**OPCCM FAQ**

***Q.1. Can an application that focusses upon a particular borough be considered or do services have to cover all Merseyside boroughs?***

A. Services have to cover the whole Merseyside region to be able to meet the conditions. A service that, for example, only focuses on one borough would not meet the conditions so it would either have to be able to scale up, collaborate or demonstrate how it can meet the needs of victims from across the region i.e. the referral pathway.

***Q.2. Can organisations be based outside of Merseyside but bid in to deliver these services within?***

A. They can, but services need to be delivered locally to meet the needs of victims i.e. face-to-face support when the service user wishes for that to happen. We try to commission local services, but we will consider a service from outside Merseyside that can demonstrate that they can deliver within.

***Q.3. Would an application that cannot deliver on one or more of the ‘services sought’ stated in the “Invitation to Submit Quotations” guidelines be automatically rejected? Or will it be possible for a more specialist provider to be able to target only some of the outcomes?***

A. As we are looking to commission specific services, organisations must demonstrate that they can meet **all** of the services sought under each strand e.g. Harmful Practices. We are interested in innovative approaches to meeting these requirements.

***Q.4. Are there any guidelines on the qualifications needed for staff involved in delivery? A requirement to ‘ave appropriately qualified staff to provide the support service’ is only mentioned in the ‘services sought’ section of the “Invitation to Submit Quotations” guidelines for Harmful Practices and not the other two strands?***

A. Harmful practices is an extremely delicate and niche area of victimisation, and requires a high level of expertise to properly understand the needs of victims of such practices, we also consider this to be very much a ‘hidden’ crime, with significant underreporting, hence the requirement for the provider to have specific training. We would expect for all commissioned services that the provider has a broad understanding of the issue and it would be beneficial for bidders to demonstrate expertise through the training of staff. We don’t want to discourage organisations from applying hence it is not detailed in the other two.

***Q.5. With regards the hate crime strand criteria around ‘Separate bids (from multiple providers) for a single strand’. Does that mean two separate providers can bid and be awarded a proportion of the allocation each or will you expect a single “lead” organisation to apply?***

A. They can be a consortium in other words, we allow this for all of our victim services. Good reason for this is that all of our services **have** to be available pan-Merseyside, so if services join together they can not only join their skills up but can also achieve a larger footprint.

Multiple agencies can apply using one form. There is not an expectation that both agencies, even when working together will need to fill in separate forms.

***Q.6. With regards the hate crime strand, can a single organisation apply to more than one sub-category of that strand e.g. race & gender identity, on a single application form or do they need to complete separate application forms for individual sub-categories?***

A. They can apply on one bid form for multiple sub-categories or one form for each sub-category but in their evidence it would be useful if they indicate in their evidence which of the services that they are bidding for/the evidence relates to.

***Can an applicant also apply to multiple strands e.g. Hate Crime and Harmful Practices, or a single form?***

A.Yes, if the applicant wants to. As long asthey indicate in their evidence which of the strands that they are bidding for their evidence relates to. If it is easier, an applicant may submit separate applications for each strand e.g. separate applications for the Hate Crime and Homicide strands.

***Q.7. One of the expected outcomes for Hate Crime is increased levels of recording hate crime incidents/crimes. As it is mentioned elsewhere in the guidance that the services should be accessible whether or not a crime has been reported, is this more of an aspiration than an outcome against which tendering groups will be scored.***

A. What we understand of hate crime is that where victims feel more supported by agencies, and support services, they are more likely to either come forward to report a crime or to seek support services that meet their individual requirements. So this is aspirational, but we would expect to see a rise in reporting if the provider was raising awareness of the issue and their own support

***Q.8. On the “Homicide services sought list”, it mentions using an established inter-agency monitoring form? Is this something you would expect organisations to already have or are there guidelines on developing this?***

A. We would work with the provider if they don’t already have this in place but what we are looking for is the ability to securely manage referrals, and this could include the use of an inter-agency form which would comply with the Data Protection Act/General Data Protection Regulations, because without some understanding of these issues the service wouldn’t be able to receive referrals (personal data) from the force or other agencies.

***Q.9. In the Harmful Practices strand guidelines, it talks about use of a common assessment framework? Is this something that organisations should already have in place?***

A. It is a risk assessment tool used for early identification of needs, again we will work with providers to get such measures in place for commissioning but an example CAF is available from LCVS if required.

***Q.10. With regards the Policies question D1, if an organisation had a policy in development (which could even mean they have just approached us to begin getting it in place) but should have it in place, how would that affect the decision? Would a conditional offer be made?***

A. As above really, we will work with providers to help them get policies in place, if they are currently delivering services they should have the majority of these things, but the ‘in development’ option is there to allow organisations the freedom to show that they are working towards meeting the requirements. Obviously we need to make sure that the successful organisation is legally qualified, so DBS checks, for example, is essential for the point at which the service is commissioned.

***Q.11. Is there any restriction on the legal status of applicant organisations? Are all non-profits including CIC’s/social enterprises eligible to be considered? Would you consider an application from a private sector org?***

A. No restriction, we will consider all bids on an equal footing

***Q.12 With regards the expected outcomes, you have mentioned some hard outcomes (increased accessing of support services) and some soft outcomes (e.g. sense of personal control) of that you would be looking. The soft outcomes are easier to measure as they relate to personal experience. However, is there a baseline figure against which the harder outcomes will be measured? Or are you treating any individuals supported by the contracted provider as additional?***

A. For hard outcomes we are looking for an increase from the point where the service commences, this is a new approach and the baseline will be day 1 of delivery. For outcomes such as ‘Individual pathways created that are victim driven’, it is for the provider to demonstrate how they will enable victims to better report crime or self-referral, using existing pathways (such as via the Merseyside Police hate crime coordinators) or other measures that the provider puts in place or already has.

***Q.13. We have been testing scenarios where a group might be considered to be both religious and racial. For example, what would you advise a Jewish based organisation applying to the hate crime strand where an individual may see being Jewish as both ‘racial’ and ‘religious’ matters? Could they potentially apply to both?***

A. Applications will be assessed upon quality, cost and ability to meet the requirements of the fund so in this instance an organisation could apply to both if they felt they can deliver this. This is a competitive process however so it may be that scoring results in one contract be awarded only.

***Q.14. If the various hate crime strands are to be supported by a range of service providers offering specialised support to the different hate crime strands will the various organisations take individual responsibility to receive, respond and make contact with victims?***

A. Yes, victims will be referred to the appropriate organisation for the particular sub-category of the hate crime strand.

***Q.15.Has consideration been taken, or confirmation obtained, with Merseyside Police on whether they will refer victims to various service providers rather than a single referral pathway which exists at this time?***

A. Referral pathways are currently being reviewed, the pathway will be agreed between Police, PCC and service provider prior to commencement of the contract.

***Q.16 If specialist service providers are not the preferred choice for a particular hate crime victims***

***will another commissioned service be expected to provide the service/ support instead?***

A. If a victim chooses not to be supported by the specialist service provider and decides to self-refer to another service provider then that is their choice.  We would expect any of the PCC’s service providers  (that a victim self-refers into) to take into account the victims request/needs and to consider whether or not they are best placed to provide the support required to help the victim cope and recover from the crime.

***Q.17 How will the issue of double counting beneficiaries be managed if a victim is victim to multiple types of hate crime with two or more service providers offering support?***

A. For each of the hate crime types they have suffered, the victim would be counted by each of the service providers.  The Police may record multiple types of hate crime as one crime (depending on a number of circumstances). In this instance there is no correlation between recording of crime and counting beneficiaries.

***Q.18.Can refugees and asylum seekers receive support through commissioned services?***

A. Yes they can.

***Q.19. In relation to the Hate Crime fund. One need identified was that current services do not fully meeting need. In what ways? Any more information? This will help applicants.***

A.The Victim Needs Assessment research from 2017 indicated that service delivery should be more inclusive of all needs as presented by individual victims.  As the motivations, circumstances and effects of hate crime offence (identified here as Race, Religion, Identity, Sexual Orientation and Disability) are likely to be different on an individual victim basis, the support requirements also need to be bespoke. Victims indicate that trust in, and the confidentiality of, the victim service is paramount. It is recognised that the current provider has provided a positive service for victims, but that the new service specification should recognise the need for support over a wider range of hate crime victimisation.

***Q.20. The OPPCM is asking for a lot for limited funding. Is it payment in advance or by results? In instalments? What are they if so?***

A. The OPCC is happy to provide payment in advance, subject to:

-Acceptance of the OPCC’s Terms & Conditions

-Receipt of the signed Grant Agreement

-Regular project monitoring information being provided as required.

Payment of monies will be agreed by both/all parties prior to commencement of the service.

***Q.21. Where a couple of organisations work together on joint bid. If a collective bid succeeds but one party fails to deliver, does that impact on the broader funding? How would that impact on the other funded partners?***

A.This is a difficult question to answer in advance as we would not anticipate this outcome (due to a rigorous and robust commissioning/selection process).  However, if one party (of two or more parties) failed to deliver to the expected standards, the OPCC would work with both/all parties to assist in ensuring the service remains in place and operating adequately.  There are annual breaks following years 1 and 2 whereby the service will be reviewed (in partnership with each provider) to ensure it is delivering according to the Grant agreement and the satisfaction of the OPCC and all other parties.  Unrestricted communication with the OPCC will also be available throughout each year.

***Q.22. When a lead agency works with smaller partners, will the lead org only have to provide references and accounts etc. or will ALL organisational partners need to fulfil ALL of the organisational requirements?***

A. Where a joint bid is submitted, it is expected that all parties to the bid will provide references, accounts and will fulfil the organisational requirements, **within reason**.  This will depend upon the role of each organisation in service delivery, the amount they will receive and how the partnership is managed.  All bids will be assessed fairly and in the best interests of victims.

***Q.23. If the OPPCM can't commission bids what will happen to the money e.g. If too many potential providers are deterred or the OPPCM does not receive bids of sufficient quality?***

A.The OPCC would encourage as many providers as possible to bid, and would like to assure service providers that all bids will be judged fairly, openly, and in the best interests of victims.  However, if the OPCC does not receive a sufficient number of bids or if bids are not of sufficient quality, the OPCC will reassess its approach to the proposed services and the commissioning process.  It may be that funding can be provided to the named services for 2018/19 in other ways.