

Decision No 2014/15



REPORT TO: POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LANCASHIRE

REPORT BY: ALAN BROWN – HEAD OF MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

DATE: 19 JUNE 2014

TITLE: ON-LINE CHILD ABUSE INVESTIGATION TEAM (OCAIT)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the PCC's strategic priorities is to protect vulnerable people and one of the most vulnerable sectors is children who are subject of viewing of indecent images and who are at risk of sexual abuse. The Chief Constable has assessed demand and vulnerability in this area and proposes a temporary team to maximise enforcement activity against those Indecent Images of Children (IIOC) Offenders who use Peer-2-Peer networks and who are, or who are most likely to become, contact sexual abusers of children. There has been a significant increase in these cases generated through national and force wide operations. In order to meet the growth in demand generated by these activities requires the establishment of 6 temporary posts within the On-Line Child Abuse Investigation Team (OCAIT) with HQ Crime. The cost of this proposal is £121,000 and will be contained within the Chief Constable's 2014/15 revenue cash limit

RECOMMENDATION

The PCC is asked to :-

- i. note the application of additional resources in 2014/15 for the On Line Child Abuse Investigation Team (OCAIT) and
- ii. note that the required funding of £121,000 for OCAIT will be contained with the Chief Constable's 2014/15 cash limit

Decision taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire:

Original decision, as set out in the attached report, approved without amendment (please delete as appropriate)	YES	NO
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Original decision required to be amended and decision as detailed below:

The reasons for the amended decision are as detailed below:



Police and Crime Commissioner: Comments

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The PCC is asked to consider any personal / prejudicial interests he may have to disclose in relation to the matter under consideration in accordance with the law, the Nolan Principles and the Code of Conduct.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to legal advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation.

<p>Signed: Clive Ash </p> <p>Police and Crime Commissioner</p> <p>Date: 19th June 2014.</p>	<p>Signed: </p> <p>Chief Officer: Deputy Chief Executive</p> <p>Date: 19-6-14.</p>
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19 June 2014.

REPORT TO POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

19 JUNE 2014

On- Line Child Abuse Investigation Team (OCAIT)

One of the Police and Crime Commissioner's strategic priorities is to protect vulnerable people. Lancashire Constabulary has an excellent record in tackling Child Sexual Exploitation through a combination of preventing sexual abuse, helping victims and bringing offenders to justice. This approach has rightly earned the Constabulary the reputation as a high performing force in this area of business. In order to continue this success the Constabulary is currently maximising enforcement activity against those Indecent Images Of Children (IIOC) Offenders who use Peer-2-Peer networks and who are, or who are most likely to become, contact sexual abusers of children. The Constabulary's capability in this area has been highlighted by HMIC as good practice.

Recently there has been a significant increase in these types of cases being generated through;

1. National operations , such as Operation Notarise.
2. Increase number of packages being sent to police forces via the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre .
3. Force wide operations, such as, Operation Toledo.

This has created a demand that has at times, outstripped existing capacity and this report seeks to increase Constabulary resources within this area to meet that growth in demand. This paper proposes that the Constabulary's On-Line Child Abuse Investigation Team (OCAIT) establishes 4 new temporary posts. The Covert Police Department (CPD) establishes 1 new temporary post and the High Tech Crime Unit (HTCU) establishes 1 new temporary post to manage the increased demand. The finance for the first 12 months will be managed within the Chief Constable's cash limited allocation for 2014/15 with the future budget to be determined following a 12 month review and an assessment of future demands and priorities. If this recommendation were not implemented it would impact on the Constabulary's ability to identify, investigate, prosecute/prevent crimes and put in place safeguarding measures in this very serious and developing area of business. It would also place the PCC and the Constabulary at risk of future complaints from known victims who may be able to indicate that appropriate action was not taken at the time despite awareness of potential exploitation.

Recently Operation Toledo was undertaken, whereby a total of 20 search warrants were executed at premises across Lancashire in the homes of people suspected of downloading and distributing Indecent Images of Children (IIOC).

The operation was a clear success with a total of 22 people arrested and their activity disrupted. This resulted in nearly 200 charges being placed against those offenders. Significantly there appears to be an intrinsic link between viewing indecent images and contact offences, for example in Op Toledo some of the suspects from that operation have subsequently had 'sexual contact' offences alleged against them. Additional to the Constabulary's self-generated work, Operation Notarise, which is a National Crime Agency lead investigation into IIOC has recently informed our Constabulary that it intends to provide between 31 and 40 intelligence packages relating to individuals in Lancashire who are suspected of this type of offending.

Projected Figures for IIOC.

The North West has some of the highest numbers of IIOC offenders in the country. As a result of Operation Toledo there is now a clearer understanding of the amount of criminality in this area and it is obvious that there are numerous offenders using the internet to share indecent images of children and that a significant percentage of those individuals are committing sexual contact offences. It is important to recognise that although Lancashire Constabulary already undertakes regular interventions throughout the year, significantly more than other police forces, there are further opportunities to increase our capacity/capability to deal with this type of offending. The below chart shows the increased activity in this area over the last 12 months. As can be seen there has been a dramatic increase in both numbers of packages and charges.

	Packages	Arrests	Charges	Contact Offences (%)
2013 excluding Operation Toledo week	42	28	70	6 (14%)
Operation Toledo week	20	22	197	2 (10%)
2014 to date	49	18	Still pending with HTCUC	On going

Additionally it is our aim to utilise OCAIT to learn as much as possible about IIOC offenders and their propensity to contact offend through more sophisticated investigation strategies using debriefs of wider family members and more

comprehensive examination of computers, etc to identify criminal networks and wider distribution pathways. It is anticipated that with the extra investment requested in this area we will be able to double our capacity and produce twice as many packages. We will also utilise OCAIT to fully exploit the digital intelligence gleaned from seized media; where possible identifying trends and networks in order to maximise enforcement activity against those who are responsible for distribution of IIOC.

Proposal to create additional posts of OCAIT officers.

Consideration has been given to current OCAIT team absorbing the increased workload but the demand has outstripped capacity. To achieve the aims set out above to increase capacity and improve our approach to identify possible contact offenders and put in place adequate safeguarding measures the following additional resources are required;

- Research to be done to identify the offender and develop the associated intelligence (Researcher CPD).
- Operationalise the intelligence and arrest offender (Assistant Investigator OCAIT).
- Secure and examine the associated computers/phones (Technician HTCUC).
- Charge/process the offenders (Assistant Investigator OCAIT).

Post	Role	Cost
4 x LC5-6	Assistant Investigator in OCAIT team	£74,000
1 x LC7	Researcher in Covert Police Department	£23,300
1 x LC7	High tech Crime Unit technician	£23,300
Total		120,600

Financial Implications

As the table above shows, the estimated cost for a full 12 months is £121,000. The funding for this will come from within existing resources within the Chief Constable's 2014/15 revenue budget. It is clear that there is potential for future cost avoidance arising from the investment as the early detection of this type of exploitative activity will help to reduce the potential for further impact on vulnerable victims and will hopefully minimise the need for heavy intensive

counselling and support costs further down the line.

Risks and consequences of not investing

Failure to invest in the additional capacity will impact on the Constabulary's ability to identify, investigate, prosecute/prevent crimes and put in place safeguarding measures in this very serious and developing area of business. It would also place the PCC and the Constabulary at risk of future complaints from known victims who may be able to indicate that appropriate action was not taken at the time despite awareness of potential exploitation. Not implementing this proposal will result in high risk offenders continuing to commit serious crime and increase the propensity to commit serious contact offences. The potential for vulnerable victims being left exposed to this risk cannot be underestimated.

Consultations

The staff associations have been consulted on the proposals and are supportive.

