

**ORIGINATOR:** Liam Bannon

**DECISION NO.** 21 /2022

**REASON FOR SUBMISSION:** For decision

**SUBMITTED TO:** Police and Crime Commissioner

**SUBJECT:** Grant agreement for Voluntary Norfolk – SOS Bus

**SUMMARY:** The SOS Bus is a first point of contact for anyone visiting Norwich's pubs and clubs on Friday or Saturday nights whose wellbeing is threatened by illness or injury, emotional distress or other vulnerability. Its primary purpose is to reduce unnecessary ambulance call-outs by offering immediate assistance to anyone at risk, and has secondary benefits of safeguarding those in vulnerable situations in Norwich, including those at risk of Violence Against Women and Girls. Improvements to the service's overall offer have been identified and can be achieved through purchase of:

1. A support vehicle (to bring people from venue to the static bus safely)
2. Branded clothing for bus staff to create more official feeling presence and to make voluntary role more attractive
3. IT equipment to enable participation with local NTE communication network
4. Promotional materials to readvertise service as restrictions ease

The OPCCN has confirmed with the Home Office it can use underspend from its Safer streets Fund 3 Bid to purchase the above.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended the PCC for Norfolk agrees to the fund Voluntary Norfolk to purchase items detailed in summary prior to the completion of the Safer Streets Fund 3 on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 up to a cost of £23,802.

**OUTCOME/APPROVAL BY:** PCC/CHIEF EXECUTIVE/CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (Delete as appropriate)

*The recommendations as outlined above are approved.*

**Signature**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Am-...".

**Date: 15/03/2022**

## **DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION**

### **1. OBJECTIVE:**

- 1.1 The objective of the Home Office's Safer Streets Fund 3 is to improve the safety of public places for all, with a particular focus on reducing Violence Against Women and Girls crimes<sup>1</sup>, in these spaces, as well as improving feelings of public safety in target areas.
- 1.2 The main aims of this fund are to:
- Reduce VAWG and increase women and girls' feelings of safety in public spaces;
  - Build the evidence base for what works on reducing VAWG crimes and increasing women and girls' feelings of safety in the public domain;
  - Improve the national and local data picture regarding VAWG crimes in public spaces, which could include increased reporting for some crime types; and
  - Make public spaces safer for all.
- 1.3 The specific objective of funding attributed to Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk will be to test the bids hypotheses, which are:
- A. by working with the gatekeepers in the NTE and adapting the physical environment to design out the opportunity for crime we can make people feel safer and be safer from potential VAWG offenders.
- B. by working to change attitudes and behaviours in the general population, particularly those engaging in the night time economy and of high school age, we can increase community capacity to challenge attitudes and behaviours resulting in VAWG and prevent them from developing.
- 1.4 This proposal will meet objectives set in 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3.

### **2. BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1 The tragic killing of Sarah Everard on 3 March 2021 brought to the forefront concerns about women and girls' safety in public places. To provide reassurance to women and girls and ensure the safety of public spaces, the Government announced, on 15 March, an additional £25 million for the Safer Streets Fund. This is being used to run a third round of Safer Streets Funding, with a focus on ensuring the safety of public places for all, and a particular emphasis on improving the safety of public spaces for women and girls. This third pilot round of the Fund seeks to expand the evidence base on the prevention of VAWG crimes, aiming to prevent these crimes before they can occur, whilst simultaneously increasing feelings and perceptions of public safety in problem areas.

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<sup>1</sup>A non-exhaustive list of crimes in scope includes rape, causing sexual activity without consent, sexual coercion, sexual assault/ indecent assault, abduction, street harassment, stalking, indecent exposure and voyeurism, unwanted sexual touching and up-skirting

- 2.2 Women are disproportionately likely to experience certain crime types. For example, they are around four times more likely than men to experience a sexual assault. According to the 2019/20 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), 2.9% of women aged 16 to 74 and 0.7% of men were victims of sexual assault in the last year. Only a small proportion of sexual assaults are reported to take place in public spaces such as parks and streets and all such crimes should be treated with the seriousness they deserve.
- 2.3 Women and girls have also been found to suffer high levels of sexual and verbal harassment. Examples include a survey of 14-21-year-olds by Plan UK in 2018 that found that 38% of girls experience verbal harassment including sexual comments in public places at least once a month. Women are also less likely to feel safe walking alone at night in their local area. According to data from the 2019/20 CSEW, 69% of women aged 16 and over said that they felt very or fairly safe walking alone after dark, in contrast to 89% of men. In women aged 75 and over, that figure falls to 58%.
- 2.4 Scanning and analysis of local crime data and other data sources highlighted:
- Norwich city centre and Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn town centres account for 16% of VAWG crimes in public spaces, but only account for 1% of the population of Norfolk. Many crimes occurred at bars, clubs or at bus stations, bus stops or on public transport.
  - Sexual harassment on the street was highlighted as a concern by residents in an EDP survey due to frequency
  - VAWG organisations said they felt it was important to enact culture change that meant people would be less likely to exhibit VAWG related attitudes and behaviours and for our community members to feel comfortable challenging these attitudes and behaviours. They also stressed the importance of advertising key messages and services to gatekeepers within the NTE. Whether behind the bar, on the door, serving food or driving them home, key gatekeepers can identify, intervene, signpost and safeguard people.
- 2.5 By providing these resources the Norwich SOS Bus, a safer space, will more effectively be able to support vulnerable people in the Night Time Economy, create a greater street presence to increase feelings of safety and awareness of the service and make the service more effective through out-reach work, publicity and Night time Economy engagement.

### **3. AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

- 3.1 This proposal is supported by the Chief Inspector of the Command Team in Norwich and the Chief Inspector responsible for Community Safety, including Licensing, as well as the Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, Integrated Commissioner Manager responsible for commissioning the SOS Bus.
- 3.2 The benefits of this funding will be:

- Increase SOS Bus capacity to respond to people in vulnerable situations in the night time economy.
- Reduced pressure on emergency services.
- Increased visible presence in Norwich's Late Night Economy.
- Make the service more efficient.
- Ensure public and businesses are aware of the service.

#### **4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

- 4.1 Do nothing. The OPCCN and its partner members of the NCCSP see not repurposing this funding as an unacceptable option as they are both committed to preventing and responding to VAWG crimes and have related statutory objectives.

#### **5. STRATEGIC AIMS/OBJECTIVE SUPPORTED:**

- 5.1 This range of projects complements the NCCSP's Safer Norfolk Plan. The bid will directly benefit the response to neighbourhood crime and sexual violence.
- 5.2 The projects will complement the national Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. In particular, the prioritising prevention strategic priority.
- 5.3 The project will support the delivery of the soon to be published Norfolk Police and Crime Plan.

#### **6. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 Costs estimated by voluntary Norfolk are expected not to exceed £23,802.
- 6.2 The funding awarded by the Home Office must be spent on activity set out in Norfolk's original bid and all funded activity must be completed by 31st March 2021.
- 6.3 The total award for Norfolk's bid and total funding available for this project is £461,895.65.

#### **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:**

- 7.1 The short timescale allowed for this project may result in incomplete delivery prior to the March 2022 deadline. In addition, because of the goods being purchase by voluntary Norfolk, there will likely be underspend.
- 7.2 In line with usual government grants, PCCs must ensure that organisations do not use the funding for any of the following activities:
- religious activities outside of projects benefiting the wider community and not containing religious content;
  - political or lobbying activities;
  - loan repayments; or

- activities that make profit for private gain
- 7.3 All organisations awarded funding will need to comply with the OPCCN Governance 'Check List' that will be provided with offers of Grants if this has not been completed in advance.
- 7.4 Should there be any risk to the service being delivered, each organisation is required to notify the OPCCN as per the conditions of the award.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	YES
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	YES
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	YES
Have human resource implications been considered?	YES
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	YES
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	YES
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	YES
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	YES
<p data-bbox="204 1384 788 1420"><b>Is this report a Confidential Decision?</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; gap: 20px;"> <input data-bbox="1066 1402 1187 1473" type="checkbox"/> <input data-bbox="1257 1402 1378 1473" type="checkbox" value="NO"/> </div> <p data-bbox="204 1496 1433 1532">If Yes, please state reasons below having referred to the <a href="#">PCC Decision Making Policy</a></p>	

**APPROVAL TO SUBMIT TO THE DECISION-MAKER** (this approval is required only for submissions to the PCC).

**Chief Executive**

I am satisfied that relevant advice has been taken into account in the preparation of the report, that the recommendations have been reviewed and that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the PCC.



**Signature:**

**Date: 15/03/2022**

**Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)**

I certify that:

- a) there are no financial consequences as a result of this decision,  
OR
- b) the costs identified in this report can be met from existing revenue or capital budgets,  
OR
- c) the costs identified in this report can be financed from reserves  
AND
- d) the decision can be taken on the basis of my assurance that Financial Regulations have been complied with.

**Signature:**



**Date: 15/03/2022**

**PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION:** *Information contained within this submission is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and wherever possible will be made available on the OPCC website. Submissions should be labelled as 'Not Protectively Marked' unless any of the material is 'restricted' or 'confidential'. Where information contained within the submission is 'restricted' or 'confidential' it should be highlighted, along with the reason why.*