

## DECISION NOTICE

**Subject:**

**ACCORD – Whole System approach to Sex Offender Management  
Sustainability – temporary funding of GMP Polygraph Officers**

**Type of decision:**

<b>Commissioner's decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Senior Officers Decision</b>	
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**The decision is that:**

1. Polygraph funding of up to £80k for twelve months is approved in principle - subject agreement to a report and update from ACC Ford on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Approval in principle is required now to ensure that the staff covering the polygraph staff absence, continue to be backfilled from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.
2. The costs are for 2 staff who will carry out the role of polygraph examiners for 12 months (01.04.18 to 31.03.19). The staff are currently at Grade G - Staff costs are estimated at £73,615 plus £3,000 to cover travel, courses.
3. As part of the funding arrangements GMP will be required to develop a full polygraph business case and sustainability plan by January 2019.

**The reasons for the decision are:**

A joint OPCC/GMP Home Office Innovation Fund bid was submitted in 2015 which incorporated this recommendation, along with a number of proposals to tackle the issue of sex offending as a whole in Greater Manchester, which was successful and funding awarded for the financial years 16/17 and 17/18.

Op ACCORD funding is due to end at 31.03.18 resulting in the need for this funding extension.

Op ACCORD has funded a national research programme in to the use of polygraph in policing and this is being led by CC Skeer from Cumbria Police with the University of Kent. Initial findings are expected in October 2018. This will help to determine the long term role of polygraph and GMP will need to consider whether it becomes 'business as usual'.

Since April 2017 there has been:

- 104 referrals
- 67 tests completed
- First pre-conviction test carried out and significant risk disclosed
- Substantive offences disclosed

Approximately 70% of tests has resulted in disclosures relevant to their management and not previously known to their offender managers. In addition, over half of examinees have been found to be deceptive, following which about 60% made disclosures when challenged about the outcome.

In addition, Lancashire Constabulary have visited and observed the polygraph examiners and would like to "buy in" their services for 15-20 polygraphs for the next 12 months whilst they look at building a business case of their own to train staff. Although this has not been formally agreed to yet, the "buy-in" of services would go some way to help mitigate the cost.

There is also wider potential with Social Services using polygraph in child protection issues.

**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

The number of registered sex offenders which are required to be managed by GMP is increasing at a rate of around 10% per annum. IOM borough staff are already supporting SOMU but the ratio for each offender manager is still 1:90 which is way above the recommended 1:50, almost double the workload. At the time of writing there are 3221 registered sex offenders in Greater Manchester. Polygraph examinations are seen as an effective tool in the management of sex offenders.

Polygraph is a unique tool and the use of polygraph examinations may help prevent or shorten potentially lengthy police investigations ultimately saving GMP money in the longer term.

A more detailed business case will be provided for the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018 with ACC Ford.

**Financial comments:**

Funding will be provided for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 subject to a briefing on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

The funding will be provided through FIM reserves available due to the recalibration of commissioned services through the ACCORD Programme in agreement with Director of Finance (Police and Crime).

**Legal comments:**

The Nation Probation Service has statutory provision to carry out polygraph tests. The Police as asking for parity with the NPS as they have a shared responsibility

for offenders on the Sex Offender Register. The national research and evaluation that has been commissioned aims to test and make the case for legislative parity which will give police better legal protection, hence the request to continue funding until the findings of the research are available.

**Risk Assessment:**

There is no doubt that polygraph is at the vanguard of innovation of policing and could be perceived as a controversial approach. This risk is being mitigated by the national research and evaluation that has been commissioned which involves the testing of procedures and benchmarking with other forces. Legal advice has been sought throughout the programme and dedicated sessions have been carried out with the CPS. All steps have been taken to ensure that current practice is fair and within the law but there is a lack of tested cases and subsequent case law.

**Is safeguarding of children relevant and has this been considered:**

Polygraph can provide an essential early intervention, prevention and safeguarding tool through the use of disclosures and subsequent intelligence. The current use of polygraph in GMP can evidence clear cases where safeguarding procedures have been put in place as a direct result of offender disclosures.

**Agreed by Commissioner**

Signed: .....

*Bev Hughes*

Date: .....

16/3/18

**Contact Officer:**

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