under-represented groups working with community groups and services, information sessions and drop-ins and 3rd sector liaison.

3.5 The proposed funding will deliver service improvements across the system, address increases in demand and complexity and improve support for protected characteristics and hidden needs. It will also help prepare for the changes due with the Victims Law and recently enacted DA Bill. For victims it will provide choice more tailored to need, and support victims to stay engaged with the criminal justice process. The IDVA and ISVA workforce in Suffolk will benefit from a reduction in case load and better job satisfaction and we envisage knock on benefits to other providers.

#### 4. MONITORING AND OUTCOMES

4.1 Full monitoring requirements are awaited from the Ministry of Justice. However written reports will be required from providers at six months and year end for the duration of the funding. These reports will be supplemented by quarterly meetings between the OPCC and service providers to assess progress.

4.2 Monitoring reports will include the following:

- Narrative update on the service, challenges and risks.
- Financial update on spend against budget allocations.
- Data on referrals and engagement with the service.
- Demographics of service users.
- Outcomes for victims. We expect all ISVAs and IDVAs to be working towards the following outcomes:
  - Survivors have access to support that is individually tailored to their level of risk and support needs.
  - Survivors who want support to navigate the criminal justice system, and have been impacted by disruption in the criminal justice system, has an advocate to support them throughout all stages of their journey.
  - Survivors have someone to advocate on their behalf, to ensure their views and needs are heard and upheld, such as within the criminal justice process, the MARAC process, or in engagement with a range of other statutory and voluntary agencies.
  - Client feedback and satisfaction with the service.

#### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The recommendation in this decision paper utilises £472,560 of new funding awarded to the PCC from the Ministry of Justice National IDVA and ISVA Fund. The funding allocation over the two year period is £223,545 in Year 1 (2021/22) and £249,015 in Year 2 (2022/23).

5.2 It is further proposed that the PCC allocates £81,700 from the PCC commissioning budget in 2022/23 to continue the employment of 4 IDVAs in the Suffolk IDVA service from 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023. This will ensure that their employment is coterminous with the existing contract.

5.3 It is recommended that funding will be distributed as follows:

Organisation	Roles	MOJ IDVA & ISVA National Fund	Funding methods
Leeway Domestic Violence and Abuse Services.	4 IDVAs - Court - Young	£310,600  Plus £81,700 PCC	Variation to existing IDVA Service contract.

	Persons - Male - Minority communities	funding for the period 1 April 2023 - 30 September 2023	
East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT)	1 Health IDVA - elderly specialism	£77,650	Grant Award
Suffolk Constabulary	1 Lead ISVA	£84,310	Memorandum of Understanding

## 6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 6.1 This funding is time limited and the Ministry of Justice funding must be utilised by 31 March 2023 for the specified purpose.
- 6.2 The MOJ have confirmed that the existing ISVA funding from the MOJ (1.8FTE in Suffolk) which runs until 31 March 2022 has been extended until 31 March 2023 at the same annual rate risking a shortfall if cost pressures arise.
- 6.3 An assessment of risk in delivery has been undertaken. This assessment has considered the values of funding to each organisation, the duration of delivery and history of previous delivery.
- 6.4 Should there be any risk to the service being delivered, each organisation is required to notify the PCC.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that the PCC:
- Approves the award of Ministry of Justice funding to employ additional IDVAs and a lead ISVA in Suffolk until 30 March 2023.
  - Awards £81,700 to Leeway Domestic Violence and Abuse Services to continue the employment of the additional four IDVAs from 1 April 2023 until 30 September 2023.

<b>ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)</b>	<b>PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	Yes
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	Yes
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes

In relation to the above, please ensure that all relevant issues have been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission.

#### **APPROVAL TO SUBMIT TO THE DECISION-MAKER**

##### **Chief Executive**

I am satisfied that relevant advice has been taken into account in the preparation of the report and that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the PCC.



**Signature:**

**Date** 17.06.2021