

DECISION NUMBER: PCCG-2017-021

OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

TITLE: Proposal for the Establishment of a Multi-Pathway Diversion Unit for Gwent

DATE: March 2017

TIMING: Routine

PURPOSE: For Approval

1.	<p><u>RECOMMENDATION</u></p> <p>This report is provided to the Police and Crime Commissioner to agree to the production of a Business Case/Initiation Document in support of the establishment of a multi-pathway diversion unit for first-time and low-level offenders in Gwent. Once approved, it is recommended that the report is also put through the appropriate Force process for agreement.</p>
2.	<p><u>INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND</u></p> <p>The Policing Vision 2025 sets out the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' (APCC) and National Police Chief's Council's (NPCC) plan for policing over the next ten years. The Vision seeks to shape transformation and the use of resources, help keep people safe and to provide an effective, accessible and value for money service that can be trusted. This includes 'exploring the wider opportunities of working with partner agencies on issues such as the management of offender rehabilitation or improving cohesion and delivery across the criminal justice system' (page 10, section 4.10) and thereby could be said to incorporate early intervention for first-time offenders and diversion from the criminal justice system.</p> <p>In October 2015, the Women's Pathfinder Diversion Scheme was implemented within Gwent. Situated in the Newport Custody Suite, the scheme was established to divert lower risk women away from the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and into voluntary community interventions and support. Under the current process, women with complex needs, often victims themselves, receive the support they need to help them address any underlying issues, to avoid future contact with the police and build positive relationships with their families and wider communities.</p> <p>All women arrested and taken into custody are eligible for consideration for the scheme. In each case an eligibility assessment is undertaken. Where an individual is deemed suitable, scheme staff will consider each referral to propose the most appropriate intervention(s) which could include housing support, debt advice, access to mental health services, domestic abuse</p>

support or substance misuse interventions. The scheme has been running successfully since its implementation, with the service provided by Newport Women's Aid. Preliminary findings related to the pilot have revealed considerable potential for the intervention as a means of reducing re-offending among low-risk female offenders and that an early intervention and diversionary approach is highly valued by many of the stakeholders, particularly the females that accessed the scheme. Further information at attached at Annex A.

A report published by the Centre for Mental Health, Rethink and the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2011 identified that diversion (use of non-custodial sanctions together with a package of community-based support services) offers a particularly cost effective alternative to remanding offenders in prison. The report maintains that diverting people towards effective community-based services can improve their mental health. It can also reduce the prevalence of other risk factors such as substance misuse and improve the effectiveness of interventions aimed at other influences on offending.

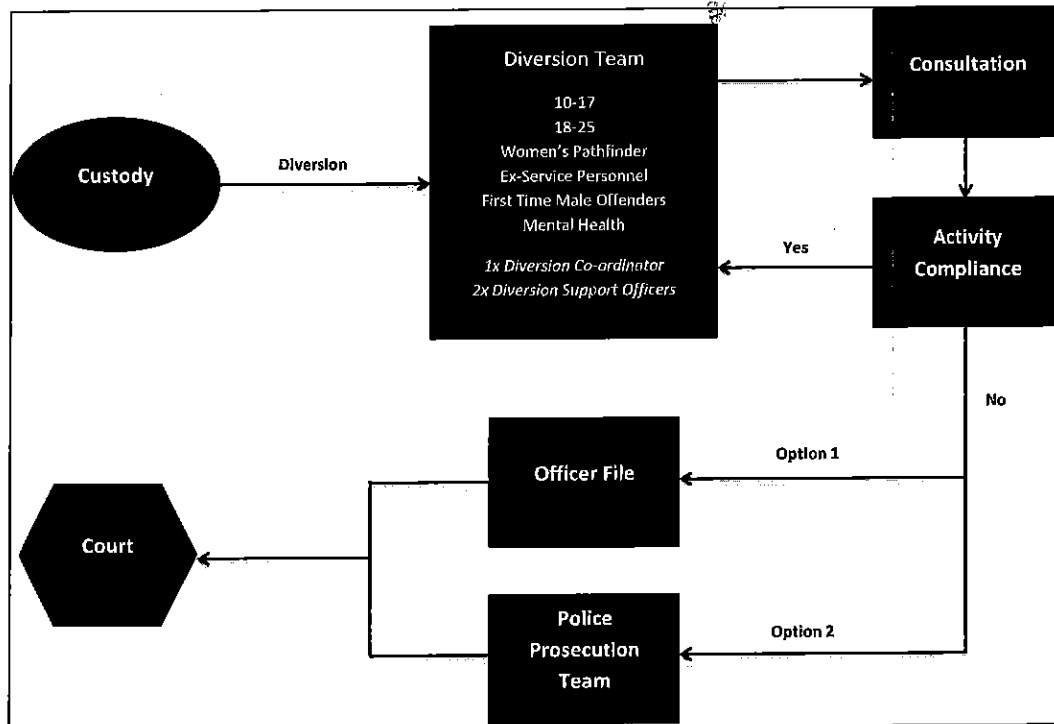
Use of diversion schemes is supported by the Welsh Government's *Wales Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2014-2016*, specifically in regards to female offenders, youth to adult transition offenders and veterans (ex-service personnel). This methodology also links to work around tackling and preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) caused by offending behaviour.

In terms of cost comparisons, an interim evaluation of diversion suggested a national average cost per engagement of £108 compared to the Home Office Cost of Crime Estimates of arrest at £1,930 (McGowan and Sapouna, 2014). Further information regarding the specific cost benefits of the Women's Pathfinder Scheme as delivered to date will be available in the forthcoming Evaluation Report.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Priority 1 of the Gwent Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 provides a focus on crime prevention with an aim to reduce offending and provide the most appropriate outcomes when dealing with offenders. One of the Commissioner's success measures under this priority is the 'provision of diversion schemes for all'. In order to increase the opportunities available to eligible individuals within Gwent and further support diversion of vulnerable people away from the criminal justice system, building on the process used by the Women's Pathfinder Scheme is it proposed that multiple pathways across a range of targeted demographic groups are established. These would be coordinated through a central point of assessment and referral to specialist teams of commissioned service providers.

The following diagram provides an outline of the proposed referral process.



Under this model, services are co-located within or adjacent to the Newport Custody Suite. A working space has already been identified that potentially meets the needs of the proposal. Oversight would be provided by a Diversion Co-ordinator with two Diversion Support Officers providing support to the Co-ordinator regarding referrals, data sharing and information management. This process will run in parallel with Connect Gwent to ensure that an appropriate victim focus is provided and maintained where required and to minimise the risk of duplication in the provision of activities such as restorative justice.

Planned national changes are anticipated in respect of Out of Court Disposals (OCD); the proposed revised legislation will result in only two OCD options (Conditional caution or community resolution) reducing from the existing five or six options in some cases. There is scope and benefit to move to this approach early in Gwent and utilising a two outcome model that forms part of the work of the team, as the approach is strongly supported by restorative methods, intervention and diversion for offenders. Currently there are a number of diversion teams running across Gwent. A 'diversion unit' approach could be implemented within a short timescale with opportunities for organic growth using existing expertise and the additional diversion specialisms referred to within this report.

Restorative justice provision for young people aged between 10 and 17 years has been scoped by Gwent Police in conjunction with the Youth Offending

Service. Further work is required to progress this activity and consideration will be given to integrating this provision, once established, into the multi-pathway arrangement. Collaborative opportunities regarding interventions for young people aged 18 to 25 years are also being explored and could be similarly integrated.

Gwent Police has already accessed funding to support activity for those with mental health issues and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has previously recognised, though discussions with partners and other agencies, a need for support for ex-service personnel. Currently, there is no formal arrangement for diversion of veterans from custody; however, Gwent Police are establishing prospective partnerships that may provide suitable support within a multi-agency arrangement.

Whilst the Women's Pathfinder Scheme aims to deliver a women-specific, whole system, integrated approach to service provision for women that come into contact with the criminal justice system, there are a number of benefits to delivering a 'whole system approach' to diversion, including:

- A contribution to prevention through early intervention;
- A reduction on Police demand due to reduced reoffending;
- A contribution towards community safety;
- Rapid access/referral into coordinated, multi-agency access across a range of specialist support (e.g. mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse);
- Positive and lasting changes to improve the outcomes for vulnerable groups; and
- Improved victim satisfaction through access to restorative justice.

The model proposed offers a cohesive, streamlined, multi-agency approach across Gwent to support local delivery of diversion opportunities. Information co-ordination and management across partners would ensure seamless handovers between organisations for local delivery of services and support.

The process would be supported by clear lines of accountability and governance as well as minimum service standards. A robust performance framework would be introduced to ensure effective service delivery. This would include a requirement for annual evaluation of the project to evidence, among other factors, cost and efficiency savings within the criminal justice system and reductions in re-offending rates.

The Assistant Chief Constable has been consulted on the proposal and it is envisaged that the Force would embed the model into day-to-day operations before exploring whether there are opportunities to collaborate on the model with the other Welsh forces. It is believed that at this stage, to scope a

	collaborative model would add significant delays to the proposed timescales.
4.	<p><u>NEXT STEPS</u></p> <p>Following agreement to the proposal by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the report will be provided for consideration to the Chief Officer Team for Gwent Police. A detailed report and/or initiation document will be required to support the highlighted activity. It is proposed that implementation should be achieved by April 2018. The planning processes undertaken during the implementation of Connect Gwent will be used for reference. Identification of potential service providers and related commissioning work will also be required in due course and could form part of the Co-ordinator's role.</p> <p>Once the identified pathways have been successfully established, consideration can be given to introducing other diversion opportunities that work alongside existing services; for example, the Gwent Domestic Abuse Service which provides early intervention programmes for domestic abuse perpetrators.</p>
5.	<p><u>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</u></p> <p>The Police and Crime Commissioner has agreed to provide the Women's Pathfinder Scheme with funding to the value of £77,322 for a further 12-month period from 1st April 2017. It is anticipated that additional costs will be incurred to roll-out the scheme across Gwent; these have been projected at approximately £30,000 based on the cost of the project to date but would be subject to confirmation during the next phase of development.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the diversion scheme for male offenders would be developed using a similar structure, and at a similar cost, to the Women's Pathfinder Scheme. The youth diversion schemes would be developed in partnership with the Youth Offending Service; additional resourcing may be required dependant on demand and would be scoped during the next stage of the planning process.</p> <p>There is opportunity to utilise funding held by Gwent Police for mental health provision.</p> <p>A review of the existing marketplace would help to determine the availability of current service providers to deliver the proposed model. Following this, some commissioning of additional services to establish the remaining diversion pathways may be required, whilst opportunities to collaborate, co-commission and establish reciprocal arrangements with providers would also be explored.</p> <p>There are limited financial considerations associated with the proposed location; however, a site assessment will be required to determine the extent of</p>

	<p>any additional modifications regarding set up, e.g. communications (I.T., phones, etc.) following which more information should be available. A detailed appraisal of cost will be conducted as part of the business case; however, current indications are that the Gwent-wide service could be delivered for less than £300,000, which includes the existing £100,000 provided for the Women's Pathfinder Scheme.</p> <p>It is proposed that a 12 month secondment/temporary contract is offered to complete the implementation of the model. It is estimated that the cost of this role will be £40,000 (based on a PO A/B grade).</p> <p>The staffing referred to in point 6 below is estimated at a cost of approx. £90,000 recurring which will cover the Co-ordinator post and the two Diversion Support Officer posts (based on Scale 3 costs and subject to evaluations). Costs are based at the top of scale and are the full expenditures associated with the appointments. Subject to agreement, it is proposed that the Force will fund these posts from cost savings resulting from the Staying Ahead review of the Criminal Justice Administration Department.</p>
6.	<p><u>PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS</u></p> <p>Additional staffing will be required to ensure effective oversight and running of the unit. Consideration could be given to the Diversion Co-ordinator acting as Project Manager, thereby reducing the overall resource requirement and allowing the Co-ordinator opportunity to shape the unit during its formation.</p> <p>The fulfilment of the Diversion Support Officer roles by Gwent Police would facilitate information sharing within a multi-agency environment and remove any issues regarding access to Police systems. The creation of two posts provides some resilience within the structure.</p> <p>A Project Management Team will be required to oversee progress. The current working group comprises the OPCC Head of Criminal Justice and Rehabilitation, an OPCC Policy Officer, the Acting Head of Criminal Justice Administration and Data Management, and the Superintendent for the East Local Policing Area. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Finance Officer are also involved at the strategic level and other colleagues and partners are consulted with as appropriate.</p>
7.	<p><u>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</u></p> <p>There are legal implications associated with data protection and data sharing in a multi-agency environment. Lessons learned from the implementation of Connect Gwent will be applied to ensure that any related risks are identified and mitigated at the earliest opportunity.</p>

	There are implications associated with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 regarding provision of access to services through the medium of Welsh.
8.	<p><u>EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS</u></p> <p>This project has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.</p> <p>One of the aims of the project is to offer individuals that meet the referral criteria with equitable opportunities to engage with diversion activity. The Women's Pathfinder scheme was established to provide a gender-specific service based on an identified need. The implementation of the additional pathways indicated within the proposal will provide services for individuals of any gender aged 10 years plus. Consideration has also been given to the availability of translation and interpretation services to ensure accessibility to diversion opportunities, thereby providing a non-discriminatory service.</p> <p>Provision of Welsh language will be built into the process to ensure that individuals wishing to conduct their engagement through the medium of Welsh are not treated less favourably than those using English.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 in preparing this report. The proposal is deemed not to impact on the human rights of individuals engaged with the process.</p>
9.	<p><u>RISK</u></p> <p>A risk register would be created as part of the project documentation and monitored by the Project Board. Lessons learned during the set-up of Connect Gwent will be applied to the process thereby potentially reducing the overall number of risks identified during implementation.</p>
10.	<p><u>PUBLIC INTEREST</u></p> <p>The covering report is suitable for publication. However, Annex A is not for publication.</p>
11.	<p><u>CONTACT OFFICER</u></p> <p>Caroline Hawkins – Policy Officer, OPCC.</p>
12.	<p><u>ANNEXES</u></p> <p>Not for publication</p> <p>Annex A: Women's Pathfinder Diversionary Scheme Preliminary Findings</p>



Annex A Women's
Pathfinder Diversion I

For OPCC use only

Consultation:	Tick to confirm (if applicable)
Financial The Chief Finance Officer has been consulted on this proposal.	✓
OPCC The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner has reviewed the request and is satisfied that it is correct and consistent with the PCC's plans and priorities.	✓
Legal The legal team have been consulted on this proposal.	N/A
Equalities The Equalities Officer has been consulted on this proposal.	✓

Chief of Staff:

I have been consulted about the proposal and can confirm that financial, legal, equalities etc... advice has been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate report to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

Signature:



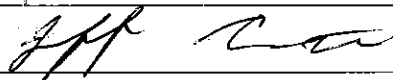
Date: 21/04/17

Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

I confirm that I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

2/5/17

