

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

**Originator: Commissioning Officer**

**Decision no. 06/2026**

**Reason for submission: For decision**

**Submitted to: Sarah Taylor - Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk**

**Summary:**

1. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) 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. The current Grant Agreement covers the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.
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, 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. 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.
4. The Project is having a positive impact on those participating and on the victims and children associated with them. It has enabled perpetrators to:
  - Have an understanding and awareness of their abusive behaviours and the impact on others.
  - Be assisted and encouraged in their self-awareness and supported in accessing further specialist support agencies.

- Encourage peer challenge and learning. Safeguarding, wellbeing and risk management of victim-survivors and children associated with 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.
  6. All terms and conditions remain as stated in the original Grant Agreement.
  7. The total cost of the project will be £30,000 for the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027.
  8. The funding will come from the Commissioning Budget.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the PCC supports a further extension of funding to enable the Hampton Trust to continue to deliver Project CARA in Norfolk for the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027.

**Outcome/approval by:** Sarah Taylor-Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk  
The recommendations as outlined above are approved.

Signature: 

Date: 17/02/2026

## Detail of the submission

### 1. Objective:

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

### 2. Background:

- 2.1 Evidence based early intervention innovations and best practice such as Project CARA are required to motivate and offer opportunities for perpetrators to change their behaviours. The National VAWG (Violence against Women and Girls) Strategy 2025-2030 includes the following priorities:
  - Prevention and early intervention – the CARA programme supports first time, medium and standard risk DA offenders to change their behaviours – reducing repeat offending and preventing further crimes
  - Relentless pursuit of perpetrators – the CARA programme supports this, managing perpetrators both inside and outside the criminal justice system.
- 2.2 Project CARA with the permission of the DPP, allows the Police to use conditional cautions for reported first-time, medium and standard risk 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 DPP will be suitable for referral to project CARA:
  - The offender has made a full admission, accepts full responsibility and has not raised the possibility of a defence, and the decision maker feels that the individual would benefit from such an outcome.
  - 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 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 risk assessment tool shows that the risk to the safety of the victim and/or family is 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 granted Norfolk Constabulary the authority to use conditional cautions for domestic abuse incidents which must meet the specific pre-conditions as set out by the DPP, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC). This has changed with all constabularies now able to use conditional cautions – however with all cases we will look to meet the standards set out by the bodies above plus the Home Office Perpetrator Intervention Standards

2.5 The desired outcomes of the project will be to:

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

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

3.1 Project CARA will be required to:

- Provide a targeted out of court alternative support by means of a conditional cautioning scheme to up to 120 offenders referred by Norfolk Constabulary, who meet the specific criteria as set out by and authority as granted by DPP.
- Supervise and observe delivery of CARA courses.
- Deliver 12 workshops over a 12-month period for up to 120 perpetrators of DA – to assist in positive change in attitudes and associated behaviours and in turn to reduce the risk of re-offending amongst attendees – as follows:
  - 8 programmes will be delivered to male perpetrators – at least 2 programmes per quarter.
  - 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:
  - National DA Perpetrator Programmes.
  - Mental Health Services.
  - Substance Misuse Services.
  - Financial and Debt Management Services.
  - Employment and Benefits Services (including Dept of Work and Pensions).

#### **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 standard and medium risk offenders, can reduce crime and harm and the prevalence and frequency of re-offending (Kerry (2015) Strang et al (2017), Christie et al (2022) and current ongoing multi-site evaluation being completed by University of Southampton).

#### **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 evidence-based perpetrator interventions which is key to stopping perpetrators from re-offending and reducing crisis intervention.
- 5.2 The strategic aims of the Norfolk Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Group and the 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.

5.3 The Norfolk Police and Crime Plan 2025-29 has the following priorities:

- To prevent crime
- To build cohesive communities
- To reduce harm.

Delivery of the CARA programme supports the priorities to prevent crime and reduce harm.

## 6. Financial and other resource implications:

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

	Funding amount
1 April – 30 September 2026	£15,000
1 October 2026 – 31 March 2027	£15,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£30,000</b>

## 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 tCO2	Saving in tCO2
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. Any risks identified will be notified to the Commissioning Lead as soon as identified.

8.2 Any risks identified to victims of DA will be notified to the Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Team and appropriate actions to mitigate the risks agreed and delivered.

<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: 12/02/2026**

**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: 18/02/2026**

**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.