

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service for Professionals

Statement of Outcomes

Introduction

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) is understood as sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards themselves or others, and can in some cases be abusive. (Derived from Hackett, 2014).

There are no accurate figures on the full spectrum of HSB. One major UK study found that two-thirds of contact child sexual abuse was perpetrated by other children and young people (Radford et al, 2011), with recent reports of children sexually abusing other children doubling in the two years to 2019, according to police figures recently obtained by BBC Panorama.

Additionally, there is limited evidence on HSB, particularly on professionals' knowledge and confidence in identifying and appropriately responding to HSB. We know that local areas need and want support to improve their strategic understanding of and responses to HSB, as evidenced by the testimonies on the Everyone's Invited website and findings and recommendations from the [Ofsted Review into sexual abuse in schools](#).

Purpose

The Home Office, hereafter referred to as 'the Authority', is seeking to award grant funding to support the delivery of the UK Government's commitments to '**expand our understanding of best practice in identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour, including by improving our understanding of peer-on-peer abuse**', and to '**consider how to make resources and training on harmful sexual behaviour and sexual abuse available to both social workers and designated safeguarding leads**', as set out in the 2021 [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) and [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](#), respectively.

This funding will pilot a minimum three-month service, with potential for extension, to deliver England-wide targeted support to safeguarding professionals on tackling HSB (working with both children displaying these behaviours and those affected by them). The service will also be used to collate evidence and intelligence on the challenges local partners are facing, in order to inform future policy decisions.

Outcomes

The support service should deliver the following:

- Increase in professionals' knowledge and confidence in tackling HSB, leading to early identification of HSB in young people.
- Earlier, more joined-up and trauma-informed support for young people displaying harmful sexual behaviour including response to underlying issues/trauma.
- Earlier, more joined-up and trauma-informed support for young people impacted by/ experiencing harmful sexual behaviour.
- Professionals understand how to begin implementing a whole-system, trauma - informed response to HSB to ensure a change in the culture in how harmful sexual behaviour is perceived and responded to.
- Greater evidence base of the issues and incidents local professionals particularly struggle with when responding to HSB, to inform future policy development.
- Greater understanding of what a 'best practice' whole-system response to HSB looks like, which can be collated and shared nationally.

Key deliverables

The service must be targeted at designated safeguarding leads within primary and secondary schools and alternative provision. Support should also be available to early years provision, colleges and wider safeguarding professionals (including police, social workers and health practitioners).

Professionals should be able to get in touch with the support service – at a minimum via telephone and email – for ad hoc advice and signposting to existing materials/resources. More tailored follow-up sessions may be offered based on triaging of need. Support and advice offered should include:

- a. Providing overarching policy guidance for headteachers and senior leaders on tackling HSB, including on the development of whole school/system approaches and sharing of best practice and available resources.
- b. Advice to designated safeguarding leads and frontline practitioners on individual cases or incidents of HSB, particularly those which do not meet Local Authority safeguarding thresholds.
- c. Signposting to relevant materials and contacts around CSA, including statutory safeguarding partners and voluntary sector providers.

To help expand the evidence base on identifying and responding to HSB, the successful grant recipient(s) will be required to engage with professionals to collate evidence and insight around local approaches to tackling HSB to identify examples of positive practice, as well as evidence of the barriers to successful coordination in the response to HSB.

Additionally, a light-touch evaluation of the service must be undertaken by the successful grant recipient(s) to assess impact and effectiveness of the intervention and to help determine value for money.

Funding

In total the Authority will make up to £400,000 available to support the delivery of the HSB Support Service in England. This will be provided over a grant period of approximately 3 months during FY 21/22, from January 2022 to March 2022, with the potential for extension into next financial year should funding be available and subject to commercial considerations.

To ensure value for money, a charge per contact payment plan should be in place with a clear stipulation within the funding agreement for a minimum staffing requirement over the lifetime of the support service.

Overview of requirements and eligibility

Bids can be either singular or in collaboration but must be put forward by a lead who can be the accountable body on behalf of the partnership.

The Authority will assess bids against the following criteria:

- *How support will be provided to professionals in tackling HSB, incorporating existing research and evidence.*
- *Approach to mobilisation including clear timeframes demonstrating your ability to deliver the service no later than January 2022, and your ability and capacity to deliver the service beyond March 2022 should a grant extension be agreed.*

- *Strategy for raising the profile of the service with its target audience.*
- *Identification and mitigations for key risks, including those posed by continued and potential Covid-19 restrictions.*
- *Expertise in responding to harmful sexual behaviour, including a thorough knowledge of existing HSB training materials and resources.*
- *Experience of delivering cultural change and supporting whole systems responses on HSB or a similar issue.*
- *Experience in collaboratively working with statutory safeguarding professionals, in particular professionals from educational settings, and a comprehensive understanding of wider multi-agency safeguarding networks and approaches.*
- *Plans to measure and monitor success in delivering the pilot throughout the lifetime of the grant funding period.*
- *Plans for a light-touch evaluation of the support service, including assessing effectiveness of the service, disseminating lessons learned from the evaluation and using the findings to inform future activity.*
- *Demonstration of how value for money will be achieved.*

Please bear in mind the feasibility of your proposal within time and funding constraints, as well as lessons learned from work to date.

The successful grant recipient(s) will be asked to produce a delivery plan setting out how they will achieve the agreed outcomes, performance profile of planned activities to support their achievement, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and timescales.

Outputs

The funding must be used to:

1. Establish a method for professionals to get in touch with HSB Support Specialists / Services. As a minimum this should be via phone and email with additional more innovative methods welcome. This should be accompanied by a clear communications plan to raise awareness of the service, particularly amongst educational professionals.
2. Provide practical support and advice to professionals from suitably qualified and experienced operatives, whether by telephone or other communication medium. This provision should be open to receive queries between the hours of 8am – 8pm Monday – Friday. Where deemed necessary, tailored follow up sessions should be arranged for service users.
3. The provision of support should be based on a clear map of advice to help structure conversations with practitioners – both on individual cases and on wider systems change. The provider should collate a directory of useful HSB links, materials and resources, including where possible key local/regional approaches/contacts.
4. Signpost users to appropriate existing guidance, training materials and resources and where necessary to support services.
5. Gather evidence on local safeguarding approaches to tackling HSB, including but not limited to examples of good practice, as well as challenges in identifying and responding to HSB and barriers for multi-agency safeguarding.
6. Collect feedback from users to monitor the service being provided and address negative feedback. The successful recipient(s) is expected to continuously work to improve the level of service provided to users.

7. Provide defined, anonymised monitoring information regularly to the Authority in order to allow for accurate monitoring of the funded support, including but not limited to expenditure and emerging issues and trends.
8. Conduct a light touch evaluation to determine impact and effectiveness of service and value for money. Whilst the Authority is not obligated to accept and act on recommendations, the recipient(s) may, on evaluation of the service, make recommendations on this provision.

Monitoring and Reporting

To monitor the volume of queries and assistance provided to the user, the successful grant recipient(s) will be required to provide a monthly monitoring report to the Authority. The list below is the minimum monitoring and reporting requirement that needs to be included in the quarterly reports. The final monitoring and reporting requirements will be set out in the grant agreement between the parties.

Impact of service and value for money will be measured by:

- Number of contacts to the support service (including but not restricted to calls answered, calls not answered [percentage, and identify any patterns of when calls are unanswered], call backs made, average call duration, instant message chats [if used], e-mails received, e-mails replied to)
- Qualitative feedback from service users (including a pre- and post-intervention qualitative assessment of confidence of identifying and responding to HSB)

Key insights from service users will be analysed to inform future work, including HSB patterns and trends reported to the service, and examples of best practice which can be piloted more widely.

Due Diligence Requirements

During the process, before advising the successful bidder, proposals will be subject to due diligence checks including financial, commercial compliance and extremism.

Location and Geographical Scope

The successful application will be expected to have reach across England, and advertising, publicity and comms should have England-wide reach across safeguarding professionals.

Planned payment dates

The Authority will provide monthly payments in arrears with the final instalment paid on completion of the activity in March 2022 (unless an extension is agreed). Monthly payment amounts will be decided in relation to the overall funding allocation of the project.

Indicative Timetable

ACTION	DATES
Competition	
Advert placed on Contract Finder	19 October 2021
Open for Applications	19 October 2021
Clarification period opens	19 October 2021
Clarification period closes	2 November 2021 (12:00 midday)
Final response to Clarifications issued	5 November 2021 (12:00 midday)
Deadline for receipt of completed applications	16 November 2021 (12:00 midday)
Evaluations & Recommendation	W/C 15 November 2021
Notification of decision	Nov/Dec 2021
Grant Agreement and Supporting Documents sent out to successful applicant(s) for signature	Dec 2021