

**To:**

1. Permanent Secretary;
2. All ministers;
3. Home Secretary

**From:** NR **Crime  
Strategy Unit, Crime  
Directorate**

**SCS: Dan Greaves, Crime  
Director**

**Date:** 16 April 2020

## **CORONAVIRUS FUNDING FOR CHARITIES**

### **Issue**

The Government has pledged £750 million to ensure charities can continue their vital work supporting the country during the coronavirus outbreak. Of this, £360m has been set aside for Government Departments to distribute nationally to charities which are seeing demand go up and funding sources squeezed as a result of COVID-19. In order to access funding, departments have to bid to DCMS and the sponsoring departments will be required to contribute 20% of funding for their bid. We are seeking your agreement for the Home Office's bids.

### **Timing**

**Urgent.** DCMS has asked departments to return their bids by 10.00 Friday 17 April. We have advised this it is unlikely we will meet this deadline and that we expect to provide our bids to them early afternoon Friday 17 April. Therefore, your comments are requested by 12 noon.

### **Recommendation**

That you (Home Secretary):

- **Agree** to the submission of the following bids:
  - Domestic Abuse (joint HO, MHCLG and MoJ) to provide £60m support for the next 3–6 months (paragraph 5a);
  - Vulnerable Children £9.75m (Paragraph 5b);
  - Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Paragraph 5c);
  - Adult Victims of Modern Slavery (Paragraph 5d).
- **Agree** to the following prioritisation of the bids:
  - Top priority: Domestic Abuse
  - Equal second priority: Vulnerable Children, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Adult Victims of Modern Slavery

- **Note** other areas where we know OGDs are pursuing bids in which we have an interest in and **agree** that we should be ready to explicitly support given shared policy interests (paragraph 5);

## Annexes

**Annex A:** Criteria, Process and Timeline

**Annex B:** Proposed bid documents (attached to covering email)

## Background

1. **The Government has pledged £750 million to ensure charities can continue their vital work supporting the country during the coronavirus outbreak.** A package of grant funds worth £750 million will be provided to support charities that are providing key frontline services to vulnerable people affected by the pandemic but which are at risk of financial hardship. The funding will be handled by the National Lottery Community Fund as well as individual Government Departments and will be open to applications shortly.
2. The funding package comprises three elements:
  - £360m from government departments to national organisations (although a large portion of this is specifically ear-marked for hospices);
  - £370m to National Lottery Communities Fund for distribution to grassroots charities;
  - Government match-funding public donations of at least £20m to the National Emergencies Trust appeal, and match-funding public donations to the BBC Big Night In fundraising event on 23 April. These monies will be distributed through local Community Foundations.
3. The £360m settlement to central government will be allocated by central government to charities based on evidence of service need. This will include up to c.£200m support for hospices, with the rest going to organisations like St Johns' Ambulance and Citizens Advice as well as charities supporting vulnerable children, victims of domestic abuse, or disabled people. Taking into account the £200m commitment to hospices, the total sum **available to all other charities will not exceed £160m and is likely to be less.** In order to access the funds available, government departments will have to **commit a 20% contribution.** Additional funding criteria is listed at Annex A.

## Discussion

4. Support for victims of Domestic Abuse was cited in the original Government announcement for this Fund and we were heavily engaged with HMT as the policy was being developed. Support for Domestic Abuse charities will be at the heart of our bid. However, our engagement with the voluntary sector and charities to support vulnerable people goes beyond this one issue. The sector plays a significant role in developing and delivery policies in relation to the exploitation of the most vulnerable who are particularly at risk to the effects of COVID-19. We are therefore recommending that, in addition to victims of Domestic Abuse, the Government should support charities working directly with vulnerable children

(including victims of child sexual exploitation and county lines), refugees and asylum seekers, and adult victims of modern slavery.

5. Outline details of the four proposals that we would recommend promoting to the fund are as follows including Domestic Abuse, but also including include vulnerable children (including victims of child sexual abuse and county lines, refugees and asylum seekers and adult victims of modern slavery) who are all groups that we believe will be disproportionately affected by Covid-19 (under the radar, limited structure and contact etc):

**a) Domestic Abuse – Home Office budget £5m (from existing funds)**

HO recommend a joint bid with MHCLG and MOJ to cover refugees and community based services of approx. £60m over 6 months. The Domestic Abuse Commissioner agrees with this figure and it reflects feedback from domestic abuse stakeholders. As MHCLG and MOJ disperse the majority of front line funding, we would recommend that we use up to £5m of HO budget which was originally aimed at perpetrator programmes but would be difficult to spend during COVID to support the MHCLG and MOJ bids – in return for controls and leverage over how the overall pot is spent.

**b) Vulnerable Children – £7.254m - £9.754m including 20% HO contribution**

Under the Covid-19 restrictions, the majority of children will be spending more time at home and online, where there may be increased risks to their safety and wellbeing, and reduced protective factors, such as school attendance and face-to-face contact with statutory and other support services. The Home Office bid on vulnerable children will cover child sexual abuse (online and contact abuse) £2.5-5m, missing persons £254,000 and child criminal exploitation (including county lines and potentially serious violence) £4.5m.

This funding will address short term capacity issues linked to changing demand and allow services to flexibly respond to deliver support services in new ways that help to tackle the threat and mitigate/manage risks to vulnerable children and young people in the context of the COVID-19 response. This could include enabling a switch to home working (equipment and technology) to sustain multiagency coordination and support services, funding communications campaigns to raise awareness of risks and support services, and funding to increase helpline capacity and increase online support for victims. Home office contributions to meet 20% thresholds can be met from repurposing existing budget lines. Delivery would be through existing contracts where possible and commercially compliant, and may require a rapid competed fund with a focus on getting money quickly to the charities that need it and / or direct awards. These figures are all dependent on deconfliction and agreement of complementary bids from OGDs.

**c) Refugees and Asylum Seekers – proposal is £3m including HO 20% contribution.**

Funding to support refugees/asylum seekers where Covid 19 and related restrictions are leading to increased need: for example, difficulty accessing more limited food supplies, this cohort's reliance on cash payments, limited access to IT resources to avail of remote support, impact of restrictions on movement.

Noting here the increased risk to social distancing/NHS if people don't understand and adhere to requirements and role of charities in helping with

this, and health issues in this sector which make them a higher risk for the NHS.

Delivery mechanism is under discussion with Commercial but our preference is for a competition to allocate the money to three bidders (ie three lots of £1m) for them either to disperse further (with appropriate assurances in place) or use themselves to provide support directly related to Covid 19.

**d) Adult Victims of Modern Slavery - proposal is £2m including HO 20% contribution.**

Modern slavery victims are recognised as a vulnerable cohort in society and can have significant physical and mental health needs. Modern slavery is a harmful and hidden crime and its victims may be especially isolated and hidden from view during the coronavirus outbreak. The bid is to support The Salvation Army, the prime contractor of the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract and their thirteen sub-contractor charities who are facing increasing pressures as a result of the covid-19 pandemic and allow them to respond flexibly to deliver support services in new ways. The proposal is to provide immediate support for victims, which includes: rapidly securing additional accommodation; a potential increase in financial subsistence; rollout of a card payment system; food parcels; recruiting additional staff; and enhancing connectivity to ensure continued access to support services. The funding would be delivered through the existing Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract that the Home Office holds with The Salvation Army.

**Do you agree that the Home Office should be for financial support for organisations working on wider vulnerabilities (vulnerable children, refugees and asylum seekers and victims of modern slavery as well as victims of Domestic Abuse?**

**6. Other Government departments are pursuing bids in which we have an interest:**

- **Drug treatment and recovery services:** There are additional proposals in development including for providers of drug treatment and recovery services, that we should be ready to explicitly support given policy interests. This DHSC and Public Health England bid to support charities delivering substance misuse support services is for £450K which would be administered by the main umbrella body for this sector, Collective Voice, and will result in a number of smaller grants of up to £30K to small and medium sized voluntary sector organisations. Home Office officials were consulted on the proposals, and agree with the approach which supports the Home Office objectives of reducing crime by ensuring those with drug or alcohol dependence are able to continue to access healthcare and recovery support at a time when these services are under significant pressure. As an additional safeguard we have requested that the drug Recovery Champion, Dr Ed Day, is consulted on the criteria for issuing these grants.
- **Vulnerable children:** The Home Office is leading cross government weekly meetings on vulnerable children with social policy departments. We will identify areas where we can mutually support and deconflict bids which benefit vulnerable children. For example, DfE are preparing a larger bid on supporting vulnerable children which includes support for the NSPCC helpline (and its promotion) which will support concerned adults on where to go and what to do about any concerns around children's welfare. This is in line with

the GPS MIG discussion on hidden crimes and the need to identify wider protective 'eyes and ears' in communities.

**Do you agree that officials should provide support to other Government Departments where there is a shared policy interest?**

7. DCMS are in the process of agreeing funding criteria for the £370m support package to grassroots community organisations and funding will be open for applications from the end of April or beginning of May. It is not clear at this stage how the national and local packages will link together over and above a consistent theme of the assisting the most vulnerable within the context of COVID-19. The Home Office has a strong relationship with the National Lottery which is keen to coordinate and align funding activities where applicable.

**Devolved administrations**

As health is a devolved matter, most of the response to COVID-19 in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is being led by the Devolved Administrations (DAs). However, this funding provides UK Government with an opportunity to project itself positively into the devolved nations.

We are clarifying with HMT the geographic scope of the £360 million settlement to central Government but have framed our bids in terms of the territorial extent of our functions e.g. the proposals for refugees are drafted as UK-wide, and those for modern slavery for England and Wales.

If our final bids go beyond England, we will engage with the Devolved Administrations and other stakeholders in the devolved nations to raise awareness of the opportunities the fund presents.

**Finance**

The Domestic Abuse bid is anticipated by HMT. The proposal is to provide a further £60m funding. This will be funded by Home Office £5m; MHCLG £5m and £2m MOJ which will release £60m of new funding. The priorities and objectives of this new funding have been discussed at length with HMT colleagues and plans to distribute funds have been developed across all departments using existing trusted suppliers.

The remaining bids are less well developed but have only been developed this week. However, the bids are smaller as with Domestic Abuse we are seeking to use and support existing delivery partners which greatly reduces our financial risk. The Vulnerable Children proposal is for £9.75m, funded by £1.95m Home office and £7.8m new money. Funding proposal Refugees and Asylum Seekers is to create a £3m fund, funded by £0.6m from the Home Office and £2.4m new money. Funding proposal Adult Victims of Modern Slavery will create a fund on £2m, (£0.4m HO; £1.6m new money) to be distributed by the Salvation Army to a range of smaller charities in this sector.

Due to time pressures we will continue work with policy teams, Finance Business Partners and commercial colleagues in parallel with the bidding process to ensure

that all bids are scrutinised for vfm and propriety, but meeting the urgent need and trying to reduce loss of life and harm to victims remains the key priority.

### **Next Steps**

- 17 April – proforma proposals to reach DCMS
- 23 April – DCMS / HMT / No.10 star chambers
- End April – Confirmation re; funding decisions, followed by issuing an MoU and mobilising delivery.

### **Press / Handling**

**There has been increasing calls in the media for more government support to be provided to domestic abuse charities due to the impact of ongoing social distancing restrictions.** Most recently this has been highlighted by media reporting comments made by the Victims Commissioner Dame Vera Baird during a HASC evidence session, saying that during lockdown 5 women a week are dying at the hands of men, instead of the usual two. The increased risk of online child sexual abuse and the need for support to charities has also been covered, however not to the same extent as domestic abuse. Recently, the Guardian published a letter from Christine Jardine calling for an increase funding for children's helplines. Furthermore, the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner has also warned about charities not being able to fundraise as effectively.

On further affected groups, there have been some calls in media for additional financial assistance for those seeking asylum or with no recourse to public funds. Often spearheaded by charities and campaigners, these calls tend to receive coverage from outlets such as the Independent and Guardian with less further reporting than domestic abuse.

**Government support packages such as the £750m and a separate £2m Home Office fund for domestic abuse helplines have generally been received well in the media, however there is some criticism that until funding starts reaching charities, the most vulnerable are still suffering.**

**With domestic abuse being heavily trailed as a key recipient of funding from the £750m fund, there is a risk that critics will question whether £40-60m is enough to support the sector, and questions may be raised how such a prominent part of the announcement will receive less than 10% of funding.** This may be exacerbated if the amount of support for the accommodation-based services, which have long been seen as underfunded and insufficiently resourced to meet existing need, let alone potential spikes in demand.

**Regardless of the split of funding, there is a risk that individual charities will complain in the media that their relevant areas are not being properly resourced or that they risk closure without further intervention.** This, however, will be exacerbated if funding is only exclusively provided to support domestic abuse charities.

Other charities, such as those supporting children or modern slavery victims, may see this exercise in the department showing what the priorities are, and ask why children and modern slavery victims are not considered as at risk as domestic abuse victims.

**Press Office will liaise with policy colleagues and other governmental department press officers on next steps for announcing funding once a decision has been made.** Media plans will be sent up separately to be cleared in the usual way.

**Copy list**

Private Office – COVID19, Submissions, Special Advisers, Press Office, Parliamentary Team, Tricia Hayes, Julia Kinniburgh, Charu Ghorasia, Glyn Williams, Dan Greaves, David Kuennsberg, Simon Baugh, Kenny Bowie Krisztina Katona,

NR	Christian Papaleontiou, Kate Carr, Tony Grimshaw,	
NR	Nicola Thomas & Hannah Gregory,	NR
NR		
NR	Marcus Starling,	NR
NR		

## **Annex A – Timeline and Funding Criteria**

The money will be prioritised by DCMS and allocated to departments where a clear Covid19 risk has been identified. The funds will be prioritised towards those charities that are actively supporting the response to Covid 19 but now experiencing financial challenges, such as surge in demand for their services. Departments are required to support the bids through funding at least 20% of the grants to be made. DCMS will try to ensure that there is a collaborative support for the sector and try to limit double funding of initiatives.

The grants are intended to provide short term liquidity for an important sector but there is no pre-determined resource/capital split. The bids are restricted to domestic charities, not those working overseas, and it is recognised that this won't help every charity in need but this is an additional support to the measures that have already been announced such as the furlough scheme, which charities can already use.

### **Process**

- A 'proposal' proforma has been issued that needs to be returned to HMT / DCMS by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April.
- w/c 20 April – Star Chambers (involving DCMS/HMT/No 10) w.b. 20 April.
- Criteria will focus on evidence of need such as increase in demand, clarity of goal/effect, deliverability within 3-6months,
- Departments have responsibility for funding at least 20% of each bid.
- Accounting Officers will also need satisfy themselves that the usual propriety and value for money criteria are met.
- The nature of this announcement suits collaborative bids and the focus is on making a difference to those at risk or vulnerable and working with the sector to support them.