

Equalities Analysis in Lambeth

Proposal Title *

Safer Communities commissioned services contract variation

Author

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Please provide name of lead author and/or those within project team who may be required to contribute to this assessment

Who will sign off the assessment?

Abi Onaboye

Please indicate who will be involved in approving this assessment. This will need to be signed off by the Director

Q1a. What is changing?

Contracts for Lambeth's commissioned violence against women and girls (VAWG) and adult offending support services (known collectively as Safer Communities) end on 31 March 2021.

These include:

1. A community-based gender-based violence support centre (the Gaia Centre delivered by Refuge)
2. Female genital mutilation community support service (delivered by Africa Advocacy Foundation)
3. 52 emergency accommodation spaces for women and children fleeing domestic abuse (delivered by Solace Women's Aid, Asha and Refuge)
4. Coordination of an integrated offender management programme for male offenders (delivered by the Community Rehabilitation Company and Metropolitan Police)
5. Support service for priority adult and young offenders (delivered by AIR Network and St Giles Trust)
6. Support service for female offenders across six boroughs including the Beth Centre in Lambeth (the South London Alliance delivered by Women in Prison).

Commissioning decisions for VAWG services are informed by a Safer Lambeth VAWG strategy, which includes an in-depth consultation with stakeholders, practitioners and residents – the new strategy was originally anticipated to be published summer 2020 but was delayed due to Covid-19 and so will now be published in Spring 2021.

Current services demonstrate good value for money and excellent performance with all key performance outcomes being achieved and high levels of satisfaction from service users and stakeholders. We will be varying the contracts for these services to extend for one year from 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022.

We anticipate a competitive tender process for procuring provision from 1 April 2022 and a

procurement plan for this activity will be produced during 2021/22. This will include a new Equalities Impact Assessment.

These are existing services, providing specialist support to Lambeth residents. This includes supporting those with protected characteristics and the contract variation will ensure consistency in service provision. The VAWG services predominantly support those who identify as women and girls due to the gendered nature of VAWG with most victims and survivors being female. The community-based support services, including those for adults and young people in contact with the criminal justice system, support those of any gender identity.

What is the most significant or key change taking place? Can you indicate the type of change in your response (e.g. policy/decision/strategy/ service/procedural/ geographic/procurement etc.) so it is clear what is being equalities assessed? Why is this change happening? What do you aim to achieve? Can you clearly indicate what decision-makers are being asked to take a decision on?

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Q1b. Who will be involved in approving this decision?

Sophie Taylor (HoD), Dan Stoten (AD), Abi Onaboye (Director), Cllr Jacqui Dyer (Cabinet Member), Finance, Legal and Procurement. Merlin Joseph (Strategic Director) has signed off the business case.

Who else will be involved in signing-off this decision?

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Please detail any project sponsors, (Head of Service, Directors cabinet member/s, legal, partners) Note: Any reports that go to anyone needing to take decisions must refer to this equalities analysis so they can consider the effects of the proposals on different groups before and during decision-making.

Q2a. What do we know about the people who will be impacted by this change?

This is a contract variation for an additional one year and so there is no change.

VAWG services (delivered by Refuge, Solace Women's Aid and Africa Advocacy Foundation)

The VAWG services provide support in the community and through safe accommodation. The Community based support is for victims and survivors of any form of VAWG, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexuality, marital status, or pregnancy. Due to the gendered nature of VAWG, they predominantly support those who identify as women and girls. The community-based services support Lambeth women and girls aged 13+ and men and boys aged 16+ who are experiencing any form of gender-based violence. The service also supports children and young people aged 11+ who have been impacted by domestic abuse. The service also provides a Children's Support Worker and on-site play activities for children to facilitate the attendance of clients with children at the centre.

The refuge accommodation services only accept referrals for those aged 16+ who identify as female as this reflects the needs of survivors, but alternatives are available for those who identify as male through Housing Options. 85% of our refuge provision is for Black, Asian and multi-ethnic survivors. All services provide support that is tailored to the individual needs of victims and survivors and that understands the additional barriers and inequalities experienced by many of our residents (people from Black, Asian and multi-ethnic communities; migrants and those with insecure immigration status; trans/non-binary and gender non-conforming; LGBQI+; those with disabilities; working class; younger and older people).

Equalities data is monitored and reviewed as part of the contract management process and to ensure that the services are accessible. An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken in 2018 and showed that services were continuing to meet the needs of the borough's diverse communities.

In 2019/20, of all engaged clients supported by the Gaia Centre:

- 97% were women and 3% men.
- 53% identified as Black, 13% as White British, 15% as minoritised ethnicities, 12% as White European or other, 6% as Asian, and 1% not known.

- 8% required an interpreter
- 39% identified as having a disability
- 4% identified as LGBT+
- 8% were aged under 18; 16% were 18-25; 34% were 26-35; 24% were 36-45; 11% were 46-55; 5% were 56-65; and 2% were over 65.
- 65% were single, 20% married, 6% co-habiting, 0% in a civil partnership, 2% divorced, 1% widowed, 4% separated, 2% not known.

The Gaia Centre does not routinely record data on socio-economic status, religion, or language, however, alternative measures and/ or national evidence are used to assess impact in these areas.

In 2019/20, of all engaged clients supported in Asha, Refuge, and Solace Women's Aid refuge accommodation:

- 100% were women.
- 46% as Asian, 37% identified as Black, 8% as minoritised ethnicities, 6% as White European or other, 2% as White British, and 2% not known.
- 19% required an interpreter
- 5% identified as having a disability
- 8% identified as LGBT+
- 0% were aged under 18; 32% were 18-25; 37% were 26-35; 23% were 36-45; 2% were 46-55; 4% were 56-65; and 1% were over 65.

The refuge providers do not routinely record data on socio-economic status, religion, marital status, or language, however, alternative measures and/ or national evidence are used to assess impact in these areas.

In 2019/20, of all engaged clients supported by Africa Advocacy Foundation:

- 100% were women or girls.
- 100% identified as Black.
- 1% were aged under 18; 30% were 18-25; 46% were 26-35; 23% were 36-59; 0% were over 65.

Africa Advocacy Foundation does not routinely record data on socio-economic status, religion, marital status, disability, or sexuality however, alternative measures and/ or national evidence are used to assess impact in these areas.

Adult Offending Support Services (delivered by Women in Prison, Community Rehabilitation Company, AIR Network and St Giles Trust)

Demographic data (ethnicity, age, and gender) for all services is provided in quarterly performance reports and is monitored and reviewed as part of the contract management process. Information on additional protected characteristics will be considered in a new Equalities Impact Assessment to be undertaken as part of the anticipated competitive tender process for procuring provision from 1 April 2022.

Contact with the criminal justice system disproportionately affects minority communities and those from lower socio-economic groups. Approximately 26% of the prison population in England and Wales are from Black, Asian and multi-ethnic communities, compared with 13% of the wider population. The situation is worse for under-18s; over 40% of those in secure youth institutions are from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds – up significantly from 25% a decade ago. Offenders have also been victims of crime, may have experienced homelessness, have poorer physical and mental health, substance misuse, and poor educational attainment and employment prospects.

Our commissioned offender support services aim to redress these inequality issues providing tailored support to residents who are socially excluded and have complex needs. The services seek to reduce and prevent reoffending as well as improve the health and wellbeing of service-users through supporting access to a wide range of support such as drug and alcohol treatment, housing, education, training and employment.

South London Alliance Female Offending Service

The South London Alliance female offending service, delivered by Women in Prison, provides a Whole System Approach to women in contact or at risk of contact with the criminal justice system, providing tailored gender-responsive and holistic support, delivered through Women's Centres and Hubs which provide a safe, supportive space for women. Support is based on women's individual needs, including advice, advocacy and information around housing, welfare benefits, education, employment, finances and debt, harmful substance use, health, parenting support, domestic abuse, court and leaving prison.

Women involved in the criminal justice system have disproportionately poorer health outcomes. Rates of substance misuse, mental health issues, self-harming and experiences of violence are higher than the general population. The service model has a strong focus on improving the health and wellbeing of service-users, including specific outcome measures which are monitored as part of the contract.

In 2019/20, of all engaged clients supported by the female offending support service (delivered by Women in Prison):

- 100% were women
- 50% identified as White, 36% as Black, 11% as Shared Heritage, 2% as Asian and 1% as other ethnicity
- 11% were aged 18-24, 28% were 25-34, 31% were 35-44, 24% were 45-54, and 6% were 55+

Integrated Offender Management programme/ Priority Offender Service

Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is a coordinated multi-agency response to reduce crime. Oversight and coordination of Lambeth's IOM arrangements, including management of an Offender Hub and referrals to and close working with the Priority Offender Service, is undertaken by the London Community Rehabilitation Company

(CRC).

The Priority Offender Service, delivered by AIR Network and sub-contractor St. Giles Trust, provides targeted and tailored support to (i) primarily male offenders who commit a high volume of acquisitive and other crimes and (ii) vulnerable young people (aged 14-25) who are involved or at risk of being involved in gangs. The service provides advocacy, one-to-one and group work. There is also close working with a range of local statutory and voluntary, community and social enterprises that provide support around issues such as substance misuse, mental health, and access to housing, support to enter education, training and employment – all of which are key risk factors associated with offending and social exclusion. St Giles Trust also provide a gender informed response to young girls and women who are at risk of gang exploitation.

In 2019/20, of all engaged clients supported by the Priority Offender Service (coordinated by the CRC through the Integrated Offender Management programme and delivered by AIR Network):

- 100% were male
- 49% identified as Black, 36% as White, 14% as Shared Heritage and 1% as Middle Eastern
- 3% were aged 21-25, 8% were 26-30, 12% were 31-35, 18% were 36-40, 30% were 41-45, 14% were 46-50, and 15% were 51+

In 2019/20, of all engaged clients supported by St. Giles Trust:

- 81% were male and 19% were female
- 81% identified as Black, 9% as Shared Heritage, 2% as White and 8% as other ethnicity
- 41% were aged 14-16, 38% were 17-18, 12% were 19-20, 6% were 21-22 and 3% were 23-25

What does your information tell you about the people who will be affected by this change? Are protected groups impacted? What information do you hold on the protected characteristics of the people affected by the change? (Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, health, socio-economic, language) Are there any gaps or missing information?

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Q2b. How will they be impacted by the change?

This is a contract variation for an additional one year and so there is no change. As mentioned above, the continuation of the existing services will benefit victims and survivors with protected characteristics as these services already provide specialist support and advocacy.

Would you assess the impact as positive, adverse, neutral? Do you have any uncertainty about the impact of your proposal? Is there a likelihood that some people will be more impacted than others? Can you describe the ways in which they will be affected? How might this change affect our 'general duty'?

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Q3a. How do you plan to promote and deliver any positive impacts of the proposal?

This is a contract variation for an additional one year and so there is no change. We will continue to promote our services in a wider range of languages and accessible formats.

How might the principles of fairness, equality of opportunity and positive relationships be further promoted as a consequence of this proposal? How do you propose to measure your positive outcomes and the benefits outlined to find out if these have been achieved?

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Q3b How do you plan to address and mitigate any negative impacts of the

proposal?

The VAWG services do not routinely record data on socio-economic status, religion, or language, though alternative measures and/ or national evidence are used to assess impact in these areas. While this is a contract variation to maintain service provision for 2021/22, we anticipate a tender process next year for all commissioned services and will conduct new Equality Impact Assessments as part of the procurement process. This process will consider any gaps or areas for improvement and these will inform future procurement of specialist services.

What impact has this evidence had on what you are proposing? What can you do differently that might lessen the impact on people within the timeframes i.e. development-implementation? Who can help you to develop these solutions?

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Q4. How will you review/evaluate your proposal, mitigating actions and/or benefits? Who will be responsible for this?

This is a contract variation for an additional one year and so there is no change. Equalities data is monitored and reviewed as part of the contract management process to ensure that the services are accessible and serve Lambeth's diverse populations.

While this is a contract variation to maintain service provision for 2021/22, we anticipate a tender process next year and will conduct new Equality Impact Assessments as part of the procurement process.

Who will you be accountable to for the above actions/outcome? How will those responsible know these actions have worked? What performance indicators will you use to demonstrate this? Are there any other forms of evidence you can use to support this assessment of their effectiveness?

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Section to be completed by Sponsor/Director/Head of Service

Outcome of equality impact assessment

- No adverse impact, no change required
- Low adverse impact, minor adjustment required
- Significant adverse impact, further action required
- Significant impact identified unable to mitigate fully
- Unlawful in/direct discrimination, stop and rethink

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Comments from Sponsor/Director/Head of Service

Submit for approval

Submit for approval

Executive Approval

Approved

Attachments

Close