

## **Subject: The Hampton Trust - Conditional Cautioning and Relationship Abuse Project (CARA)**

**Originator:** Amanda Murr

**Decision no.** 09/2025

**Reason for submission:** For decision

**Submitted to:** Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Sarah Taylor

### **Summary:**

1. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk currently funds The Hampton Trust to deliver Project CARA (Conditional Cautioning and Relationship Abuse) a short rehabilitative awareness programme which addresses abusive relationship behaviours. Please refer to decision notice 38/2024 – this Grant Agreement provided funding until the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2025.
2. Project CARA with the permission of the Director of the Public Prosecution (DPP), allows the Police to use out of court disposals, conditional cautions for reported first-time domestic abuse (DA) incidents. The perpetrator must comply with attending a short rehabilitative awareness programme which addresses abusive relationship behaviours. If the offender fails to comply, then they may face prosecution for the original offence. Acceptance to the DA Conditional Cautioning scheme must meet specific criteria as set by the DPP and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).
3. The Hampton Trust began mobilisation of Project CARA in Norfolk in November 2019 as per the original Office of the Police and Crime Commission for Norfolk (OPCC) Decision Notice 2019/64. Due to Coronavirus (Covid-19) measures implemented by HM Government, full mobilisation of Project CARA was delayed until the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2021.
4. During this project it has been identified that the intervention, delivered by skilled staff, is having positive impact on those participating and those victims and children associated to the perpetrator. The project has enabled perpetrators to:

- a. Have an understanding and awareness of their abusive behaviours and the impact on others.
- b. Be assisted and encouraged in their self-awareness and supported in accessing further specialist support agencies.
- c. Encourage peer challenge and learning.

Safeguarding, wellbeing and risk management of victim-survivors and children associated to the project has always been a priority throughout the intervention. Victims and perpetrators have reported positive changes in attitude towards them and their children.

5. Academic evaluation is currently underway with the University of Southampton in collaboration with researchers from within Criminology, Public Health and Social Care to deliver this research. This is alongside several other universities.
6. Project CARA is an early response to perpetrator awareness and behaviour change which is offered to the right individuals at the right time. This intervention holds perpetrators to account and offers them opportunities to choose to change. It supports and enhances the safety and freedom (space for action) of victim-survivors and children allowing support to be offered.
7. Early prevention supports the strategic aims of the Norfolk's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Group, Perpetrator Partnership Subgroup. The strategic aims include a key commitment to improve the response to perpetrator provision through appropriate resourcing of projects and programmes utilising national best practice, innovation and lessons learnt to address domestic abuse offenders' behaviours.
8. All terms and conditions remain as stated in the original Grant Agreement.
9. The funding will come from the Commissioning Budget.

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the PCC for Norfolk supports a further extension of the funding as detailed in the Decision Notice 38/2024 from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 to enable the Hampton Trust to continue to deliver Project CARA in Norfolk.

**Outcome/approval by:** PCC

*The recommendations as outlined above are approved.*

**Signature:**



**Date:** 25/02/2025

## Detail of the submission

### 1. Objective:

- 1.1 Project CARA is an out of court disposal, used by the Police for first time, standard or medium risk offenders of domestic abuse. CARA is part of a conditional caution, is an evidence based early intervention and supports the Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Intervention Standards (February 2023)
- 1.2 Project CARA is an early response to holding perpetrators to account offering them opportunity to choose to change, address their actions and attitudes to prevent domestic abuse recidivism and repeat victimisation. Project CARA is offered to the right individuals at the right time. Its priority outcome will enhance safety and freedom (space for action) for all victim-survivors, including children.

### 2. Background:

- 2.1 Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act (2021), Home Office Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan (2022) and Standards for domestic abuse perpetrator interventions (2023) supports and provides the necessary tools to increase the availability of domestic abuse interventions to address perpetrator behaviour. Evidenced based early intervention innovations and best practice such as Project Cara are required to motivate and offer opportunities for perpetrators to change their behaviours.
- 2.2 Project CARA with the permission of the Director of the Public Prosecution (DPP), allows the Police to use out of court disposals, conditional cautions for reported first-time domestic abuse incidents. The perpetrator must comply with attending a short rehabilitative awareness programme which addresses abusive relationship behaviours. If the offender fails to comply, then they may face prosecution for the original offence. Acceptance to the DA Conditional Cautioning scheme must meet specific criteria as set by the DPP and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).
- 2.3 Only those domestic abuse offenders who meet the specific criteria as set by the Director of the Public Prosecution (DPP) will be suitable for referral to project CARA:
  - The offender has made a full admission and accepts responsibility and has not raised the possibility of a defence, for example in the case of assault self-defence, and the decision maker feels that the individual would benefit from such an outcome.
  - The offender accepts full responsibility.
  - The offender has no previous convictions or cautions for domestic abuse in the previous two years.
  - The offender has not committed a serious offence. The starting point for assessing seriousness is to consider the likely penalty if the matter went to court.

Where the circumstances of the offence indicate that an immediate custodial sentence or high-level community order is the appropriate sentence then an out of court disposal should not be offered.

- The express wishes of the victim are met by following this route after the victim has been provided with a full explanation of all options and their consequences. However, the final decision will always rest with the police supervisor or CPS.
- There is no evidence of coercive or controlling behaviour on the part of the suspect within the relationship which might influence the victim's views (to be verified where possible by support services).
- A DARA or other risk assessment tool shows that the risk to the safety of the victim and/or family not higher than the "standard" or "medium" classification.
- The conditions imposed for the disposal under consideration are in line with those identified as suitable and sanctioned by the National Policing Lead on Domestic Abuse.

2.4 The DPP guidance restricts the use of conditional cautions without their explicit authorisation. The DPP has granted Norfolk Constabulary the authority to use conditional cautions for domestic abuse incidents which must meet specific pre-conditions as set by the DPP, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC). This will change as all constabularies can now use conditional cautions however with all agreements we will look to meet the standards set out by the bodies above plus the Home Office Perpetrator Intervention Standards.

2.5 The Hampton Trust began mobilisation of Project CARA in Norfolk in November 2019 as per the original Office of the Police and Crime Commission for Norfolk (OPCC) Decision Notice 2019/64. Due to Coronavirus (Covid-19) measures implemented by HM Government, full mobilisation of Project CARA was delayed until the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2021

2.6 The desired outcomes of this project will be to

- Target support to up to 120 offenders of domestic abuse
- Support to assist attitudes, behaviour and risks of re offending for those attending and completing the CARA workshops.
- Reduce the reoffending rates for domestic abuse perpetrators
- Reduce in the number of domestic abuse perpetrators who meet the DPP criteria going through the court process.
- Reduce repeat victimisation and vulnerability.

### **3. Areas for consideration:**

3.1 As the operator of Project CARA Hampton Trust will be required to:

- Provide a targeted out of court alternative support by means of a conditional cautioning scheme based on 120 offenders, referred by Norfolk Constabulary, where they meet the specific criteria as set out by and authority as granted by Max Hill, QC, Director of the Public Prosecution (DPP).
- Supervise and observe facilitators delivery of CARA courses.
- Deliver up to 12 workshop programmes over a 12 month period for up to 120 perpetrators of domestic abuse – to assist a positive change in attitudes and associated behaviour and in turn reduce the risk of re-offending amongst attendees – as follows:
  - a. 8 programmes will be delivered to male perpetrators – at least 2 programmes per quarter
  - b. 4 programmes will be delivered to female perpetrators – at least 1 programme per quarter
- Provide assessment and feedback of the participants in the group to ensure they are participating fully and notify Norfolk Constabulary where any breaches are identified.
- Signpost participants in workshops to appropriate services including:
  - i. National domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
  - ii. Mental and other health issues
  - iii. Substance misuse/s
  - iv. Financial and debt management
  - v. Employment, including the DWP.

#### **4. Other options considered:**

4.1 Not funding The Hampton Trust to continue this project. This option was rejected as Project CARA has been identified by robust academic evaluation which demonstrates this is an effective initial rehabilitation programme, delivered at an early stage to low-risk offenders, can reduce crime harm and the prevalence and frequency of reoffending, Kerry (2015), Strang et al (2017), Christie et al (2022) and current ongoing multisite evaluation University of Southampton in collaboration with other ARC Universities.

#### **5. Strategic aims/objective supported:**

5.1 The delivery of Project Cara supports the strategic aims and plans as set out in national guidance, policy and best practice regarding evidenced based perpetrator

intervention, prevention, and protection which is key to stop repeat and serial perpetrators from reoffending and reduce crisis intervention.

- 5.2 The strategic aims of the Norfolk’s Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Group, Perpetrator Partnership Subgroup includes a key commitment to improve the response to perpetrator provision through appropriate resourcing of projects and programmes utilising national best practice, innovation and lessons learnt to address domestic abuse offenders’ behaviours. Project CARA supports the strategic aims of the partnership

## 6. Financial and other resource implications:

6.1 The total value of the grant is £30,000.

6.2 The grant period will be from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

## 7. Carbon Emissions and Other Environmental Implications:

### Carbon Emissions

- 7.1 The estimated impact on our carbon emissions that must be reported under current statute from this proposal is:

Emission Categories:	Increase in tCO <sub>2</sub>	Saving in tCO <sub>2</sub>
Scope 1 – Fuel – Building Heating	0	0
Scope 1 – Fuel – Transport	0	0
Scope 2 – Electricity	0	0

### Environmental Implications

- 7.2 No material implications

## 8. Other implications and risks:

8.1 All parties will work together to identify, manage and mitigate risks on achieving the outcomes of the project. These shall be highlighted to the Commissioning lead as soon as identified and recorded in a joint risk and issues register.

8.2 The risk and issues register will be regularly reviewed and updated, not less than once every quarter.

<b>Originator checklist (must be completed)</b>	<b>Please state 'yes' or 'no'</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	<b>No</b>
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	<b>Yes</b>
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	<b>Yes</b>
Have human resource implications been considered?	<b>Yes</b>
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	<b>Yes</b>
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	<b>Yes</b>
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	<b>Yes</b>
Have sustainability and environmental factors been considered? (e.g. biodiversity, employee commuting, business travel, waste and recycling, water, air quality, food and catering and estates construction)	<b>Yes</b>
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	<b>Yes</b>

**Is this report a Confidential Decision?**

**No**

If Yes, please state reasons below having referred to the [PCC Decision Making Policy](#)

**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: 18/02/2025

### 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: 18/02/2025

**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.*