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**Durham Police and Crime Commissioner**

**‘Community Based Services Supporting Women’**

**Reference:**

**Service Specification**

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| Service | **Community Based Services Supporting Women** |
| Commissioner Lead | **Jeanne Trotter, Head of Projects, Policy and Commissioning** |
| Project Lead | **Stefanie Hurren, Project and Strategy Officer** |
| Provider Lead | **Durham Police and Crime Commissioner** |
| Period | **01-Jan-2026 to 01-Jan-2028 (2+1+1 contract length)** |

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| **Specification Overview** |
| * **Fund amount:** £70,000 maximum.   + £5,000 will be awarded to one Provider in each of the 12 Local Network areas (formerly Area Action Partnerships) in County Durham. £10,000 will be awarded for 1 area for Darlington Borough Council (13 areas in total).   + A Provider can apply for more than one Local Network area. There will only be one successful Provider per area. * **Contract Term / Length:** 01-01-2026 to 01-01-2028, with possibility of extension of up to 12 months plus 12 months (2+1+1). * **Focus:** Community-based services providing community-focussed activities/intervention to women (18 years and above) who are residents of County Durham and Darlington. * **Annual income:** no minimum or maximum income requirement. * **Location:** Up to 12 areas across County Durham and 1 area in Darlington. See ‘Funding Application Guidance’ for full list of available areas in which can be applied for. * **Application deadline: Friday 10th October 2025, 5pm.** |

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| **Background** |
| As PCC, my vision for County Durham and Darlington is to make our communities safer, stronger and more resilient. My [Police, Crime and Justice Plan](https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/5fda6a31bca106741c9e1ee2/67ed43a1ea5d2831d4ff56ca_NEW%20Square-DPCC%20Crime%20Plan%202025%20v04.pdf) belongs to the people who live and work in County Durham and Darlington. Their priorities are my priorities. Under my priority of ‘Safer People Safer Places’, I am committed to protecting all individuals within our local communities, recognising the national threat of violence against women and girls and the harm caused by this, to victims and society.  In response, my plan commits to commissioning a trauma and gender informed ‘full service’ for women. This responds to the recommendations of the [Transforming Services for Women’s Futures](file:///\\durpol\odpcvc\PCVC\Working%20Folders\Stef's%20Folder\Transforming%20Services%20for%20Women's%20Futures%20-%20Final%20Report%202023.pdf) project, aiming to improve the lives of women in our communities by redesigning services and systems, to better meet women with multiple unmet needs. I want to enable women’s empowerment, by viewing each woman as a whole person and providing support for the varied needs of each individual.  We know that a combination of structural and individual risk factors in childhood and adulthood can lead women and girls into experiencing adversities in life. Women entering services are often viewed through a lens of ‘what is wrong with them’, rather than through the lens of ‘what has happened to them’. This attitude can increase the likelihood of women experiencing barriers to accessing support services and can increase the risk of their needs not being appropriately met.  It is important that we listen to the research and look to the successful models that other areas have taken, to inform the approach we take to best supporting our local women. It is with this that I announce the the ‘Community Based Services Supporting Women” fund, going some way fulfil my commits to commission a trauma and gender informed ‘full service’ for women. This project aims to deliver the outcomes that I and my Office aspire to, including supporting a whole-system approach to improving health and justice outcomes for women in County Durham and Darlington. |
| 1. **Introduction / Context** |
| See ‘Annex A – Introduction & Context’ attached for the following:   * Definitions * International Context * National Context * Local Context |
| 1. **Project Summary** |
| * 1. The Vision   The **purpose** of the Community Based Services Supporting Women Projectis to support a whole-system approach to improving health and justice outcomes for women in County Durham and Darlington.  The Project **ambition** is to deliver this by enhancing those community-based services which are greatly valued. This will be achieved by managing existing resources differently to target support more efficiently, avoiding gaps or duplication in service provision, to support women to be better able to cope and build resilience to lead fulfilling lives.  The Project **aims** to deliver community-focussed activities in a welcoming and safe space, to ensure equality and equity of support service provision for women, across County Durham and Darlington.  If a specific need is identified or disclosed by the service user, this project encourages Providers to ensure signposting or referral to specialist services, which meets any unmet need, for example, those who are may be a victim of crime, in contact with the criminal justice system, experiencing homelessness, engaging in survival sex or sexual exploitation, experiencing severe mental health problems, experiencing serious drug and/or alcohol problems and/or experiencing gambling problems. |
| 1. **Eligibility** |
| * 1. Service Delivery   The Provider must fulfil the Project aim (see above). However, it is open to interpretation on how the Provider delivers this. This can be an existing or new intervention.  The Community Based Services Supporting Women Fund will award funding to one Provider in each of the 12 Local Network areas (Area Action Partnerships) in County Durham (see a full list and maps at [About Local Networks - Durham County Council](https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/1960/About-Local-Networks)), in addition to Darlington Borough Council area (13 areas in total).  A Provider can apply for more than one area but must be able to evidence why they are the best service to deliver in the area in which they are applying for.   * 1. Eligibility Criteria   The service will be accessible for:   * All women, * Resident of the area for which you are applying for (within County Durham or Darlington), * Aged 18 years and above.   1. Service Principles   The following factors are principles which must be demonstrated within service delivery:   * **Gender and trauma informed** services provide support that is informed by an understanding of trauma and gendered issues. * **Culturally-responsive** services are services that provide support to services users in a way that is culturally appropriate and ensure the awareness of culture and identity are embedded into policies, practices, and environments. * **Person-centred, flexible and adaptable approach** means tailored to the individual needs of each woman and her life situation. * **Multi-agency partnership working** women are able to access the holistic, wrap-around support they need and bring public and third sector partners together to develop appropriate services and support pathways that are accessible to all women. * **Peer to peer support**: approaches which enable peer to peer support between participants are encouraged to foster the building of safe relationships and networks. * **Empowerment and agency** participants will be encouraged to lead the process of building on their strengths and aspirations to address challenges that affect their day to day lives. * **Co-production and community Led**: [a way of working where services and services users work in equal partnership](https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=7032d40f41cf1f86112e3ed662e2b0b9008ff2516ade22fc7c7786e2ee30abb2JmltdHM9MTczNDkxMjAwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=119366cd-2920-6731-1ece-77412d2061fa&psq=co-production&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuc2NpZS5vcmcudWsvY28tcHJvZHVjdGlvbi93aGF0LWhvdy8&ntb=1) to develop the service. [It involves consulting, including, and working together from start to end of any project that affects them.](https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=7032d40f41cf1f86112e3ed662e2b0b9008ff2516ade22fc7c7786e2ee30abb2JmltdHM9MTczNDkxMjAwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=119366cd-2920-6731-1ece-77412d2061fa&psq=co-production&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuc2NpZS5vcmcudWsvY28tcHJvZHVjdGlvbi93aGF0LWhvdy8&ntb=1) * **Barriers to access**: being aware of, and addressing, physical and psychological barriers which may prevent engagement. * **Flexible programming and support:** recognising that a range of approaches, interventions and supports may need to be identified and employed to deliver the different outcomes.   1. Exclusions   Person/s meeting the criteria and with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) are NOT excluded from accessing the service/s.  The service does not apply to people residing outside of the boundaries of County Durham and Darlington local authority boundaries.   * 1. Referrals to the Service   Referrals will be managed by the services. It the responsibility of the provider to promote the service.   * 1. Support and Safety Plans   Support and Safety Plans will be managed by the services and interventions being delivered by the service provider.  All service users must have an individual Support and Safety Plan in place following the Providers initial assessment. These should be developed in conjunction with service users and there should be documented evidence (e.g. service user signature) of the service users’ agreement with the Support Plan.  As a minimum the Support and Safety Plan should include:   * A Safety and Support plan (which must be reviewed at least every 6 weeks or whenever there is a change in circumstances). * Clear goals and aims of involvement, detailing support interventions. Plan must be written in conjunction with and agreed by the service user. * A named key worker who is responsible for the delivery and coordination of the plan. * Explicit reference to risk management and identify the risk management plan and contingency plan. * Confidentiality and information sharing protocols. * Appropriate information about the age and background of the service user as well as their diversity requirements. * Management oversight / Sign off.   The Provider will work with service users on the ongoing development and regular review of their support plans. Plans should be revisited regularly and reviewed fully a minimum of every 6 weeks. The reviews of these support plans must be documented and evidenced   * 1. Location of service   The group must be delivered in person from an accessible location in County Durham or Darlington, which best meets the needs of service users.   * 1. Days/Hours of operation   Any provider delivering services to women should deliver a flexible delivery model that is adaptable to meet the changing needs of women.   * 1. Safeguarding   In the event that any safeguarding issues relating to children or vulnerable adults emerge during the support, the Provider will take responsibility for following the safeguarding policies and procedures of their Local Safeguarding Boards (Children and Adult). The Provider will undertake to involve the Commissioner and will inform the Commissioner of issues and ongoing investigations without delay.  All concerns regarding a child or young person's welfare who lives in County Durham, should be referred into First Contact - 03000 267 979.  For concerns relating to an adult living in County Durham, Social Care Direct – 03000 267979.   * 1. Equality of Access   The Provider is expected to take positive action to combat discrimination on any grounds and will be expected to apply requirements and good practice in line with the Equality Act 2010.   * 1. Interdependencies with other services   The Provider will work collaboratively with any other agency or organisation.  The Provider will have sound knowledge of wider support available to service users and will actively promote and engage in partnership working arrangements.  The successful provider will be expected to attend the VCS Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Provider forum and engage fully with this process. |
| 1. **Standards of Service** |
| See ‘Annex C – Standards of Service’ attached for the following:   * Applicable National Standards * Applicable Local Standards * Code(s) of Conduct * Policies and Procedures * Complaints * Legislation * Workforce * Staffing * Recruitment and Selection * Staff Training and Personal Development * Governance Arrangements * Serious Incidents * Safeguarding * Information Governance * Cyber Security |
| 1. **Service Monitoring and Review Requirements** |
| * 1. Contract Review Meetings   In addition to any requirements in the Terms and Conditions for Services, the Commissioner requires the Provider’s attendance at Contract Review Meetings at any time throughout the duration of the contract. The purpose of these meetings is to review service quality and performance plus, where necessary, review actions being taken by the Provider to drive improvement.  Contract Review meetings will occur at least once every quarter as a minimum, with the view to reduce to bi-annually, based on performance. The Commissioner may also conduct a review of the service at any time (usually at least annually) and require access to view policies, procedures, staff and service user files, in order to check compliance with the service specification and good practice.  Key Performance Indicators will be agreed between the Commissioner and the Provider during contract mobilisation. The performance metrics will be closely linked to the outcomes and impacts, shared in the table below.  The OPCC is piloting a new service monitoring system, in partnership with Orcuma. The Provider must be willing to engage with this system and provide access to data.   * 1. Service User Feedback   The Provider will promote regular consultation with service users in order for service user views and experiences to be used as a tool for performance monitoring and continuous service improvement. The Provider will also ensure there are mechanisms which allow anonymous feedback from service users. This information should be shared with the Commissioner without prejudice. |
| 1. **Funding** |
| 6.1 Pricing Schedule:  The funding envelope for the Community Based Services Supporting Women Project is a maximum of £70,000, totalling £5,000 per Local Network area (Area Action Partnerships) in County Durham. Also available, is a total of £10,000 for 1 area for Darlington Borough Council.  A Provider can apply for more than one Local Network area. There will only be one successful Provider per area.  Payment schedule will be an annual one-off payment.  This contract is term is 01-Jan-2026 to 01-Jan-2028 (with possibility of extension of up to 12 months + 12 months). |
| 1. **Social Value** |
| The Commissioners are committed to improving social value in County Durham & Darlington, as well as supporting providers in the delivery of services.  Where possible, the Provider(s) will assist the Commissioners to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area through delivering social value.   * **Social benefits** can be gained by improving personal aspirations in education, employment, living standards, social interaction, reducing dependence on public services, increasing opportunities for volunteers, and increased ownership and involvement of the service users and wider community, including the voluntary sector. * **Economic benefits** may be gained by improving opportunities for employment, providing quality, local employment by adopting the best working practices and conditions, and by creating a better place for businesses to operate and grow. * **Environmental benefits** may be gained from reducing waste and emissions, increasing recycling and reuse of resources, ethical purchasing (e.g. using sustainable materials and fair-trade product(s), and improving energy efficiency through reducing energy use and making sustainable energy choices.   The Provider(s) will support local employment and will collaborate with the Commissioners and fellow stakeholders to identify good practice. This may include information sharing; response to policy change, and potential development opportunities. |