



Commissioning and Grants Strategy – 2025-28

This strategy has been developed to transparently set out the approach taken by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner) to award funding to people or organisations in the county. This funding is provided to enable the delivery of the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2024-28. It allows the Commissioner to fulfil the statutory responsibilities placed upon him and be responsive to emerging local, regional and national issues.

The strategy operates within the framework of the ‘Financial Regulations for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioners’ (including Contract Standing Orders) which was published in February 2025.

The approach is underpinned by the four stages of the ‘Commissioning Cycle’ which are followed in a way which is proportionate to the funding awarded. The OPCC endeavours to influence the commissioning of co-dependent services to ensure they adhere to the below principles.

Taking a commissioning approach – the Commissioning Cycle

“Commissioning is the process which works out what services are required, now and in the future, to meet the needs of local people, and to ensure that they are planned and delivered in line with local strategies.”

The Commissioning Cycle is a continuous cycle of action and improvement. Its key principles guide the award of all funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner



Understand Phase – key actions

We will develop a **clear evidence-base of need** - through local needs assessments, engagement with the public, listening to the views of potential service users and partners and mapping of existing provision to prevent duplication.

We will clearly set out the **outcomes to be achieved** and consider if a new service is required or whether an existing service could be re-commissioned or enhanced to deliver the same outcomes.

We will work in **partnership** with other agencies trying to deliver the same outcomes and explore if a **co-commissioning** arrangement with a **pooled budget** could lead to a more joined up service provision and deliver economies of scale.

We will consider how a new service or provision might be co-dependant on other agencies and will ensure there are **seamless pathways** between them.

We will ensure all victims and witnesses of crime who live in our county have access to **victim focused** proportionate support.

We will support an **early intervention** approach to help prevent crime and serious violence, including Violence Against Women and Girls, from happening in the first place.

We will **listen to the views of communities** to solve local issues.

Plan Phase – key actions

We will ensure **equitable countywide provision** of services (unless funding is being awarded to an area to respond to a bespoke local need).

Where possible we will provide opportunities for service users, potential providers and partner agencies to **co-design** services or feedback on service specifications and will support innovation.

We will develop **outcome measures** in consultation with the provider to enable them to show they are meeting the identified need and delivering the required outcomes.

We will proactively seek to enhance local service provision by leading/ supporting applications to **new funding streams**. In particular we will continue to work with local specialist VAWG services to ensure their voices, and that of the victims they support, are heard nationally and funding provided to continue the provision of life saving support.

We will carry out '**due diligence checks**' on all potential recipients of funding.

We will complete **Equality Impact Assessments** for all new services to help us meet our public sector duty under the Equality Act 2010.

Do Phase – key actions

We will support the use of **local suppliers** and recognise the added value provided by local third sector service providers.

We will adhere to the local Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders in cases where multiple providers could deliver a service. This sets out:

- £0-£6,000 – one written quote
- £10,000 - £60,000 – three written quotes
- £60,000 and above – competitive tender

We will ensure equality of opportunity **by transparently** advertising all open funding opportunities on our website and on the Government Contract Finder website where the cumulative contract value exceeds £60,000. The funding envelope and quality v cost split will be clearly shown.

We will hold **Market Engagement** events where they add value.

We will only directly award funding where a single provider has been proven to deliver the best outcomes for the service or where a bid/provision has been developed in partnership.

We will ensure an independent member sits on all **tender evaluation** panels. Service users will be invited to engage in the process where possible.

We will endeavour to **award multi-year contracts** recognising that short-term funding destabilises providers and makes it challenging to recruit into posts.

Review Phase - key actions

We will ensure outcome reporting is **proportionate** to the size of the funding awarded – as a minimum all recipients will be required to submit a six-monthly monitoring return, to demonstrate how the funding is delivering the agreed outcomes.

We will invite all recipients of funding over £10k to a **six-monthly monitoring** (three monthly for victim services) meeting and maintain two-way dialogue so emerging issues on either side can be flagged and collaboratively addressed before they impact upon the delivery of outcomes.

We will regularly **review** all services.

We will create opportunities to **listen to, and consider, the views** of service users and partners in a safe and proportionate way.

We will **de-commission** services which are not meeting their outcomes, the needs of service users or delivering value for money.

All de-commissioning will be carried out in partnership with the provider. **Equality Impact Assessments** and appropriate **risk assessments** will be completed.

How we award funding

Grants and Contracts

Funding is awarded through either a:

- Grant Agreement
- Contract
- Contribution to a co-commissioned contract (sometimes called a collaborative commissioning agreement)
- Memorandum of Understanding
- An invoice
- Bid Acceptance Forms for small grants

The use of '**grants**' enables the Commissioner to swiftly award funding to providers and to be responsive to emerging issues. Grants are defined as "*contributions to a specific or broad range of activities*" rather than a contractually agreed service specification. However, by taking a 'commissioning approach' we can ensure both parties have agreed the parameters of the funding and the correct due diligence completed. Specific legislation allows for the Commissioner to award grants.

Contracts follow a formal procurement process and legally bind a provider to deliver an agreed service specification for a specified number of years. The Police and Crime Commissioner will be named as a **co-commissioner** where he contributes to contracts put in place by other agencies.

Memorandum of Understandings are used where funding is being awarded to other statutory partners. While small charities and community groups bidding for small grants will be issued with a **Bid Acceptance Form**. Proportionate due diligence checks will always be completed.

Occasionally goods and services are paid for through **invoices**.

Single Tender Actions enable a contract to be awarded without a competitive procurement process (whether this is a new contract or an extension to an existing one) where:

- It can be evidenced that only one supplier is able, or willing, to carry out the work or services or to supply goods for technical reasons; or
- there is a justifiable case to use an existing contractor/supplier to maintain a continuity of supply.

These are subject to scrutiny by the 7F Commercial Services Team and Chief Finance Officers.

Resources available

The Commissioner has access to a number of funding streams from which awards can be made to contribute to the delivery of the objectives within the Police and Crime Plan. The OPCC also acts as 'grant sponsor' on behalf of partnership bids to central government funds and receives the funding. The OPCC commissioning staff ensure the funding is awarded to the named recipients with the appropriate outcome and financial monitoring, due diligence and governance in place.

Support Services for Victims and Witnesses of Crime

Central Government Funding

Police and Crime Commissioners were given responsibility for commissioning support services for victims of crime in 2014 along with an **annual core grant from the Ministry of Justice**. An amendment to section 56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 allows for this. Historically Police and Crime Commissioners have been asked to co-ordinate, submit and then manage bids for **additional specialist victim services**. Cambridgeshire is also one of five areas working in partnership with the **Home Office** on a local devolution pilot of national funding for support for survivors of sexual violence. This funding is referred to nationally as the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund (RASAF).

Reducing Crime and Disorder

Central Government Funding

Police and Crime Commissioners have historically received funds or co-ordinated bids into a number of Home Office funds designed to reduce crime and disorder including serious violence. The OPCC is responsible for monitoring the delivery of outcomes on behalf of the Home Office and ensuring appropriate governance is in place. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 enables the PCC to provide funding to 'specified authorities' to fulfil their duties to prevent and reduce serious violence.

Local Funding - Crime and Disorder Reduction Fund

The Commissioner creates a local fund from which crime and disorder reduction awards are made. This comes from the main police grant. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 states that a Police and Crime Commissioner can provide crime and disorder reduction grants:

- to any person
- for securing, or contributing to securing, crime and disorder reduction
- and can make grants subject to any conditions

Local Funding - Casualty Reduction and Support Reserve – Road Safety

The Commissioner has a small fund which is made up of the surplus income from the Cameras, Tickets and Collision Unit and can only be spent on activities which improve the safety on the county's roads.

Local Funding - Proceeds of Crime & Police Property Act

The Commissioner has access to funding from the sale of recovered and unclaimed property which can be used for charitable purposes.

