

OPCC Record of Decision

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| Decision to Extend Funding to CASSPLUS 2021-22 |
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| Decision Record Prepared by | |
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| Name: | Wendy Rowden |
| Role: | Criminal Justice, Partnerships and Commissioning Officer |
| Date of Decision: | 27/01/2021 |

1. Background

- 1.1. CASSplus is a magistrate's court-based service which aims to support and address the needs of any court users requiring help whether they are offenders, victims, witnesses or supporters of the attendees. The OPCC has funded the service's offer (22 hours per week) in Newton Abbot since 1 January 2018 and through contract reviews and evidence of positive outcomes this service has shown to be effective.
- 1.2. With the introduction of the new commissioning framework funding for CASSplus is due cease on 31 March 2021.
- 1.3. In reviewing the exit strategy of funding for this service in a quarterly review meeting on the 26th of January 2020 it has become apparent that the intensity of the work being undertaken by the service and individual's within it, means that CASSplus workers at Newton Abbot will be putting the people they are supporting at risk as a result of reductions in funding. This is even more acute at this time as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic lockdown which has resulted in other local services, both statutory and voluntary and community sector, being unable to offer adequate support for their clients, which is resulting in CassPlus supporting a new cohort of people whom are in need at this time. Furthermore, in this space CASSPlus have become a frontline face to face service, as one of the only support services offering a face to face service, closure of the service risks a reduction in overall support services for people who are at risk and are present within an open statutory service; the court.
- 1.4. In examining new demand as a result of the pandemic CASSPlus report that their support worker is currently holding 23 new cases all received since the beginning of January 2021. These cases are all individuals with complex needs who amongst other needs have housing and mental health challenges which are currently not being meet by statutory services because they are under the threshold for support. This figure includes five referrals from local domestic abuse services seeking the expertise of CASSplus.
- 1.5. The OPCC recognises that the global pandemic is placing an extra-ordinary and acute pressure on our voluntary and community sector, and in particular CASSplus and consider it appropriate to provide funding for a further 12

months (1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022) to meet the extra needs being supported by the service whilst the Covid 19 crisis persists.

2. Decision record

- 2.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner will continue to provide funding of £33,600, on a one-off basis in 2021-22 to CASSplus to ensure the service provision at Newton Abbot magistrates court can continue enabling CASSplus to meet increased demand due to the ongoing Covid 19 global pandemic crisis.
- 2.2 CASSPlus are encouraged to access grant funding to sustain this service, which is expected to be available in the summer of 2021 and must as a result of this extension provide the OPCC with an exit strategy for this funding by December 2021.

3. Consultation, Engagement and Communication

- 3.1 This funding has been approved in recognition of the acute pressure on the service during a global pandemic and as part of a safe exit strategy for CASSPlus. Due to the time pressures and Covid restrictions wider consultation is not considered imperative or safe at this time.
- 3.2 The PCC and OPCC staff are in email, video conferencing and telephone communication with CASSplus.
- 3.3 Face to face meetings are not currently possible due to reinstatement of Covid19 lockdown regulations January 2021.

4. OPCC Monitoring Officer Advice

- 4.1 The deputy Monitoring Officer of the OPCC advise that the delivery of CASSPLUS' service falls within the PCC's obligation and aligned to the PCC's commitments to support victims and witnesses and to reduce reoffending. The service provision is in alignment with Police and Crime Plan priorities; namely:
 - Preventing and deterring crime
 - Protecting people at risk of abuse and those who are vulnerable
 - Supporting victims and witnesses and helping them to get justice

4.2 Financial and Commercial – Current and Future

Chief Finance Officer and s.151 Officer has advised that the expenditure incurred by this decision is consistent with the financial priorities and role of the PCC.

5. Supporting documents:

5.1 None

6. Official approval

6.1 Following the appropriate approval, this decision sheet will be published, subject to FOIA classification, on the OPCC website.

For OPCC office use:

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| If FOI Closed at the current date under Section 22, please provide details of the future date by which this decision can be reconsidered for publication: | N/A |
| Is there a publication schedule that lists the documents relating to this decision that will also be published at a later date in the future? If yes, please attach a copy with this decision. | no |
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The Recommendation for Decision as outlined in this report is formally approved and subject to Freedom of Information Classification will be published on the OPCC website:

Police and Crime Commissioner



Signed
Print: Alison Hernandez
Date: 25 February 2021

**Governance Signature by
Chief Financial Officer**



Signed
Print: Nicola Allen
Date: 24th February 2021

Decision logged in register? *[Tick if completed]*

✓

Decision published on OPCC website? *[Tick if completed]*

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