



# **Grant Funding Opportunity Raneem's Law**

**Strengthening the police response to domestic abuse by  
embedding independent, external domestic abuse  
specialists in control rooms**

## **Service Specification**

## Grant Funding Opportunity – Raneem’s Law

### **Introduction**

The government has committed to halving violence against women and girls (VAWG) in a decade and in December 2025 they published their new strategy [Freedom from Violence and Abuse: a cross-government strategy to build a safer society for women and girls Volume 1 Strategy](#). The strategy makes the following commitment:

*We will roll out ‘Raneem’s Law’ to all forces in England and Wales by the end of this parliament to improve the police response to domestic abuse victims. These specialists will review risk assessments, quality assure responses, and advise officers being dispatched to live incidents, so no opportunity to protect a victim is missed. Already operating in Bedfordshire, Humberside, Northamptonshire, Northumbria, and West Midlands, this model is delivering potentially life-saving support from the very first point of contact. Our goal is clear: when victims reach out, the police are ready to protect them.*

Thames Valley has been selected as one of the phase two force areas that will pilot Raneem’s Law.

Domestic abuse specialists are being introduced into police control rooms following the tragic death of Raneem Oudeh and her mother, Khaola Saleem, who were murdered by Raneem’s ex-partner in August 2018. There had previously been 13 reports made to the police regarding concerns for Raneem’s safety. On the night she was killed, Raneem made four emergency calls to 999, but the police failed to respond in time.

‘Raneem’s Law’ aims to strengthen the police response to domestic abuse by embedding independent, external domestic abuse specialists within police control rooms. These specialists will help ensure that domestic abuse calls are assessed, managed and responded to effectively, and to ensure opportunities to safeguard victims are not missed.

In February 2025, the Home Office began working with five forces under phase one to launch ‘Raneem’s Law’ and scope out a refined model. Forces were selected based on having some existing provision in this space and the Government were able to test out a variety of models. Under phase two, a more consistent, refined model of ‘Raneem’s Law’ will be piloted which has been developed based on internal light-touch process evaluation of phase one and feedback gathered from phase one forces. Ultimately, it is anticipated that ‘Raneem’s Law’ will be implemented in all 43 police forces in England and Wales, and underpinned by statutory guidance.

### **Opportunity for grant funding**

The Home Office has awarded grant funding to the PCC to enable independent, external domestic abuse specialists to be embedded in the two Force Control Rooms (FCR) and two Police Call Centres in Thames Valley. Phase two pilot forces must mobilise at pace with the Home Office requesting that Thames Valley mobilise on or as soon as possible after 1 April 2026.

As a result, the PCC is launching a grant funding opportunity for a delivery partner/s to provide independent, external domestic abuse specialists. Funding has been confirmed for the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027 and it is possible that the funding may be extended for a further period of 12 months.

## **Domestic abuse specialists**

### Essential criteria

The following criteria are essential:

- a. The domestic abuse specialists must be independent from police staff and co-located within the FCRs/ Police Call Centres which are based in Kidlington (Police Call Centre) and Abingdon (FCR) in Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes (FCR and Police Call Centre).
- b. The role is primarily desk-based, focused on supporting staff within the FCR, by carrying out the activities listed under the section titled 'role of the domestic abuse specialist in the FCR and Police Call Centre'.
- c. The specialist's role is primarily to work alongside police officers and staff to improve their response to victims.

### Considerations, skills and standards

The domestic abuse specialist provider should use its discretion to appoint suitable candidates who will be independent from policing. The domestic abuse specialists must be sufficiently independent to feel empowered to influence and drive improvements within the FCR. Home Office guidance recommends that the following is considered as a guide when recruiting the independent domestic abuse specialists:

- a. The domestic abuse specialists should have experience of directly supporting victims of domestic abuse. Experience of working with the police is also beneficial. A qualified independent domestic violence advisor (IDVA) would likely be a suitable candidate for the role, but this qualification is by no means necessary.
- b. The domestic abuse specialists should have a good understanding of risk assessments, safety planning and the typologies of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse caseworkers experienced in dealing with cases at a range of risk levels, may also be well suited to observing movements in risk level.
- c. The domestic abuse specialists should have a thorough understanding of the local specialist services available to support victims of domestic abuse, including 'By and For' services, and be able to make informed referrals based on the type of support each service provides.
- d. The domestic abuse specialist should have received relevant domestic abuse training, including specialist knowledge training from a by and for service where possible. It would be advantageous for the domestic

abuse specialists to have experience of delivering domestic abuse training or facilitating workshops.

e. The domestic abuse specialists should be able to demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a crisis. Experience supporting victims of domestic abuse in moments of crisis/at the first point of contact would be advantageous – for example, domestic abuse helpline workers.

## **Role of the domestic abuse specialist in the FCR and Police Call Centre**

The domestic abuse specialists must be physically co-located with police staff in the FCR and Police Call Centre, and they will be given access to police systems.

The domestic abuse specialists will perform the following activities, however, the domestic abuse specialists activities should always be an addition to and never a replacement for the work of police staff:

a. Listen to domestic abuse calls and provide feedback to call handlers on victim engagement. The calls could be live or recently recorded (up to seven days) 101 or 999, to quality assure the standard of response victims are receiving and provide feedback to call handlers on victim engagement. These calls could be identified as domestic abuse calls for domestic abuse specialist review by staff, or domestic abuse specialists could review a sample of all calls to look for other domestic calls that may have been missed. The exact mechanism for identifying calls for domestic abuse specialist review will be discussed and agreed with Thames Valley Police (TVP), informed by their specific operational contexts. The domestic abuse specialists may also review body worn footage.

b. Review police risk assessments and identify any which may need a different risk grading/response time. This can be achieved by reviewing police logs and DASH/DARA risk assessments, alongside information from police systems, and escalating any cases of concern to the Inspector for review and possible regrading.

c. In addition to the information provided by staff, provide operational advice and information from manual intel checks of police systems to officers attending a scene. For example, the domestic abuse specialists can add notes to dispatch logs to indicate whether there is a protective order in place or provide background information around the persons involved based on other information from police systems.

d. The domestic abuse specialists will also work with the force to identify any additional areas where they may be able to help improve the police response to domestic abuse. Some examples of such activities include:

- Work with the Victims First Hub to coordinate support and facilitate referrals to specialist services, informed by knowledge of local provision.
- Support training sessions for staff. For example, in Humberside Police the domestic abuse specialists have provided input into the induction training undertaken by new call handlers.

- Attend incidents alongside officers to support with completing DASH/DARA risk assessments and providing safeguarding advice.

There is no expectation for the domestic abuse specialists to engage directly with victims, as their primary function is to support and upskill police staff.

The domestic abuse specialists will provide support, guidance and constructive challenge to police, working collaboratively with police to improve outcomes. The police retain ultimate authority.

Where a recommendation is made and declined, the police and domestic abuse specialists should each record the reasons for this. This will also help the domestic abuse specialists to learn what information is most useful to provide to police in their recommendations and most relevant to influence a change in risk assessment. However, the domestic abuse specialists should not take any police data outside of the force without written approval from the force. Any data that is then taken outside of the force should be anonymised.

The domestic abuse specialists should feel able to raise concerns and challenge practices where necessary. The process for escalating concerns will be set out and agreed between TVP, the OPCC and domestic abuse specialist provider/s at the beginning of implementation.

## **Geography of provision**

The Thames Valley has three locations for their FCR/ Police Call Centres with an FCR and Police Call Centre in Milton Keynes and in Oxfordshire there is a FCR in Abingdon and a Police Call Centre in Kidlington. The Kidlington post would also cover support of the Rapid Video Response (RVR).

Due to the geographical size of the area, we are open to bids to cover either the whole Thames Valley provision or bids that would cover either Milton Keynes or Oxfordshire, with two FTE posts in each area. We are open to flexibility in model delivery and options could include a lead provider model. If a lead provider model is selected then all delivery organisations would be subject to the same grant terms and conditions and delivery requirements.

If a provider intends to cover the whole of Thames Valley then they will need to ensure they evidence in their expression of interest how they will recruit staff locally recruited to efficiency losses from travelling between FCR locations.

## **Working arrangements for the domestic abuse specialists**

TVP has confirmed that peak domestic abuse demand is late afternoon into the night and from mid-week to weekend. This is what has informed the minimum requirements below. However, the pilot requires a flexible approach from the provider and hours may need to be adjusted according to need. Thames

Valley has opted for four staff to cover the three locations (Milton Keynes, Abingdon and Kidlington)

The minimum requirements that need to be fulfilled are outlined below:

- Four full-time equivalent domestic abuse specialist roles (at least 37 hours per week) with hours of coverage spread over all seven days of the week between the hours of 0800 and 2200. We could be flexible about how a service wanted to structure this, but coverage must be available at peak demand (1400-2000) and at weekends. These roles may be fulfilled by multiple part-time workers, however there must be at least four domestic abuse specialists to ensure resilience in the event of leave/sickness.
- The domestic abuse specialists will work from one of the below, however, the service should ensure resilience cover between the locations:
  - FCR in Milton Keynes
  - Police Call Centre in Milton Keynes
  - FCR in Abingdon
  - Police Call Centre and RVR in Kidlington

It is recommended that TVP should notify FCR staff at the start of each shift when the domestic abuse specialist is available. For example, during the announcements at the beginning of each shift Northumbria Police let staff know whether the domestic abuse specialist is working or not. This helps to remind police staff that they can reach out for advice from the DA specialist if needed.

The domestic abuse specialists should also advise FCR staff on other sources of support when they are not on shift. For example, they could create a poster detailing out of hours helplines offering crisis support for domestic abuse victims.

The domestic abuse specialists should not take annual leave at the same time.

Anyone working in the FCR is subject to enhanced vetting which will be expedited through Warwickshire and must be funded from the total grant available.

### **Support, monitoring and quality assurance of the DA specialist**

All domestic abuse specialists should have access to supervision and wellbeing support, even if this is not standard in their parent organisation. When completing the expression of interest form, providers will need to evidence that they have the right processes in place for their support and supervision.

In addition, TVP will also provide the domestic abuse specialists with access to appropriate wellbeing support that is offered to their call handlers.

The domestic abuse specialists' performance monitoring will be conducted by their line manager in their parent organisation. However, this will be informed by feedback from their supervisor in the FCR/ Police Call Centre.

The domestic abuse specialist provider must also consider the specialist's ongoing need for continuous professional development (CPD). The domestic abuse specialists should regularly spend time with their parent organisation to ensure their victim support skills and knowledge remain up to date. The Home Office have advised that one model to consider is using multiple domestic abuse specialist workers from a provider to perform the full-time role. In this way, the workers remain embedded and engaged with the work of their parent organisation and are able to better support the force.

### **Role of TVP**

TVP will work with the domestic abuse specialist provider to onboard and embed the specialists in their FCR/ Police Call Centre. The specialists will require training from the force to prepare them and TVP will provide an induction into control room processes for the domestic abuse specialist. There will be an opportunity for the domestic abuse specialists to spend time shadowing before they start and it may also be helpful for the domestic abuse specialists to attend the force's call handler training.

The force will ensure the domestic abuse specialists are introduced to FCR staff, explain the independent nature of their role, the support they can offer, and how staff can access this. The force will provide a named key point of contact that the domestic abuse specialists can seek advice from or escalate any concerns to.

The domestic abuse provider, OPCC and TVP will work collaboratively to agree how the force will capture and respond to learning from what the specialists find – for example, on feedback given to call handlers, or if there are consistent themes or patterns emerging from the risk assessments which are recommended for regrading, that they should consider acting on. For example, Northumbria Police maintain a running log of feedback provided from domestic abuse specialists to call handlers and any learning identified. This log is monitored by the force lead for domestic abuse to identify any themes or knowledge gaps. It is also discussed at fortnightly meetings with the domestic abuse specialists and representatives from their parent organisations.

The Home Office are committed to conducting a thorough and robust evaluation of 'Raneem's Law'. The aims of the evaluation are to understand how the 'Raneem's Law' model is working and identify areas for improvement. During phase two, forces will be expected to provide monitoring data to support the evaluation and to participate in primary research such as interviews and surveys. Forces will also join regular review meetings.

### **Data protection**

Under 'Raneem's Law', the Home Office envisages that all tasks performed by the domestic abuse specialist will be performed for the police force in which they are embedded. These tasks include:

- a. Listening in to live or recently recorded calls (101, 999 and body-worn video footage) and offering feedback to call handlers on victim engagement.
- b. Reviewing incident logs and risk assessments, flagging any concerns about incorrect grading.
- c. Providing operational advice to officers attending incidents, based on manual intelligence checks of police systems.
- d. Facilitating referrals to local specialist services.

Policing controllers are responsible for assessing the relationship between the domestic abuse specialists and the force.

Under data protection legislation, a "controller" is the person, public authority, agency or other body which, alone or jointly with others, determines the purpose and means of the processing of personal data. A "processor" is any person who processes personal data on behalf of the controller. This does not require for that person to be directly funded by the controller, but that they are acting under the controller's instruction and authority.

Forces are expected to ensure compliance and have necessary documentation in place for these arrangements, for example, a controller-processor contract to ensure clear instruction and safeguards over the processing undertaken by the domestic abuse specialists when granting access to personal data held by police, such as live or recorded calls, body-worn video footage and other operational policing information.

The domestic abuse service provider will be required to enter into appropriate data sharing agreements with TVP and the OPCC..

### **Performance monitoring arrangements**

This pilot and grant funding will be overseen by the OPCC. The service provider will be required to engage in mobilisation/implementation meetings and attend regular performance monitoring meetings with both the OPCC and TVP. The provider will be expected to submit reports in advance of the monitoring meeting with agreed performance metrics and a narrative report that outlines progress, trends, successes and challenges. The performance monitoring arrangements will be discussed and agreed collaboratively during mobilisation.

### **General requirements**

The provider will:

- Be responsible for the provision of the service to be delivered as described. This will include ensuring appropriate resource is in place to support implementation and expedited mobilisation.

- Alert the Commissioner to any capacity or service delivery issues in a timely and appropriate way.
- Have a clear complaints procedure and critical incident policy.
- Notify the Commissioner if sub-contracting any element of the work relating to this funding and ensure any sub-contractor adheres to all criteria as set out in this document. Notification must be prior to agreeing any sub-contracting arrangement.
- Ensure compliance with the requirements under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in handling of personal data of service users.

### **Grant funding and payment arrangements**

The PCC has been awarded £218,944 for the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027. This includes £1600 per Laptops and associated licences and expedited vetting for all domestic abuse specialists through the premium vetting service from Warwickshire. The cost is £462 per application for level two vetting. Providers must factor these costs into their proposals as £218,944 is the maximum amount for the whole of Thames Valley or 50% costs for Milton Keynes and 50% for Oxfordshire.

The proposals must include a minimum of four full-time equivalent domestic abuse specialists, associated training, equipment, expenses and on-costs. The OPCC would expect the salaries of the DA specialists to be representative of the specialism they hold and would generally expect salaries at a minimum of £30k per FTE post. If the salaries specified in your bid fall below this then further detail on rationale must be included. In the event that two providers are chosen with variations in salaries, further discussions may be required to ensure proportionality across the area.

Please note that the OPCC can only submit a claim to the Home Office for expenditure incurred during the reporting period and payment is in arrears. No funding will be paid in advance.

### **Expression of interest application process**

As outlined above, the Home Office have requested that this pilot is mobilised on or shortly after 1 April 2026. As a result, we are working at pace to secure a delivery partner. Timeline is outlined below:

Grant opportunity published:	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Expression of interest deadline:	9am Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Applications assessed:	26 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Provider notified:	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Mobilisation commences:	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2026

Interested service providers are invited to complete the expression of interest document below and return by 9am on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The OPCC remain committed to competed grant opportunities, however due to the specialist nature of the roles required and the timeframes we are working to, this opportunity has only been shared with specialist providers that are currently delivering dedicated domestic abuse services across Thames Valley.

If you have any questions relating to the opportunity, please contact the PCC's Head of Service Delivery, Candy Heinrich on [candy.heinrich@thamesvalley.police.uk](mailto:candy.heinrich@thamesvalley.police.uk) and [servicedelivery@thamesvalley.police.uk](mailto:servicedelivery@thamesvalley.police.uk)