

## Decision Note

### Commissioning of Employment Support Service for Offenders



#### REQUEST FOR DECISION BY THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

	Policing:	Crime:	Fire & Rescue:
This decision relates to:	x	x	

#### APPROVAL (for completion by Staffordshire Commissioner only)

Rationale for approval

STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

Signature

Date

28/2/21

Date decision required by: 17 February 2022

If an urgent approval is required, please state reasons:

**For completion by Staffordshire Commissioner's Office**

only:- Decision Number: SCP-D-202324-003

Date Received: 7 July 2023 - process complete

	Yes	No
Has the required decision been considered under the guidance of the Staffordshire Commissioner's Decision Making Policy?	X	
Has the required decision been deemed to be a Key Decision as defined within the Staffordshire Commissioner's Decision Making Policy?	X	
Who is empowered to make the required decision? Staffordshire Commissioner		

Title	Commissioning of Employment Support Service for Offenders
<p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>This paper seeks approval in principle to go out to market for the provision of a new Employment Support Service for offenders targeted on the IOM cohort.</p> <p>As part of its current strategic priorities the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Reducing Reoffending Board has identified a need for the strengthening of employment support services for the IOM cohort of offenders and other identified 'difficult to engage' groups for whom employment and reoffending outcomes are currently poor.</p> <p>The proposed service will aim to compliment and add value to existing employment support services for offenders, through the provision of an enhanced service to IOM offenders and other hard to engage groups, with the aim of enabling more offenders to take up available employment opportunities and to establish and maintain stable lifestyles in the community away from crime.</p> <p>It is proposed that the service will be commissioned on a pilot basis for an initial period of 2 years from 1 May 2022, with the option for the contract for the service to be extended beyond this for a further two further periods of 12 months subject to satisfactory performance.</p> <p>The estimated annual contract cost, if approved, will be between £75,000 and £80,000, with the total contract cost for the initial 2 year pilot period being between £150,000 and £160,000.</p> <p>The total cost of the contract over the potential full contract term from 1 May 2022 to 30 April 2026, should the option for the contract to be extended for a further two twelve months periods be taken up, will be between £300,000 and £320,000.</p>	

Given the potential aggregated value of the contract over the full contract term to ensure compliance with current UK Public Contracts Regulations it will be necessary to run either an open Tender or make use of an existing Procurement Framework Agreement in order to source suitable providers.

Should the option for the contract to be extended from 1 May 2024 be triggered, it is proposed that opportunities to jointly fund / co-commission the service from this point will be explored with partners with a view to reducing / removing the call on the SCO budget for the remainder of the contract term.

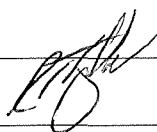
**Recommendation:**

That the Commissioner approves the commencement of a tender process to identify a suitable provider to deliver the service based on the budget and contractual arrangements outlined

**Chief Executive**

I hereby approve the recommendation for consideration.

Signature



Date

28/2/22

## REPORT AND ADVICE TO THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

### 1. Introduction and background

Despite having equal access to available employment opportunities and employment support provision in the community alongside other offenders levels of worklessness amongst the IOM cohort remain comparatively high relative to the general offender population.

In terms of the overall offender population in Staffordshire, in the 12 months period to the end of September 2021, 39.7% of offenders subject to Probation supervision had identified support needs in terms of training / employment.

In contrast, for the IOM cohort (offenders selected for supervision via multi-agency IOM teams) of those commencing supervision in the 3 months period to the end of December 2021 71% had identified support needs in terms of training / employment (186 out of 264 cases being identified as unemployed and not actively seeking work).

This is considered by the Probation service to be a key factor limiting the ability of many IOM offenders to successfully complete Community Orders, to achieve stable lifestyles in the community away from crime and to avoid further offending.

Against this background, as part of its current strategic priorities (as reflected in the current pan-Staffordshire Reducing Reoffending Strategy and Action Plan), the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Reducing Reoffending Board has identified a need to strengthen existing employment support provision for IOM offenders with the aim of supporting more offenders to access available training and employment opportunities in the community.

#### Service Aims

The proposed service will aim to improve existing employment support provision for IOM offenders and other difficult to engage groups - including serving prisoners on Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) conditions - through the offer of a more intensive and sustained employment support and mentoring package based on

personalised support plans, with the aim of enabling more offenders to obtain and maintain available training and employment opportunities.

The service will initially focus on creating and maximising employment opportunities within the local construction industry and suitable linked supply chain businesses. However, it will also seek to work with other employers from the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent areas who are already engaged in offender employment support programmes and have experience of providing and managing suitable work placements.

Offenders assessed as being suitable for employment placements will be offered support in taking up placements and ongoing mentoring during the initial stages of placements to maximise the chances of placements succeeding.

The service will engage with wider support services, including vulnerability hubs and similar wrap-around support provision, as appropriate, in order to support service delivery and to maximise outcomes.

#### Staffing / Service Capacity

Final arrangements in terms of staffing / service capacity will depend on discussion / agreement with the successful bidder.

However in terms of staffing it is envisaged that the service is likely to involve the appointment of x2 whole time equivalent ETE Support Workers – with each worker covering a different geographical patch and undertaking a mix of duties to include:

- work with local employers to open up job placement opportunities for offenders
- delivery of a bespoke employment support / mentoring service to offenders identified as being suitable to take up any opportunities created.

In terms of service capacity it is envisaged that the service will have the capacity to work with up to 30 clients in total at any one time, with the level of support provided being tailored to the needs of individual clients and being phased out over time as job opportunities are identified and taken up, creating scope for new referrals to be accepted.

#### Outcomes

Due to the challenging nature of the caseload, it is anticipated that attrition rates for the service will be higher than those for generic employment support services. In addition to measuring final job outcomes therefore, an important component of the service will be to measure the 'distance travelled' / intermediate service outcomes achieved by service users (eg in terms of building the skills and confidence to enter the labour market, and achieving goals set within their ETE pathway plans).

Performance measurement criteria will include:

- Number of training placements created;
- Number of employment placements created;
- Number of clients referred / selected for training and/or work placements;
- Evidence of progress in terms of clients achieving realistic goals within their ETE pathway plans;
- Number of clients commencing training and/or work placements;
- Number of clients successfully completing training and/or work placements;
- Number of clients successfully completing Community Orders;
- Number of clients avoiding reoffending

Performance targets in respect of both intermediate and long-term outcomes will be agreed with the successful bidder.



## Performance Monitoring

An outcomes framework will be agreed with the successful bidder setting out a range of metrics that will allow performance in relation to both intermediate and long-term outcome targets to be measured, built around data that is readily available via the Probation case management system

The service will be subject to detailed performance monitoring with regular reports on progress and outcomes being made to the SCO and partners via the Reducing Reoffending Board.

## Procurement

Given the potential aggregated value of the contract over the full 4 year contract term should the option for the contract to be extended for a further two twelve months periods be taken up, to ensure compliance with current UK Public Contracts Regulations (2015) it will be necessary to run either an open Tender or make use of an existing Procurement Framework Agreement in order to source suitable providers.

The use of a Procurement Framework offers many benefits, such as time and resource efficiencies and tailored T&Cs, which typically makes this the preferred route to market.

The Ministry of Justice has recently established a new Probation Rehabilitation Services Framework Agreement which is split into multiple Lots, one of which is for Education, Training and Employment.

Since its launch the government has encouraged PCC's to make use of the Framework when considering the commissioning of offender rehabilitation services and after consideration of all available options the RR Board (Procurement Working Group) has agreed this to be the most suitable route to market (should the proposed commissioning of the service be approved, the SCO will be the first PCC in the country to make use of the Framework).

Use of the Framework will guarantee compliance with current UK procurement rules and ensure access to the opportunity for relevant approved providers of offender rehabilitation services whilst ensuring that the procurement process can be expedited quickly and straightforwardly within the proposed timescale, relative to the alternative option of running a direct tender.

## Procurement Timeline

The proposed procurement timetable is set out below (key dates in bold):

Phase	Date
<b>Issue Call-Off ITT via the eSourcing System</b>	<b>28 February 2022</b>
Deadline for receipt of queries/clarifications	2 March 2022
Deadline for receipt of Tender Responses	11 March 2022 (12 Noon)
<b>Notification of Intention to Award</b>	<b>w/c 11 April 2022</b>
End of standstill period	w/c 25 April 2022
Call-Off Effective Date [Mobilisation begins]	w/c 2 May 2022
<b>Call-Off Commencement Date</b>	<b>8-12 weeks from Contract Award (to be agreed)</b>

## **2. Issues for consideration**

Reducing offending and reoffending is a key priority within the current Police and Crime Plan and Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Reducing Reoffending Strategy.

Tackling worklessness amongst offenders is key to effective casework with offenders and to local efforts to tackle and drive down offending and reoffending rates.

Recent research and scoping work has identified a clear demand for the service. There is no alternative provision to which the IOM cohort of offenders can be referred, capable of providing the same, intensive level of support, should the service not be commissioned.

Provision has been made within the SCO budget to cover the contract costs over the projected contract term

The service will initially be delivered as a two-year pilot service in order to assess its effectiveness and potential scalability, with an option to extend at the end of this period.

Should the option for the contract to be extended be triggered following completion of the initial pilot phase, it is proposed that opportunities to jointly fund / co-commission the service from this point will be explored with partners with a view to reducing / removing the call on the SCO budget for the remainder of the contract term.

### 3. What other options have been considered?

The possibility of co-commissioning the service alongside partners has been explored however this is not an option at the present time.

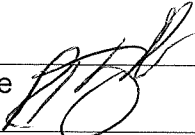
### 4. Consultation and Engagement undertaken

Extensive consultation with partners has been undertaken as detailed above

## Report Implications

### Monitoring Officer comments:

Signature



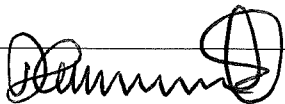
Date

1/8/2022

### Section 151 Officer comments:

Spend included within budget for 22/23 and mTB.

Signature



Date

1/3/2022.

	Yes	No
Has legal advice (outside of that provided by the Monitoring Officer) been sought on the content of this report?	<div>X</div> <div>(Procurement Advice – see below)</div>	

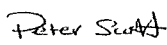
### Legal Comments:

Due to the value of the contract the award of the contract falls within the ambit of UK procurement regulations.

The procurement process will be taken forward via the procurement route outlined above with a suitable provider for the service being identified via the recently-established national MOJ Probation Rehabilitation Services Framework

The risk of legal challenge to the award of the contract is considered to be low		
<b>5. Equality Comments – please attach the completed EIA</b>  Equality considerations have been taken into account in the preparation of the specification for the service to ensure equitable access to the service for all groups including groups and communities with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.  A completed EIA is attached.		
<b>6. Background/supporting paper</b>  A copy of the current Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent RR Acton Plan is attached  A copy of the full service specification attached		
<b>7. Public access to information</b>  No - until completion of the tender process		
<b>8. Data Protection Impact Assessment - please attach the completed DIA</b>  A DIA is to be completed following completion of the tender process.		
<b>9. Is the publication of this form to be deferred?</b>  Yes – until completion of the tender process		
<b>10. If the report is for publication, is redaction required?</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Of the Decision Note?		X
Of the Appendix?		

**ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:**

<b>Author</b>	Peter Scott
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	01/03/2022





# Equality Impact Assessment



The purpose of this EIA is to ensure you consider any equality issues as part of your decision making when developing / reviewing your policy / procedure.

Please complete the sections below and send to the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office to be quality assured. New / revised policies cannot be published on the policy database until the EIA has passed the quality assurance process.

<b>Title of policy/procedure:</b>	Commissioning of Offender Employment Support Service
<b>Department:</b>	Commissioning and Partnerships
<b>Date:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> February 2022

## 1. Identify the aims and purpose of the policy

The purpose of the commissioning exercise is to identify a provider to deliver a new employment support service for offenders in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent targeted on the IOM cohort.

As part of its current strategic priorities the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Reducing Reoffending Board has identified a need for the strengthening of employment support services for the IOM cohort and other identified 'difficult to engage' groups for whom employment and reoffending outcomes are currently poor.

The proposed service will aim to compliment and add value to existing employment support services for offenders, to enable an enhanced service to be offered to IOM offenders and other hard to engage groups with the aim of enabling more offenders

to take up available employment opportunities and to establish and maintain stable lifestyles in the community away from crime.

It is proposed that the service will be commissioned on a pilot basis for an initial period of 2 years from 1 May 2022, with the option for the contract for the service to be extended beyond this for a further two further periods of 12 months subject to satisfactory performance.

Offenders access to the service, once commissioned, will be via referral from the Probation service or local YOS services whose practice is governed by national MOJ equality and diversity policies designed to ensure that due regard is paid to equality considerations in service provision for offenders with a focus, specifically, on offenders with protected characteristics

In terms of referrals made to the service this will guarantee that there should be no access issues for people from different protected characteristic groups

As a condition of the contract the service provider, once confirmed, will be required to ensure that the service is available and accessible to all offenders

## **2. Identify the individuals and organisations who are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy.**

Offenders under the supervision of the National Probation Service  
Offenders under the supervision of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Youth Offending Services  
Families and children of offenders  
Staffordshire County Council  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council  
Staffordshire Police  
8 Districts / Boroughs in Staffordshire  
Employers  
Training Agencies / Providers  
Voluntary Sector organisations

## **3. Data**

**Summarise the findings of any monitoring data / information which you have considered regarding the impact of this policy on people from all or any of the protected groups. This could include national or local data.**

In assessing potential equality impacts of the service, reference has been made to the following key evidence sources:

- Criminal Justice Statistics (England and Wales) data which provides key statistics on activity in the criminal justice system for England and Wales and includes data on protected characteristics.



- Data on offenders starting community orders or suspended sentence orders, or in prison (drawn from the Offender Management Statistics).
- Data from the Offender Assessment System (OASys).  
OASys is a structured risk assessment and management system that guides and assists offender managers / supervisors to assess and manage offenders' risks and needs and to adapt intervention delivery to be responsive to the offender. OASys is used throughout the sentence, with the initial OASys assessment carried out early in the sentence and reviewed according to the sentence length and type of offender.

### **3.1 Age**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all youth and adult offenders aged 16 and above

### **3.2 Disability**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all regardless of disability.

### **3.3 Race**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all regardless of race / ethnicity.

### **3.4 Religion or Belief**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all offenders regardless of religion or belief.

### **3.5 Sex**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all offenders regardless of gender / sex

### **3.6 Sexual Orientation**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all offenders regardless of sexual orientation.

### **3.7 Transgender**

The service will be provided to all offenders including those transitioning (undergoing gender reassignment)

## **4. Research**

**Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy for all or any of the protected groups. This could include information you have obtained from other sources e.g. Home Office.**

- Findings / recommendations of relevant national research reports and policy documents:
  - Lammy Report into the Treatment of, and Outcomes for, Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Individuals in the Criminal Justice System
  - HMIP Inspection Report into Black and Mixed Heritage Boys in the Criminal Justice System
  - MOJ Tackling Racial Disparity in the Criminal Justice System 2020 Update
  - Women Offenders Strategy
- Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Strategic Assessment of Offending and Offender Needs 2015
- Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Strategic Assessment of Offending and Offender Needs 2022 (Draft version1)

#### **4.1 Age**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all youth and adult offenders aged 16 and above

#### **4.2 Disability**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all regardless of disability.

#### **4.3 Race**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all regardless of race / ethnicity.

#### **4.4 Religion or Belief**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all offenders regardless of religion or belief.

#### **4.5 Sex**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all regardless of gender / sex.

#### **4.6 Sexual Orientation**

The service provided will be available to all regardless of sexual orientation.

#### **4.7 Transgender**

The service provided will be available and accessible to all offenders including those transitioning (undergoing gender reassignment)

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## 5. Consultation

**Summarise the opinions of any consultation for all or any of the protected groups. Who was consulted and how e.g. survey, discussion, forum. If there was no consultation please justify why.**

No specific local consultations with protected groups have been undertaken however in planning for the service the results of national research and consultation with protected groups have been taken into account to inform development of the service specification

### 5.1 Age

See above.

### 5.2 Disability

See above.

### 5.3 Race

See above.

### 5.4 Religion or Belief

See above.

### 5.5 Sex

See above.

### 5.6 Sexual Orientation

See above.

### 5.7 Transgender

See above.

## 6. Conclusions

**Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts).**

The service will not have an adverse impact on any of the protected groups.



In planning for the commissioning of the service consideration has been given as to whether the service will give rise to the possibility of a person being treated less favourably by reason of their protected characteristics and how the service can advance equality of opportunity for those who share protected characteristics.

The main access route to the service will be via referral from the Probation service or Youth Offending Services whose practice is governed by national MOJ equality and diversity policies designed to ensure that due regard is paid to equality considerations in service provision for offenders, meaning that there should be no referral / access issues for people from different protected characteristic groups

A number of steps have been taken in the design of the service specification to ensure that the new service provider, once appointed, takes equality into consideration at every stage of delivery – from initial referral through to placement with a training and / or employment provider.

#### **6.1 Age**

See conclusions.

#### **6.2 Disability**

See conclusions.

#### **6.3 Race**

See conclusions.

#### **6.4 Religion or Belief**

See conclusions.

#### **6.5 Sex**

See conclusions.

#### **6.6 Sexual Orientation**

See conclusions.

#### **6.7 Transgender**

See conclusions.



**7. Decisions**

**If the policy will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how the policy will change or why it is to continue in the same way.**

**If no changes are proposed, the policy needs to be objectively justified.**

There is no anticipated negative impact expected.

**8. Monitoring arrangements**

**If the policy is new what consideration has been given to piloting the policy?**

**If monitoring is not already in place what arrangements have been made to monitor the effects of the policy on equality and diversity?**

It is proposed that the service will be commissioned on a pilot basis for an initial period of 2 years from 1 May 2022, with the option for the contract for the service to be extended beyond this for a further two further periods of 12 months subject to satisfactory performance which will include consideration of performance in terms of equality and diversity

Contract management and performance monitoring will be overseen by the SCO with half-yearly reports submitted to the RR Board.

**This equality impact assessment will be published on the SC website.**

EIA Form Dated  
01/08/2018

