

**WEST MIDLANDS POLICE  
AND CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

**NOTICE OF DECISION**

009/2015

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**Title: Restorative Justice Allocations 2014-15**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Funding for victims of crime, including Restorative Justice (RJ) funding, has been transferred to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). They are therefore responsible for commissioning some of the local RJ solutions which are to be provided.

West Midlands received £188,030 for 2013-14 and £305,244 for the 2014-15 financial years. As this funding is not 'ring-fenced' the Commissioner has agreed to utilise some of the funding for services around victims (see WMPCC 005 2015 Victims Services).

This leaves £97,131.96 remaining to allocate.

**Project 1**

West Midlands Police (WMP) and Midland Heart (MH) have been in collaboration in order to develop an effective model of delivery that maximises the benefits that RJ provides.

A sixth month pilot was undertaken, along with Birmingham Safer Housing Project, whereby the two organisations agreed to provide a member of staff each to focus on the use of RJ as a means of resolving Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). Overseen by a project group, the two members of staff (a police officer and a MH case-worker) were charged with identifying complaints about ASB involving at least one MH tenant, and resolving the matter through RJ. The criteria for evaluating the success of the project were complainant satisfaction and reduced demand on organisational resources.

The results have indicated that the project is proving successful. However it is unclear, at this point, whether the success can be replicated on a broader scale. In order to test this WMP and MH have agreed that further resources need to be committed for another six months, with the geographical areas covered being expanded significantly. It is anticipated that success in the second six months of the project will provide sufficient evidence that other Local Policing Units (LPU) and housing providers will adopt the model. If the success is demonstrated then the benefits to the communities of WMP will be a significantly improved service which effectively and quickly resolves their complaints about ASB and low-level crime. In addition for the organisations involved, there will also be significant cost-savings.

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In order to undertake this further pilot additional funding is required. Thus far, the cost of this pilot has been born by Birmingham West & Central LPU and MH so therefore financial support is sought from the PCC for the additional costs which will be accrued during 2015-16.

## **Project 2**

Staffordshire and West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Company (SWM CRC), in partnership with WMP and the Youth Justice Board, is looking to develop a RJ model of centralised dedicated delivery in the next financial year through the PCC and Victim Commission. However, as a precursor to this submission, it is evident that the CRC is not in as good a position as its partners, to be able to provide RJ and restorative activities for the benefit of victims and offenders. A RJ pilot is being run in the Wolverhampton and Walsall area, which has seen some successes in delivering RJ conferences (over 13 so far) through a multi-agency response with amongst others, the council, local police and prisons. However, SWM CRC is unable to roll out such a pilot across the West Midlands, as the training needed which had been funded by the National Offender Management Service, that was utilised to develop staff capabilities to run the pilot, has now ended.

Given the evidence of successful outcomes for victims and offenders, the SWM CRC wants to invest in the training and development of its staff in:

- utilising restorative principles better in its work with offenders which reduce crime and the number of victims caused
- develop dedicated and ultimately accredited RJ practitioners who are able to deliver RJ conferencing with partners, in both a dedicated multi-agency team for the benefit of the wider community, as well as in its day to day business.

This additional investment in the development of CRC staff will enhance the quality of services that are offered to victims and offenders in the West Midlands. It will assist to build the capacity for restorative activities to be delivered not just within the CRC but in the future, with partners in responding to pre-court matters, anti-social behaviour, burglaries and violent offences. This investment will ensure that RJ and consequent victim satisfaction is fully embedded in day to day probation practice and this specialism is developed that will put us on a par with our partners when it comes to developing a dedicated RJ team across the West Midlands.

The training will be rolled out across a two year period to ensure that existing and new staff are given the opportunity to attend.

## **DECISION**

I have considered these request and approve to:

£65,000 being allocated jointly to WMP and MH to support of the joint RJ pilot.

£31,725 being allocated to SWM CRC to help build the capacity and capability of staff in delivering RJ across the West Midlands.

**West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner**

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in this decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for the West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime. Any interests are indicated below.

Signature.....David Jamieson.....

Date.....31 March 2015.....

## **NON - CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

1. In November 2013, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) announced that it would be making at least £29m available to PCCs and charities to help deliver RJ for victims over the subsequent three years.
2. The cash – which has been recovered from offenders – will be used to help finance RJ across the country.
3. MoJ research of a number of RJ pilots found that 85% of victims that participated in the conferencing method of RJ were satisfied with the experience. It also found the process was associated with an estimated 14% reduction in the frequency of re-offending.
4. During the final six months of 2013-14 £5m was provided by the MoJ for RJ, of which £3.85m was distributed to PCCs. A further £10m was made available for 2014-15, with £6.25m distributed to PCCs. In 2015-16, at least £14m is anticipated to be set aside. The money being handed to PCCs is part of a wider pot of funding for victims of at least £83 million through to 2015-16. PCCs will receive the victims' services and Restorative Justice funding in a single allocation so that they can make decisions about the services that best meet local need.
5. Full details of both projects are included in Annex A (MH/WMP) and Annex B (West Midlands CRC)

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5. The total funding for RJ received by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Midlands is £305,244.00 plus £9,529.96 which was unallocated from 2013-14 providing a total allocation of £314,773.96.
6. This has been allocated as follows:

Victims	Various	£217,642.00
Midland Heart/WMP	Expansion of Pilot	£65,000.00
West Midlands CRC	Capacity and Capability Building	£31,725.00
Unallocated		£406.96
Total		£314,773.96

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. The funding will be issued as a grant under s56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and

Victims Act 2004.

8. Schedule 9 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 provides Commissioners with the powers to award crime and disorder grants to any organisations and projects they consider will help them achieve their crime prevention and wider priorities.

#### **Schedule of Background Papers**

9. None

#### **Public Access to Information**

10. Information contained in this decision is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation. This decision will be made available on the Commissioner's website.

## **West Midlands Police and Midland Heart Restorative Justice Collaboration**

### **Restorative Justice**

Restorative Justice in its simplest terms is a process whereby victims and offenders come together to discuss an incident or crime. The discussion allows the 'victim' to understand why the 'offender' has done what they have done, and also to explain how those actions have affected them emotionally. The parties are then given the opportunity to agree how they want to resolve the matter. On some occasions, the meeting itself will be enough: on other occasions, the parties might agree to complete further actions to repair the damage caused.

The reference to 'victim' and 'offender' relates to crimes, but one of the benefits of RJ is that it focuses on emotional impact and repair, rather than legality and punishment. As a result, it is equally applicable to ASB and other non-crime disputes. It is also a flexible process which can deal with situations where the role of victim and offender is less clearly-defined (neighbour disputes are a prime example of 'tit-for-tat' situations where both parties could be considered victims and offenders).

Restorative Justice is well researched, and rigorous studies show that RJ leaves 85% of all victims satisfied. It also impacts on the offender, with those who have been through the process 14% less likely to offend than offenders who have not. WMP research also showed that RJ is effective as a means of reducing demand, with a sample of nearly 90 cases demonstrating a reduction in demand of 88%.

### **WMP and Midland Heart Collaboration**

Despite the wealth of evidence about the effectiveness of RJ, the challenge facing police and partners is how to develop an effective model of delivery that maximises those benefits: the collaboration between WMP and MH represents an attempt to achieve this goal. Working with Birmingham Safer Housing Project, the two organisations agreed to provide a member of staff each for a six month pilot focusing on the use of RJ as a means of resolving ASB. Overseen by a project group, the two members of staff (a police officer and a midland heart case-worker) were charged with identifying complaints about ASB involving at least one Midland Heart tenant, and resolving the matter through RJ. The criteria for evaluating the success of the project were complainant satisfaction and reduced demand on organisational resources.

Following a recruitment process, the two staff were identified and the project officially entered its 'live' phase in April 2014. The results, which are explained below, suggest that the project is proving hugely successful. The question that therefore arises is whether or not the success experienced thus far can be replicated on a broader scale. To test that, WMP and MH have agreed that further resources need to be committed for another six months, with the geographical areas covered being expanded significantly. It is anticipated that success in the second six months of the project will provide sufficient evidence that other LPUs and housing providers will take on the model. If that occurs, then the benefits to the communities of WMP will be a significantly improved service which

effectively and quickly resolves their complaints about ASB and low-level crime. For the organisations involved, there will also be significant cost-savings. However, to extend the scope and duration of the pilot will entail additional costs. Thus far, the cost of this pilot has been born by Birmingham West & Central LPU and Midland Heart: however, financial support is sought from the PCC with the additional costs that will be accrued. It is submitted that the return on investment for the PCC will be the presentation of a sustainable model which will be adopted by other agencies, thus achieving against the PCC's strategic objectives.

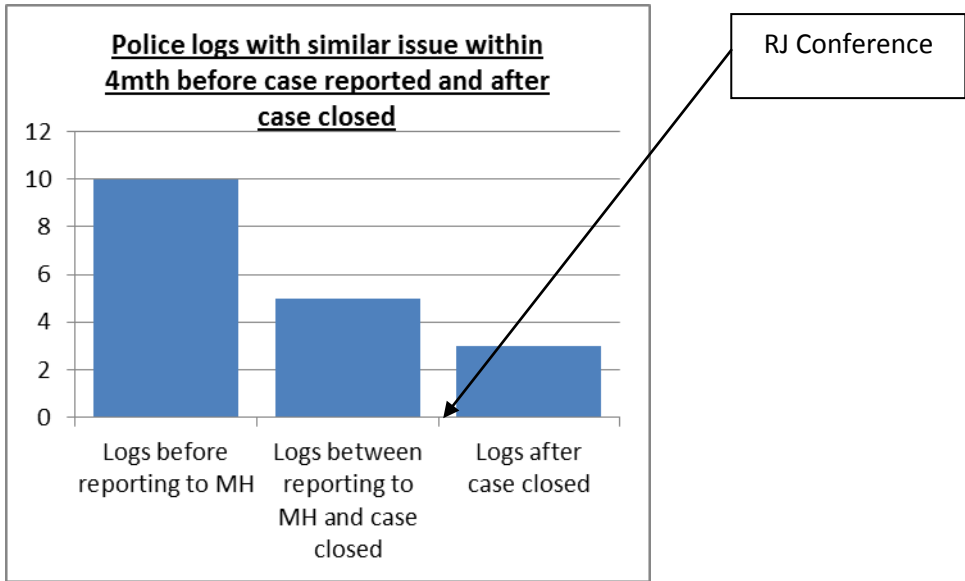
### **The Evidence**

Midland Heart have completed an interim evaluation based on the first 28 cases which were resolved by the RJ team. Since the evaluation was completed, the team have finalised further cases, taking the total to 43. The subsequent cases are not included in the interim data, but the analysis already completed represents a useful indicator as to future trends.

The headline results of the Midland Heart analysis are as follows (as stated, based on 28 cases finalised by RJ):

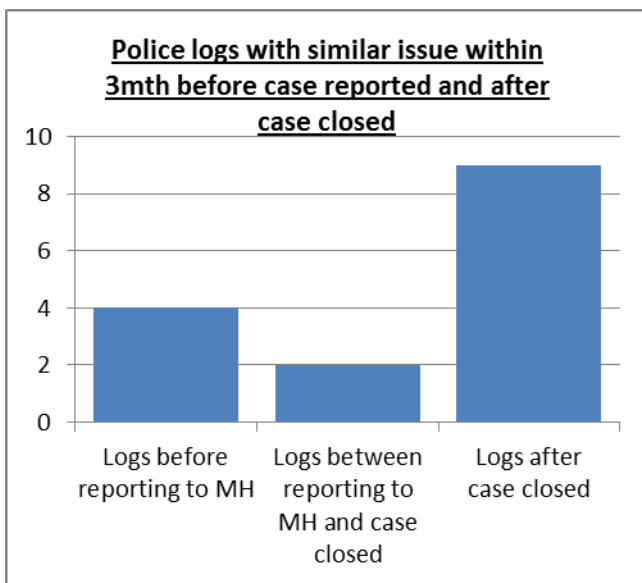
- On average cases taken to RJ were open and closed within 3 months and 12 days. The corresponding number for cases which were eligible for RJ, but did not receive it, was six months to close. *It should also be noted that this is a 'mean' average that was distorted somewhat by cases which had been open for a significant period prior to the commencement of the RJ project. In reality, most cases are resolved within approximately two weeks of referral to the team.*
- The satisfaction of parties involved in ASB cases (complainant and perpetrator) recorded by Midland Heart has **increased by 13.7%**.
- At time of writing, **no cases** taken through the RJ process have had actions logged on Northgate in relation to the same issue post conference (Northgate is Midland Heart's system for logging complaints).
- This is corroborated by surveys which show 73.4% of complainants reported an improvement in the situation following a RJ intervention (46.7% of people stated issue resolved).

The results above represent data from a Midland Heart perspective. WMP have cross-referenced the data held by WMP and found that 10 of the 28 cases resolved through RJ had also generated demand for WMP. The table below shows how many calls for service had been received in the 4 months *prior* to the RJ conference taking place, as opposed to the calls for service in the fourth months *after* the RJ:



As can be seen, the total number of logs recorded by police for the ten cases prior to the conference was 15 in four months. For the same period after the RJ, there were only 3 calls – an 80% reduction in demand on police resources. The average cost of responding to a log is estimated at £35.

As an illustrative comparison, a control sample of similar cases where RJ was not used shows the opposite trend:



Where cases that were suitable for RJ (but did not result in an RJ) were compared over four months prior to and after the non-RJ investigation, there was a **50% increase in demand on resources**.

The sample size for this comparison does represent a limitation, and it was based on recognition of this issue that the project team increased the number of WMP cases during the second half of the pilot. However, it is not possible to provide findings for these cases: because most of the latest cases were resolved in September and October, the four months required for comparison have not yet elapsed. Notwithstanding, the trends for both MH and WMP appear consistent.



## Costs

To develop the good work of this project going forward, the cost of the project will be £65,000 for a further year. This consists of salaries of 2 Restorative Justice Co-ordinators (£26,500 salary plus on costs) and £5,000 in resource costs for subsistence, room hire, car costs and other expenses. The posts will be supported by Midland Heart and located within Midland Heart premises.

The next 12 months of the project will be used to:

- Provide further evidence of the positive outcomes seen so far across a wider area.
- Analyse the benefits of RJ to individuals, communities and organisations over a longer period
- Develop a workable model for Registered Providers, West Midlands Police Birmingham City Council going forward which could be replicated across the force area.

This funding would support an enlarged WMP team of four officers from BWC and BN LPUs working alongside 3 staff from Midland Heart (Midland Heart will continue to fund one post from their own resources).

## Prediction for 12mth / 300 cases

### Calls for Service

Based on the team completing 300 cases over the next 12mths and using the same ratio of calls per case the below is a prediction of how many calls we would receive and the estimated reductions in demand **based solely on calls for service**: the estimated minimum saving would sit at **£10,278**. The figures however are heavily based on log markers within the OASIS police system which are currently under used so the true cost of savings is likely to be a lot higher.

Estimated		4mths prior to reporting to Midland Heart		4mths after case closed at Midland Heart	
		Before case reported	Costing's	After case closed	Costing's
RJ	Calls to Police	150	£6,900	45	£2,070
	arrests - NFA	4	£1,140	1	£285
	Arrests - Criminal proceedings	1	£593	0	£0
	Non Crimes	11	£5,500	3	£1,500
Total			£14,133		£3,855

## Cost of Investigations

Whilst the data above suggests what we would save in terms of basic demand (i.e. calls to 101/999 which would require police attendance), the more significant cost of ASB is associated with the investigation which is required beyond the initial attendance. Costing investigations is more difficult to calculate simply by reviewing calls for service, and so a case-study approach has been adopted.

Appended to this document is a detailed explanation of how the following costs were reached, but the headline figures are represented in the table below, and were obtained by conducting a matching exercise with cases from the Midland Heart pilot and *similar cases not dealt with as part of the pilot*:

<b>Case Classification</b>	<b>Average<sup>1</sup> cost per RJ case</b>	<b>Average cost per WMP ASB case</b>
High	£189.35	£2,787.75
Medium	£142.62	£987.20
Low	£114.23	£817.80
<i>Total average</i>	<i>£147.18</i>	<i>£1,441.14</i>

In other words, the Midland Heart pilot has been able to generate savings at a ratio of 1:10 (on average - the cost-efficiency is even greater with more complex cases). Even if every case the pilot team dealt with in the future was categorised as 'low' in terms of complexity, and only 100 cases were dealt with, this would suggest that there would be a £81,780 return on investment for the £65,000 costs of running the pilot (the ambition is to deal with 300 cases).

As suggested already, these savings are in addition to the general reduction in demand costs of £10,278 over 300 cases.

## Summary

It is important to be clear that the figures suggested here are based on a small sample: the savings predicted are based on the best estimates available at this time. Notwithstanding that the figures suggest a return on investment within 12 months, the real investment is in developing an even stronger business case that will appeal to our partners in housing provision. With compelling evidence from a larger-scale pilot, the ambition is to persuade RSL's and local authorities to invest in RJ services to the extent that they exponentially reduce future demand on police resources, whilst improving victim satisfaction and community cohesion.

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<sup>1</sup> The average relates to 14 matched ASB cases.



# Funding Proposal for Staffordshire and West Midlands CRC

## 1 CONTEXT

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Staffordshire and West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) is one of 21 Probation CRCs across England and Wales which share Police and Local Authority boundaries. Probation's role is to protect the public, reduce re-offending, enforce the punishment of offenders, rehabilitate offenders to lead law-abiding lives and uphold the interests of victims of crime.

The CRC supervises over 9000 offenders in the community across the West Midlands - including those subject to community sentences (Community Orders or Suspended Sentence Orders) and those released from prison on licence and supervision. Approximately 85-90% of all offenders that are assessed by the CRC have problematic issues that are related to attitudes, thinking and behaviour connected to the crime they have committed, and may be appropriate for restorative justice or restorative activity.

Alongside direct delivery of its core offender management services, which includes the delivery of accredited offending behaviour programmes and Community Payback, the CRC delivers a range of interventions which are designed to address offenders' resettlement and rehabilitation needs with the ultimate focus being the reduction of reoffending, fewer victims and the promotion of safer communities.

### **Restorative Justice in the CRC**

Restorative Justice (RJ) is the process of bringing together victims of crime together with those responsible for causing that crime in order to find a positive way forward. It gives both parties the opportunity to embrace the possibility of restoration and closure following such harmful behaviour and puts at its centre, the way in which communities can ameliorate the impact of crime.

SWM CRC in partnership with West Midlands Police and Youth Justice Board will be looking to develop a Restorative Justice model of centralised dedicated delivery in the next financial year through the PCC and Victim Commission. The PCC may be aware of a briefing paper prepared by Inspector Tom Joyce which outlines some of these proposals and to which SWM CRC is a willing partner. However, as a precursor to this submission, it is evident that the CRC is not in as good a

position as its partners, to be able to provide Restorative Justice and restorative activities for the benefit of victims and offenders. An RJ pilot is being run in the Wolverhampton and Walsall area, which has seen some successes in delivering RJ conferences (over 13 so far) through a multi-agency response with amongst others, the council, local police and prisons. However, we are not able to roll out such a pilot across the West Midlands, as the training needed which had been funded by the National Offender Management Service, that was utilised to develop staff capabilities to run the pilot, has now ended.

### **Why do we believe that Restorative Justice is effective?**

A broad array of activities in the CRC may come under the umbrella of restorative justice, defined by the principles of collective involvement of victim and perpetrator, consent from all parties to the decision made, the consideration of the social context of a crime and the involvement of the broader community in reducing further criminal activity by the offender.

The development of restorative justice in the CRC is being strongly influenced by the results of reports independently undertaken for the Ministry of Justice between 2002 and 2008. These reports aimed to establish the procedure and evidential basis for the application of restorative justice within the UK Criminal Justice System.

The evidence produced on behalf of the Ministry of Justice indicates that, based on three different restorative justice projects, those engaged in restorative justice **commit significantly fewer offences** over the subsequent two years than those taking a standard path within the CJS. The Ministry of Justice final report also states that **78% of victims would recommend the process** and **80% of offenders stated that it made them less likely to reoffend** in the future. It is considered that for every £1 spent on Restorative Justice, it will save the area £8.

Further evaluation (Wager, O’Keefe, Bates and Emerson undated) found that:

- 35% of those who did not complete an RJ programme were reconvicted compared to 18% for those who did.
- Across the three RJ activities of conferencing, written letter of apology and completing victim empathy work – all had rates of reoffending that were 30% lower than that what was expected.
- The skills of the Restorative Justice facilitator appear to be crucial to the success of delivery and outcomes generated for victims and offenders.
- Evaluation also showed that victim empathy worked in reducing reoffending.

## **2 PROPOSED PROJECT DETAILS**

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The CRC is currently engaging the restorative justice model in the pilot capacity mentioned previously, however the coverage implied by the distribution of these services limits the extent to which restorative justice can be applied across the CRC. In this regard the CRC is similar to many other criminal justice organisations who have incorporated elements of restorative justice formally within their systems but due to a lack of funding, have stopped short of adopting restorative measures as standard practice.

Given the evidence of successful outcomes for victims and offenders, the SWM CRC wants to invest in the training and development of its staff in:

- utilising restorative principles better in its work with offenders which reduce crime and the number of victims caused
- develop dedicated and ultimately accredited RJ practitioners who are able to deliver RJ conferencing with partners, in both a dedicated multi-agency team for the benefit of the wider community, as well as in our day to day business.

**What are the reparative activities that we intend to use:**

- face to face victim/offender Restorative Justice conferencing facilitated by trained RJ accredited facilitators involving professional preparatory and post care support available to both parties. This is the most effective method of delivering RJ and in the longer term we are in support of the ideas around a dedicated RJ multi-agency team.
- exploration of the use of technology to deliver that face to face meeting e.g. videolink / teleconferencing
- audio/visual feedback from victim/offender shared with other party e.g. use of ipads to record a message which provides the effectiveness of visually seeing your perpetrator/victim if either party cannot commit to a face to face meeting.
- Contract agreement – victim may seek agreement that they may not be targeted again or come into contact with perpetrator
- Letter of apology (LOA) – victim may request a letter from their perpetrator apologising/explaining their behaviour. LOA could be completed by offender as a reparative exercise in itself as part of wider victim empathy developmental work.
- Victim empathy sessions – proven to be effective in reducing reoffending especially if restorative principles are used. Can be the beginning of work completed by offender to begin to think about their victim and maybe progress into more directly restorative activities.
- Direct reparation – usually delivered to communities through Unpaid Work but individual victims may request offender to complete a specific piece of work to repay for the harm caused directly to them in their area. This task may come out of a RJ conference as part of a resolution.
- Deferred sentence and pre-court disposals – this is an area that is sorely under utilised by the Courts due to the current lack of dedicated provision and is something we know reduces reoffending and improves victim satisfaction of their experiences of the legal system.

### **3 FUNDING REQUEST BREAKDOWN**

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To ensure consistency of staff training, we intend to utilise Restorative Solutions, the organisation that has delivered NOMs funded training to staff and partner agencies in the Walsall and Wolverhampton pilot and are nationally recognised for building RJ capacity.

Training involves:

- 3 day Practitioner training for 10 practitioners to become able to deliver Restorative Justice conferencing

- Day 1 of this training can accommodate a further 10 people to receive 'Foundation' RJ training
- An overall cost of £2850 per course

We intend to offer 60 of our Probation staff the opportunity to attend the 3 day training course at a cost of **£17,100**. This will provide a further 60 spaces for the Foundation Training.

In addition, we intend to deliver Foundation training to as many of the remaining 230 probation practitioners (Probation Officers and Probation Service Officers) across the organisation at a cost of £950 per day, 20 spaces per day. If we can cover 220 spaces, 11 events are needed at a cost of overall £10,400.

We also intend to support practitioners to becoming accredited by the completion of a BTEC level 3 Advanced Award Practitioner Training in Restorative Approaches through Restorative Solutions which will include a written assignment after they have completed two conferences. We would offer this initially to 13 of the staff practitioner trained at a cost of an extra £ 325 p/p (in all £4225).

**Bid Breakdown:**

- Cost of all Practitioner Training -	£17,100
- Cost of all additional Foundation day training -	£10,400
- Cost of practitioner completion of BTEC award -	£ 4,225
Overall bid:	<b>£31,725</b>

**4 ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

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This additional investment in the development of CRC staff will enhance the quality of services that are offered to victims and offenders in the West Midlands. It will assist to build the capacity for restorative activities to be delivered not just within the CRC but in the future, with partners in responding to pre-court matters, anti-social behaviour, burglaries and violent offences. This investment will ensure that Restorative Justice and consequent victim satisfaction is fully embedded in day to day probation practice and this specialism is developed that will put us on a par with our partners when it comes to developing a dedicated RJ team across the West Midlands.

The training will be rolled out across a two year period to ensure that existing and new staff are given the opportunity to attend.

**5 PROJECT EVALUATION AND MONITORING**

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The tangible effect of this investment will be monitored and reported in a number of ways to provide a combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment. The following methodology will be applied for evaluation:

The evaluation process will be carried out on a continual and reflective basis to ensure that the performance of the service is consistently of the highest quality, and that outcomes are evidenced.

This process will be based in the use of the data recording and monitoring infrastructure present across the CRC, the expertise embedded within the central data management team and the nomination of evaluative roles within each locality.

The headline impact on reoffending will be evaluated through a composite of an individually-comparative statistical approach to evidence a change in offending behaviour, and comparison to the Offender Group Reconviction Scale. To undertake this, agreement will be established with West Midlands Police Force within each operational area in order to facilitate access to previous convictions data for those engaging with services. This information will be sourced from the Police National Computer and throughout this process, it will be ensured that information will be managed securely and that consent is obtained prior to information being requested.

The analysis of reoffending data will centre on comparing the extent of offending in the year previous to the client engaging Restorative Justice activity to the year following completion of engagement with the CRC. This analysis will go beyond descriptive statistics to define the degree of statistical significance with which a reduction in reoffending can be asserted, complemented with qualitative and quantitative evidence of the quality of the interventions delivered. A further comparison will be made to the OGRS4 score produced for each offender based on their conviction history and demographic factors, such that the individually-based analysis may be complemented with the cohort data at the root of OGRS.

In order to ensure that key learning may be accessed by others, a full evaluative report will be provided detailing the outcomes. This report will detail core qualitative findings from methods such as feedback questionnaires, and quantitative data analysis concerning the impact of the project, focusing on the achievement of outcomes in contribution to desistance. This full report will be complemented by a brief analyses of intermediate outcomes produced at 6 months. This approach to reporting will ensure that the evaluation of key outcomes is made available rapidly following the end of the grant period to inform similar services in the planning or implementation stages, and that a fully transparent approach to the reporting of outcomes within reoffending is taken to which other services may be compared.

## **6 ADDED VALUE, QUALITY ASSURANCE AND FUTURE GOALS**

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The CRC is a crucial partner in the development of a strategic approach to improving victim provision and ensuring that victims have a key voice within Criminal Justice Services in the West Midlands. The outcomes and evidence obtained through this investment will contribute to developing Restorative Justice practice across the region. The proposal is aligned with the national RJ strategy through:

- Accessibility – the proposal will allow the CRC to increase the circumstances in which RJ is available to victims in stages of the criminal justice system;
- Awareness – increasing the volume of staff trained in RJ techniques will enable the CRC to increase awareness and understanding of what RJ entails and where and how it is applicable within the criminal justice system;

- Strengthening capacity – ensuring all appropriate CRC staff are trained across the West Midlands to build on existing expertise that exists in limited geographical areas, and;
- Evidence – the agreed reporting will contribute to a growing evidence base across the region.

Increasing the existing expertise within CRC practitioners, will enable the CRC to work toward attaining the Restorative Service Quality Mark awarded by The Restorative Justice Council - the quality assurance body for the field of restorative practice. The Restorative Justice Council promotes best practice and provides quality assurance.

The Restorative Service Quality Mark (RSQM), which is backed by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), requires organisations to show that they are consistently meeting six Restorative Service Standards. Both the standards and the RSQM were developed in consultation with experts and practitioners in the restorative field as part of the MoJ's Restorative Justice Action Plan 2012.