



Decision Note - Proposed Contract Extension – Provision of Pre-Arrest Drugs Diversion Scheme SCP/D/202526/03

REQUEST FOR DECISION BY THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

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

APPROVAL (for completion by Staffordshire Commissioner only)

Rationale for approval

This decision relates to the following priorities set out in the Police & Crime Plan:

- Work with partners and criminal justice agencies to ensure Community Orders are granted with drug, alcohol and mental health treatment requirements to provide people with support and encouragement to avoid reoffending.
- Through the Drug and Alcohol Partnership Board, implement a comprehensive local response to the National Drugs Strategy to break drug supply chains, deliver treatment and recovery services and reduce the demand for drugs and to develop and deliver a local alcohol strategy.

STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

Signature

Date 27/02/2025

Date decision required by: 27th February 2025

If an urgent approval is required, please state reasons:

Confirmation of the contract award is needed as soon as possible to enable the provider to confirm 2025-26 service arrangements



For completion by Staffordshire Commissioner's Office only:-

Decision Number: SCP/D/202425/003

Date Received: 27/02/2025

	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	Proposed Contract Extension – Regional Pre-Arrest Drugs Diversion Scheme																						
Summary:																							
The background to the proposed extension of the above contract has been set out in previous reports to the Commissioner.																							
The SCO is currently party to a regional co-commissioning arrangement for the provision of the above scheme together with other PCCs in the West Midlands for which West Midlands PCC currently acts as lead Commissioner.																							
The contract - with Cranstoun - was originally awarded on 1 July 2023 for a 12 months term - with the SCO signing up as a party to the contract later than other areas in February 2024 - and was extended on 1 July 2024 for a further 9 months following agreement between the respective PCCs meaning that as things stand the contract is due to end on 31 March 2025.																							
Full-year contract values for 2024-25 were as follows:																							
<table><tr><th>OPCC</th><th>2024-25 Contract Value*</th><th>2024-25 Contracted Referrals</th><th>Unit Cost**</th><th>2024-25 Projected Referrals</th><th>Unit Cost**</th></tr><tr><td>Staffordshire</td><td>£12,750</td><td>250</td><td>£51</td><td>64</td><td>£199</td></tr><tr><td>Warwickshire</td><td>£7,315</td><td>160</td><td>£45</td><td>120</td><td>£61</td></tr></table>						OPCC	2024-25 Contract Value*	2024-25 Contracted Referrals	Unit Cost**	2024-25 Projected Referrals	Unit Cost**	Staffordshire	£12,750	250	£51	64	£199	Warwickshire	£7,315	160	£45	120	£61
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West Mercia	£35,095	670	£52	586	£60
West Midlands	£122,509	2,650	£46	3714	£33
TOTAL	£177,669	3730	£47	4,484	£40

* full year contract value (Staffs SCO 9 months pro-rata contribution £9,500)

** approximate figures

A business case seeking approval for the extension of the contract for a further period of 12 months was submitted to SLT in January 2025 and was supported, subject to clarification of the legal position regarding the proposed extension.

At the point of submitting the business case it was not 100% clear as to whether there was provision within the original contract for the contract to be extended for a further 12 months period as proposed and therefore the business case was supported subject to the position being clarified with the West Midlands PCC Commissioning Lead.

Since this time it has been confirmed that no provision for a further extension of the contract is included in the original contract to enable the proposed extension to be agreed

This being the case the proposal from West Midlands PCC (as lead Commissioner) is to make a direct contract award to Cranstoun for a period of 12 months to ensure continuation of the service

This report therefore seeks approval for arrangements for the award of a new contract to be taken forward with West Midlands PCC and Cranstoun as now proposed (as opposed to an extension of the existing contract).

The contract, if approved, will commence on 1st April 2025 and cover a period of 12 months.

The cost of the contract, in terms of the SCOs agreed contribution, will be £9,500.

This is lower than the full-year cost of the scheme in 2024-25 and reflects the revised price negotiated with the provider based on the estimated level of take up of the scheme in 2025-26.

It is considered that the direct award of a new contract to Cranstoun as proposed is permissible under West Midland PCCs current contract SOs.

The Commissioning Lead for the contract within the West Midlands PCC office has been asked for confirmation as to whether or not this is the case but at the time of writing a response is still awaited.

In terms of the SCO contribution as this is below £10,000 under the SCOs current contract SOs it is possible for the Commissioner to directly approve this spend.

Recommendation:

That, subject to confirmation from West Midlands PCC that the direct award of a new contract to Cranstoun as proposed is permissible under West Midland PCCs current contract SOs, the proposed award of a new contract with West Midlands PCC and Cranstoun for the provision of the regional Pre-Arrest Drugs Diversion



Scheme for offenders be approved for a further 12 months period from 1 April 2025 on the terms outlined in this report.

Chief Executive

I hereby approve the recommendation for consideration.

Signature

Date 27/02/2025

REPORT AND ADVICE TO THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

1. Background

As indicted above the contract for the regionally-commissioned Pre-Arrest Drugs Diversion Scheme (PADS) was originally awarded on 1 July 2023 for a 12 months term - with the SCO signing up as a party to the contract later than other areas in February 2024 - and was extended on 1 July 2024 for a further 9 months meaning that as things stand the contract is due to end on 31 March 2025

The scheme – based on the successful DIVERT programme which has been operating in the West Midlands for some time – provides officers in Staffordshire with a viable diversionary option for use when dealing with incidents of minor offending where drugs are a factor, ensuring that incidents can be dealt with quickly on an informal level without the need for more formal action helping to reduce unnecessary demands on Police time

The Scheme is delivered as part of a non-statutory Community Resolution (CR) and provides front-line police officers with the option of offering individuals found in possession of illegal drugs an opportunity to attend a bespoke online programme designed to help individuals address their drug use and to avoid further offending as an alternative to more formal criminal sanctions being imposed.

Since its introduction in early 2024 the scheme has provided officers in Staffordshire with a viable diversionary option for use when dealing with incidents of minor offending where drugs are involved.

Whilst take up of the scheme to date has been lower than planned it is expected that further work to promote the scheme within the Force over coming months will help to embed the scheme within the Force's range of diversionary Policing options and build up referrals.

At the time of writing there are proposals for the scope of the scheme to be extended to cover incidents involving Monkey Dust which if supported will potentially result in an uplift in referrals going forward.

It is considered that the scheme has the potential to add an important new option for front-line officers to use when dealing with incidents of minor offending where drugs are a factor, alongside other options currently in place, whilst helping to reduce Police demand.

Support for the award of a new contract in 2025-26 will allow further time to promote awareness of the scheme amongst officers and to build up referrals to the contracted level.

2. What other options have been considered?

As part of the original business case submitted in respect of future commissioning options for the service the following two options were considered:

- Option A: Do nothing - allow the current contract to end on 31st March 2025
- Option B: Take-up the available contract extension (subject to clarification of the legal position regarding the proposed extension) to ensure continuation of the scheme for a further period of 12 months

Following consideration of the above options the option to take-up the available contract extension for a further period of 12 months (Option B) was supported.

Following clarification of the legal position regarding the proposed extension from West Midlands PCC this has now been superseded by the proposal to make a direct contract award to Cranstoun.

3. Consultation and Engagement undertaken

In considering future commissioning options for the scheme discussions have been held with a range of key stakeholders to establish views on the value of the scheme including:

- Frontline Police Officers
- Partners represented on the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Reducing Reoffending Board
- Staffordshire Police Out of Court Disposals Strategy Group
- Other PCC's in the West Midlands who are party to the regional PADS contract.

Feedback from Police officers who have used the scheme is generally positive, with officers with experience of delivering the intervention valuing the availability of the service and the opportunity it presents for dealing with incidents of low-level drugs possession quickly and effectively without the need for more formal intervention

Views on the the scheme from the Reducing Reoffending Board and Force OOCDS Strategy Group are also positive with strategic and operational managers involved in the groups appreciating the role that it plays in providing a viable diversionary option for use when dealing with incidents of minor offending where drugs are a factor.

Other PCC's in the region who are party to the contract have expressed positive views about the scheme and are supportive of the agreement of a new current contract with Cranstoun for a further 12 months term.



Report Implications

4. Monitoring Officer comments:

A robust business case has been considered setting out the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed contract extension which have been taken into account in reaching a view as to whether or not the final extension available on the contract should be taken up.

Signature

Date 27/02/2025

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

Signature

Date 27/02/2025

Yes

No

Has legal advice (outside of that provided by the Monitoring Officer) been sought on the content of this report?

X

6. Legal Comments:

The Commercial Team and Legal services have been engaged in advising on commissioning options for the service.

7. Risks - please give the details of any operational or strategic risks that are affected by this decision (add risk reference number and title below)

Operational / Strategic Risks

The key operational / strategic risks, should the recommendation to support the continuation of the contract in 2025-26 not be supported, will be that the Force will no longer have access to a viable diversionary disposal for front-line police officers to use when dealing with cases of low-level illegal drug possession, potentially leading officers to consider more formal, low level criminal sanctions when responding to incidents, creating additional demands on Police time.

Contractual Risks:

In terms of the overall contract, it is unclear as things stand whether or not a direct award of a new contract to Cranstoun as proposed is permissible under West Midlands PCCs internal contract SOs.

The Commissioning Lead for the contract in the West Midlands PCC Office has been asked for confirmation as to whether or not this is the case but at the time of writing a response is still awaited.

In terms of the SCOs proposed contribution towards the cost of the contract, there is a low risk to the SCO in making the contribution should the proposed direct contract award to Cranstoun be approved.



Under the SCO's current contract SOs it is possible for the Commissioner to directly approve the SCO's planned contribution towards the cost of the contract for a further period of 12 months.

A funding allocation has provisionally been included in the SCO commissioning budget to cover the cost of the SCO's contribution towards the cost of the contract should the contract award be approved.

8. Equality Comments – please attach the completed EIA

The scheme will be available to service users regardless of their, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and transgender.

9. Background/supporting papers

Please answer the following questions

Yes

No

10. Public access to information?

X

11. Does this decision involve the processing of personal data? (If yes please attach a completed Data Impact Assessment)

X


12. Is the publication of this form to be deferred? (If yes approx. how long?)

X

13. Does this form contain commercial or operationally sensitive information which is to be redacted? (If yes, please provide details with the submission of this note)

X

14. ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Author	Pete Scott
Signed	
Date	26.02.25