**SUMMARY DECISION SHEET**

**PURPOSE: COMMISSIONER DECISION –** REF. DLl 188

**Timing:** Pressing

Decision approved by VAWDASV Executive Board 10/11/2020

**Title:** Extension of Independent Domestic Violence Advisory service contract

**Category of Decision / Business Area Impact:** Commissioning

**Executive Summary:**

Decision log DLl 052 in October 2017 outlines the arrangements for the joint commissioning of IDVA services from 1st April 2018 onwards. The report outlines the rationale for a joint service, capacity required, financial considerations, governance arrangements and delivery timescales.

This contract was one of the first in Wales to be jointly commissioned between PCCs and Local Authorities and has been noted as best practice.

The below report outlines the current situation regarding this contract and the requirement to call upon the first extension period, taking the end date to 31st March 2022. This decision was approved by members of the VAWDASV Executive Board in November 2020.

The contract currently costs the PCC £200,000 per annum, a sum match funded by the 4 Local Authorities across Dyfed Powys. During the extension period, an evaluation of a number of new practices affecting the contract will be undertaken and discussions at the VAWDASV Strategic Board will influence the proposed way forward post 2022.

**Recommendation:**

The Commissioner is asked to approve the utilisation of the extension period for the jointly commissioned IDVA service taking the end date to 31st March 2022. This is in line with the decision made by Local Authority partners at the VAWDASV Executive Board.

**Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys**

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Nolan Principles for Conduct in Public Life.

The above request has my approval.

**Signature:**  **Date: 1st of December 2020**

**Report to Mid and West Wales VAWDASV Executive Board**

**Regional Independent Domestic Violence Advisory Service**

**October 2020**

*Introduction*

The below paper was presented to the Mid and West Wales VAWDASV Strategic Board at the meeting of 22nd October 2020. The Strategic Board supported the recommendation but acknowledged that the decision to continue with the funding sits with the Executive Board. Given the time pressured requirement for this decision in order that continuation notice can be given to the provider, it was agreed that it would be expedited to the Executive Board for approval prior to the next scheduled meeting.

*Background*

In October 2017 a series of discussions were held focussing on the potential for joint commissioning of services for high risk victims of domestic abuse. The VAWDASV Executive Board approved the below recommendations:

* A 50/50 split between Local Authority contribution and the Police and Crime Commissioner in funding the future Independent Domestic Violence Advisory (IDVA) service
* A combined financial contribution from Local Authorities across Dyfed Powys of £200,000 to be pooled with £200,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner to enable a minimum of status quo provision to be achieved
* Recognition that the Welsh Government VAWDASV grant is unlikely to provide sufficient funding for all VAWDASV related requirements and there will need to be consideration of commitment from other sources
* Financial and management arrangements as laid out in the draft Memorandum Of Understanding[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Commencement of the tender process in line with the timescales outlined within the report.

Subsequently a joint procurement exercise was undertaken by Dyfed Powys Police acting as lead commissioner, with a new IDVA service commencing on 1st July 2018. The first exit point for this contract is 31st March 2021 with 2 options to extend contained within the contract, each for an additional period of 12 months. The contract was awarded to Hafan Cymru and Pobl Care and Support working jointly across the Dyfed Powys area. This contract has provided the stability and consistency of service provision that had been impossible to achieve on historical annual funding cycles.

Based on average IDVA salaries across England and Wales, national average unit costs, and allowing for recognised third sector management costs, a fixed price contract of £400,000 per annum enabled the provision of 10.5 FTE IDVAs. This was based on numbers required according to Safe Lives data regarding MARAC cases.

*Current situation*

Since the contract began in 2018 a number of developments have been introduced within Dyfed Powys in particular the vulnerability desk, secondary risk assessment unit (SRAU) and daily multi-agency discussions (DD). These have all assisted in the improved risk assessment of victims, resulting in a lower volume of high risk cases being presented to MARAC.

An academic evaluation of the impact of the SRAU and DD processes is being undertaken by Data Cymru and this will help to inform the requirement for IDVA provision going forward. This evaluation is being delivered over a 12 month period from November 2019 to November 2020.

Capacity requirements for the IDVA service need to be balanced against the requirement for other specialist interventions to support medium and standard risk victims. The outcomes of the evaluation will assist in shaping future provision and therefore it is not recommended that current capacity be altered until commissioners have the evidence base required for any proposed changes.

The Covid 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on commissioners and providers alike and current circumstances and timescales do not allow for a full procurement process to recommission the service in time for 1st April 2021.

*Proposal*

It is proposed that given the current situation, commissioners utilise the first of the 12 month extension periods taking the end of contract date to 31st March 2022. This will:

* provide stability for providers and victims
* allow commissioners to utilise the findings of the SRAU and MACC evaluations to influence future provision requirements
* provide sufficient time to take an informed decision on future commissioning exercises

The contract is monitored via quarterly meetings between representatives for the funding commissioners and the service providers. This contract has experienced some challenges during its lifetime and commissioners have identified a number of areas where attention needs to be focussed during the extension period.

It is proposed that Dyfed Powys Police on behalf of the commissioners should therefore extend the contract by 12 months, based on the below requirements:

* The service does not yet run seamlessly as a single service, it is evident to commissioners that is still runs as two separate services. This has been demonstrated recently in the context of funding bids and resource mobilisation. Commissioners require an improvement in the general continuity and consistency of service delivery across both organisations so that the services act as a unified body.
* Accreditation requirements and staff training requirements outlined in the original contract specification need to be addressed as a priority and matter of urgency.
* The data set needs to be finalised and consistently recorded and reported on across both organisations as one service.

1. The draft Memorandum of Understanding was agreed between commissioning partners to ensure clarity regarding financial, risk and performance management arrangements. Please note a separate arrangement is in place between Local Authorities regarding the regional banking arrangements for receipt of the Welsh Government VAWDASV grant. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)