



## RECOMMENDATION REPORT

<b>DECISION:</b>	<b>DATE: 23 APRIL 2026</b>
<b>TITLE: FUNDING FOR DELIVERY OF RECOURSE PROJECT</b>	
<b>REPORT BY: LIZ CANAVAN</b>	
<b>Executive Summary</b> This report sets out the proposal from Lancashire Women to deliver the Recourse project within Lancashire for the financial year 26/27.	
<b>Recommendations</b> The Police and Crime Commissioner is recommended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve funding of £50,000 to Lancashire Women for the delivery of the 'Recourse' programme in 2026/27.</li><li>• Agree that the funding should be taken from Proceeds of Crime receipts</li><li>• Note that NHS England are providing £50,000 in match fund for the programme.</li></ul>	

# 1. Background and Advice

## 1.1. Overview

- 1.1.1. Evidence shows women have significantly different outcomes to men when engaged in the criminal justice system, and demonstrates the need for a unique approach to secure positive outcomes.
- 1.1.2. Women make up just 4% of the UK's prison population (March 2025), but statistics show their outcomes are significantly poorer with a 73% reoffending rate from custody (compared to 63% of men) and 87% of women unemployed or unavailable for work for six weeks following release (compared to 80% of men). Where a mother is jailed just 5% of children remain within the family home.
- 1.1.3. The majority of the women who make up these statistics have committed less serious crimes to their male counterparts and posing less risk to the public (Ministry of Justice 2028, Female Offender Strategy).
- 1.1.4. In addition, the statistics suggest community-based orders have a greater impact on women's reoffending than custody, with a re-offending rate of 30% from community-based orders compared to 73% for short custodial sentences (Women's Budget Group & NWJC (2025). The Women's Centre Model – The Financial Case for Alternatives to Prison)
- 1.1.5. The independent sentencing review published in May 2025 recommended that custodial sentences should only be used as a last resort and, while out of court disposals and diversions were out of scope, there was a suggestions that consideration should be given to early intervention outside the CJS.
- 1.1.6. Therefore, there is strong evidence to support delivery of womens community diversion programme in Lancashire.

## 1.2. Recourse

- 1.2.1. Recourse is a project which was successfully delivered by Lancashire Women in the county between November 2020 and March 2022 to support women who had been issued with a Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND), community resolution or conditional caution.
- 1.2.2. The project offered alternatives to custody or fines via whole-systems holistic approach, with women supported through access to an online PND group which addressed the following:
  - Substance/alcohol misuse and awareness
  - Behaviour and taking responsibility
  - Relationship web – intimate partners, family, friends and associates
  - Assertive communication
  - Victim awareness and the effects of crime
  - Restorative justice
- 1.2.3. In addition, women were offered one-to-one case worker support and given access to Lancashire Women's programmes such as Dependency & Recovery support, Money Advice, Employment Support, and Mental Health and Wellbeing projects across the county.
- 1.2.4. Referrals were also made for external specialist support e.g housing/legal/domestic abuse.

- 1.2.5. The project reported really strong outcomes, and a Lancashire police analysis in October 2021 showed out of 58 women who had engaged with Recourse:
- 1.2.6. 1 woman had been named as an offender of a crime resulting in an outcome since their intervention
- 1.2.7. 1 woman had been under investigation since the intervention
- 1.2.8. The remaining 56 had not had any police contact since they engaged with Lancashire Women

### 1.3. Proposal

- 1.3.1. Recourse ceased because no sustainable funding was accessible, leaving a huge gap in support for women in contact with the Criminal Justice System.
- 1.3.2. Lancashire Women has now developed a proposal to re-launch Recourse in the county, initially focussing solely on the PND pathway.
- 1.3.3. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has secured 50% of the required funding from NHS England, and is now seeking 50% internal funding to finance the project fully for 12 months.
- 1.3.4. The project would support approximately 60 women per year through the PND pathway.
- 1.3.5. This will be activated when police are called to an incident involving a female offender which is a low-level offence, and a decision is made to take a referral route to divert the individual away from police custody and the courts system.
- 1.3.6. Where police issue a PND, the female has 21 days to contact Lancashire Women to book onto the PND group, or risk paying a £90 fine.
- 1.3.7. Once booked on, the individual attends an online PND group delivered by a Lancashire Women caseworker and once completed they can be referred into additional LW support as identified.
- 1.3.8. Attendance or Failure to Attend is reported directly to the police.
- 1.3.9. The projected outcomes are:
  - Signposted to specialist services within and outside Lancashire Women
  - Improved lifestyle choices
  - Improved self-esteem and confidence
  - Increased levels of motivation

### 1.4. Costing

- 1.4.1. Lancashire Women has provided the below costing template for the project

Item	Cost
Staffing	£69,696
IT Equipment	£ 1,621
Mobile/licences	£ 3,183
Travel	500
Org costs	£25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£100,000</b>

- 1.4.2. Match funding of £50,000 has been secured from NHS England for the programme in 2026/27.
- 1.4.3. It is **recommended that the PCC provide £50,000 from Proceeds of Crime receipts for the delivery of the Recourse programme in 2026/27.**

## **2. Links to the Police and Crime Plan**

2.1. Supporting female offenders and diverting them from the criminal justice system is crucial to the priority of Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls, due to the strong links between female offenders and their status as victims of VAWG.

2.2. It also supports the priority to Tackle Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour, as by supporting women through alternatives to custody we can prevent re-offending and incidences of crime.

## **3. Consultations**

None

## **4. Implications:**

### **a. Legal**

None

### **b. Financial**

The funding for the contribution to the Recourse programme will be met from Proceeds of Crime receipts in 2026/27.

### **c. Equality Impact Assessment**

None

### **d. Data Protection Impact Assessment**

None

## **5 Risk Management**

## **6. Background Papers**

## **7. Public access to information**

<b>Officer declaration</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – As above</b>	
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – As above</b>	
<b>EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS – As above</b>	
<b>CONSULTATION – As above</b>	
<b>Author</b>	
Signature: Liz Canavan	Date 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>Sponsor</b>	
I have read the above report and confirm this is factually correct.	
Signature: Steve Freeman	Date 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>Section 151 Officer for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner</b>	
I have read the above report and have considered the financial implications. I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire.	
Signature: Steve Freeman	Date 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>Chief Executive (Monitoring Officer) for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire</b>	
I have been informed about the proposal and confirm that financial, legal and equalities advice has been taken into account in the preparation of this report. I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire.	
Signature: Anna Hopkins	Date 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2026

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