

DECISION NOTICE

Decision author and proposer:

Subject: Trapped – Tackling the criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults

Type of decision:			
Deputy Mayor's decision	x	Chief Officer's decision	

In all case this will need to be approved by the Assistant Director Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire.

The decision is that: Funding totalling £30,000 will be allocated to the Trapped programme of work for the year 2018/19 to assist with raising awareness and understanding of the various manifestations of criminal exploitation with communities and professionals, including through a comprehensive publicity campaign, targeted weeks of action, training, education and conferences. An end of year review will be undertaken by GMCA before any decisions about further funding for this campaign in subsequent years.

In Greater Manchester we recognise that the criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults is not only in relation to drugs but can include other forms of criminal activity such as arson, violent offences, storing firearms and holding money, amongst other forms of criminality. We also know that young people and vulnerable adults are not always moved to towns outside of Greater Manchester and that the exploitation can take place within our boundaries. The movement of a person for the purposes of exploitation is detailed in the Modern Slavery Act 2015 as a form of trafficking and slavery.

“County Lines” is a national term used by police and law enforcement to commonly describe the approach taken by gangs and criminal networks originating from urban areas, who travel to locations such as county or coastal towns to sell class A drugs. Gangs typically use children, young people and vulnerable adults to deliver drugs to customers and this often involves the child being subjected to deception, intimidation, violence, financial exploitation and grooming. The county lines business model is linked by a marketed mobile phone line through which users phone for specific drugs to be supplied.

Another form of criminal exploitation is 'Cuckooing' which involves gangs and criminal networks taking over the home of a vulnerable person and using their property as a base to store drugs, firearms and often run their criminal activity.

Programme Challenger has developed the 'Trapped' campaign to raise awareness of all forms of criminal exploitation, in recognition that young people and vulnerable adults may feel 'Trapped' and need support to 'find a way out'.

Programme Challenger will use the Trapped campaign to raise awareness of criminal exploitation amongst key partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors and to work with communities to ensure they feel confident about identifying and reporting their concerns.

Key to this is working with schools, youth centres, housing and drugs services to raise awareness with young people and vulnerable adults, to enable them to identify when someone is trying to exploit them and provide them with safe places to report their concerns. Programme Challenger will ensure that there is a co-ordinated, victim-centred approach to any reported case of criminal exploitation.

The following is indicative of how the funding will be allocated:

Year 1: £30,000

Trapped conference (9th October): £10,000

Work in schools to educate pupils and staff: £8,000

Campaign materials including film, posters and merchandise: £8,000

Training for frontline staff: £4,000

The reasons for the decision are: Criminal exploitation is a particularly hidden crime in which the victim either doesn't recognise that they are being exploited or are so trapped in the exploitation (economically or through fear of repercussions) that they are unable or unwilling to provide evidence to the police or other agencies. Therefore, whilst there are undoubtedly victims of criminal exploitations in communities across GM, GMP's intelligence picture in relation to this is patchy and there are currently only seven organised crime groups that are mapped as being involved in criminal exploitation across GM. The publicity campaign, training and awareness raising will greatly assist in improving our collective understanding of the problem, including spotting the indicators of exploitation and knowing where to report any concerns.

This decision will contribute to priorities of the the Greater Manchester strategy in the following ways:

Programme Challenger is recognised in the Standing Together strategy as Greater Manchester's partnership approach to tackling all forms of serious and organised crime, including modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation. The Trapped campaign provides those partners with an opportunity to raise awareness about criminal exploitation under one banner, utilising the resources made available through Programme Challenger to clearly explain the various manifestations of criminal exploitation and how to report it.

Financial comments:

The funding for this proposal features as a budget line in the police, crime, criminal justice and fire three year financial projections.

Legal comments:

Any services or products procured through this programme will adhere to GMCA commissioning policy and EU rules on procurement.

Risk Assessment:

Many victims of criminal exploitation find themselves in the criminal justice system having been prosecuted for the offences they committed whilst being exploited. Others are victims of serious violent crime or have mental health issues as a result of trauma due to their experiences. Without the concerted efforts of Programme Challenger and its key partners across GM to promote the Trapped campaign and improve the system response to working with victims of exploitation, these issues will continue and more victims will receive poor outcomes from the criminal justice and safeguarding systems.

Is safeguarding of children relevant and has this been considered:

At its core, the criminal exploitation of children is a safeguarding issue. The ten local authority children's services directorates are fully engaged in the Trapped programme and are actively involved in system redesign of children's social care to better meet the needs of children (particularly adolescents) where the safeguarding risk is outside of the family home.

Is safeguarding of vulnerable adults relevant and has this been considered:

Vulnerable adults are also targeted by crime groups who want to exploit them for criminal gain. The most common form of exploitation is to store drugs, money or weapons in their home or use their home as a base from which to sell or produce/prepare drugs. This is commonly referred to as

"cuckooing" and is a core element of the Trapped programme. The new film being developed in 2018/19 will focus on the issue of cuckooing.

Agreed by Assistant Director – Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire

Signed.....

Date.....17/8/18

Agreed by Deputy Mayor

Signed:

Date:17/8/18

Contact Officer: