



Cambridgeshire  
Police & Crime  
Commissioner

**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable and Chief Executive

**Date:** 21 September 2016

## TACKLING RE-OFFENDING THROUGH DEFERRED PROSECUTION

### 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Business Coordination Board (“the Board”) on the progress of the work to tackle reoffending through the use of deferred prosecutions and effective support interventions using Home Office innovation funding.

### 2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of this report and endorse the commissioning intentions.

### 3. Background

3.1 Cambridgeshire was successfully awarded £250,000 from the Home Office Police Innovation Fund in 2016-17. A further £250,000 for 2017-18 has also been approved, subject to sufficient progress and meeting monitoring requirements in year one. The bid proposal was to tackle the root causes of early offending behaviour through a conditional deferred prosecution. This will provide a foundation for multi-agency pathways to reduce demand on policing and other services.

3.2 Police are able to identify suitable individuals and hold over their prosecution, pending compliance with conditions for dealing with the issues underpinning their behaviour. A swift multi-agency assessment process enables appropriate conditions to be set, and agreed with the offender. Bespoke options for support are likely to include support for debt management; housing issues; anger management; drugs or alcohol misuse; mental health or other health needs; employment, education and training. Appropriate interventions will be provided by partner organisations. Compliance will

be monitored throughout and if the conditions are not met, the prosecution will continue.

3.3 The project is focused on two key outcomes:

- Reducing reoffending
- Reducing demand and costs associated with reoffending.

3.4 Anticipated benefits include:

- Savings from court processes and related police time and longer term savings through reduced demand across agencies
- The root causes of an individual's offending behaviour will be addressed early, before they escalate and require more costly interventions, while holding over the prospect of prosecution to ensure compliance
- Holding the offender to account for their behaviour, but not adversely affecting the rest of their life with a criminal record
- Ensuring the delivery of the most appropriate interventions by fewer agencies where previously many organisations may have acted independently, often duplicating services and giving conflicting advice and assistance
- Multi-agency working to ensure that every contact offenders have with services reduce their likelihood of reoffending
- Increased victim satisfaction
- Ensuring that the issues causing offending behaviour are tackled by the most appropriate agency
- The potential for prosecution should increase the motivation of the offender to get issues dealt with.

#### **4. Update on Progress**

4.1 To support the implementation and on-going development of the hub a Police Sergeant has been appointed as the Co-ordinator. He is supported by a part-time Business Administrator.

4.2 There has been extensive consultation with statutory and voluntary agencies to promote this work and to identify support services and interventions, which currently exist. The identification of an assessment framework and appropriate resources are nearing conclusion, with an implementation date planned for end of October for Cambridgeshire.

4.3 The project is now live in Peterborough and a strong partnership with Sodexo has enabled offenders to be referred to their "Outside links" centre in Peterborough city centre. This single referral mechanism provides the necessary support and expertise to ensure needs are identified and appropriately addressed.

## 5. Commissioning Intentions

- 5.1 The “virtual” offender hub is bringing together appropriate and existing agencies to identify and effectively address the underlying causes of an offender’s behaviour. The initial commissioning intentions at Annex A sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner’s intentions with regards to capacity building to support the new approach to conditional cautions/deferred prosecution.

## 6. Recommendation

- 6.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of this report and endorse the commissioning intentions.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

<b>Source Document(s)</b>	Agenda Item 7.0, Tackling Re-Offending Through Deferred Prosecution, Business Coordination Board, 26 May 2016
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## **Offender Pathways –Commissioning Intentions – September 2016**

This document sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner’s intentions with regards to capacity building for the interventions necessary to support the new approach to conditional cautions/deferred prosecution.

### **Strategic vision for Reducing Reoffending in Cambridgeshire**

The Police and Crime Commissioner’s draft Police and Crime Plan sets out a key aim of reducing reoffending to ensure that offenders are brought to justice and are less likely to reoffend. Key objectives are:

- Police enforcement which disrupts offenders and deters would-be offenders
- Offenders are brought to justice while ensuring the best outcomes for victims
- All agencies coming into contact with offenders play their role in ensuring causes of criminality are addressed
- A partnership approach to protect local communities from crime and manage the most complex offenders.

The strategic vision for reducing reoffending in Cambridgeshire was created from a strong evidence base which included Cambridgeshire’s Victim and Offender Needs Assessment and the BeNCH study on offenders. There is a wealth of evidence about the impact of various interventions on offending behaviour.

### **Development of Virtual Offender Hub**

We are working with partners to tackle the root causes of early offending behaviour through a conditional deferred prosecution. Police will be able to identify suitable individuals and hold over their prosecution, pending compliance with conditions for dealing with the issues underpinning their behaviour. This will provide a foundation for multi-agency pathways to reduce demand on policing and other services.

The project is focused on two key outcomes:

- Reducing reoffending
- Reducing demand and costs associated with reoffending.

Anticipated benefits include:

- Savings from court processes and related police time and longer term savings through reduced demand across agencies
- The root causes of an individual's offending behaviour will be addressed early, before they escalate and require more costly interventions, while holding over the prospect of prosecution to ensure compliance
- Holding the offender to account for their behaviour, but not adversely affecting the rest of their life with a criminal record
- Ensuring the delivery of the most appropriate interventions by fewer agencies where previously many organisations may have acted independently, often duplicating services and giving conflicting advice and assistance
- Multi-agency working to ensure that every contact offenders have with services reduce their likelihood of reoffending
- Increased victim satisfaction
- Ensuring that the issues causing offending behaviour are tackled by the most appropriate agency
- The potential for prosecution should increase the motivation of the offender to get issues dealt with.

## **Funding**

Cambridgeshire has successfully been awarded £250,000 from the Home Office Police Innovation Fund in 2016-17. A further £250,000 for 2017-18 has also been approved, subject to sufficient progress and meeting monitoring requirements in year one.

The bid proposal was to tackle the root causes of early offending behaviour through a conditional deferred prosecution. This will provide a foundation for multi-agency pathways to reduce demand on policing and other services.

The Commissioner also allocates Crime and Disorder Reduction Grants. Allocations have been made for 2016 – 17 but future decisions will reflect the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

## **Commissioning Intentions**

### **Stage 1 - October 2016 to March 2017 (Expected)**

Interventions - Existing provision is being scoped and this will continue through the life of the project. There may be a requirement for additional service and pathway mapping to be commissioned, as well as support to build the capacity and capability of the voluntary sector and other partners.

The scoping has informed the intended approach which aims to build on existing capacity across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to develop the virtual offender hub model and ensure appropriate interventions are in place to support this approach. The Commissioner intends to commission interventions where existing capacity and capability is insufficient to address the issues underpinning offending behaviour. This is likely to include:

- support for a swift multi-agency assessment process which will enable appropriate conditions to be set, and agreed with the offender
- other bespoke options for support are likely to include support for debt management; housing issues; anger management; drugs or alcohol misuse; mental health or other health needs; employment, education and training; counselling; mentoring and logistical support to ensure that conditions can be met.

Evaluation - Development of the availability of deferred prosecutions, together with enhanced interventions to tackle the underlying causes of criminality are the principle focus within this work. In addition to the increased numbers, it is vital to understand what works, why it works and how investment in interventions at the earliest possible stages of criminality can reduce costs over time, not just in terms of policing but other key areas such as education and health. Independent evaluation of the design and implementation of the virtual offender hub model, together with effectiveness of referral pathways and partnership engagement will be sought.

## **Timescales**

Funding will be allocated for spend in 2016-17. Further consideration will be given to stage two (from April 2017) as funding for 2017-18 becomes clearer.

## **Process**

The preferred approach is for the OPCC to draw up a project specification and approach a list of existing providers on a transparent basis. The specification would also be shared appropriately to enable any less known providers to express an interest. Where the capacity of an existing service is the issue grant funding may be the appropriate mechanism.