

APPENDIX 2

Summary of wider policy implications

1. The statutory Community Safety Partnership Plan 2017 – 2020 comprises eight priorities, one of which relates to *'reducing substance misuse'*. The proposed contract will contribute to achievement of this priority.

To protect individuals, families and communities from the negative impact of drugs and alcohol misuse by:

- *Reducing the number of individuals misusing alcohol, illegal and other harmful drugs and increasing the number of individuals who successfully recover from alcohol and / or drug dependence*
 - *Identifying children and young people affected by parental or sibling substance misuse and taking action to reduce harms and improve life chances*
 - *Increasing the number of individuals who successfully engage with Southwark treatment system following release from custody*
 - *Working collaboratively with partner agencies to prevent or reduce drug related deaths and to reduce the transmission of blood borne viruses*
 - *Restricting the supply of drugs and identifying and prosecuting those involved in the drug trade*
2. The Southwark Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Refresh 2021-24¹ is focused upon promoting the mental health of Southwark residents by improving the range and access to services and delivering good outcomes and value for money. The Strategy details 16 priority areas (workstreams) for delivery, including a specific workstream for 'Drug and Alcohol Use and Mental Health (including Dual Diagnosis)'.
3. The HM Government Drug Strategy 2017² detailed two overarching aims: *"to reduce all illicit and other harmful drug use, and increase the rate of individuals recovering from their dependence."* The service will support the delivery of both of these aims, with a focus on both *reducing demand* and *building recovery* in Southwark's communities as follows:
 - *Reducing demand* – the services will seek to prevent an escalation of substance use across the life course, including targeted intervention and support offers for the most vulnerable individuals.
 - *Building recovery* – the council and provider(s) will work closely together throughout the duration of the contractual term to improve the quality of treatment and outcomes for a range of user cohorts. There is a focus on working collaboratively with partners and other commissioning bodies to ensure integrated care pathways, and access to a range of services are in place to support all residents in Southwark to live a life free from substance misuse or dependence.

¹ <https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s101396/Report%20-%20Joint%20Mental%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%202021-24%20Update.pdf>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-strategy-2017>

4. The HM Government Serious Violence Strategy 2018³ identifies four key themes, one of which is '*tackling county lines and misuse of drugs*', operating from a premise of strong evidence that illicit drug markets are a driver of serious violence. There is an identifiable overlap between this Strategy and the Drug Strategy 2017 in relation to the need for an enhanced understanding of the cohorts that are using drugs, and the need for access to high quality treatment provision to support individuals with addressing their misuse, which will be delivered through the proposed services.
5. In 2019, the council committed to implementing the recommendations from an Extended Learning Peer Review undertaken by the Home Office's Violence and Vulnerability Unit which identified key linkages between the violence, vulnerability and exploitation of children and vulnerable adults in drug market activity. This is incorporated within the 'Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan 2020-21'.⁴ The proposed service will play an essential role in reducing demand for drugs in the borough, working in partnership with the community harm and exploitation hub, thus helping to reduce the criminal exploitation of vulnerable people in drug supply chains, through the provision of high quality services.
6. In Summer 2021, the government published an initial response⁵ to the 'Independent Review of Drugs: Part Two'⁶ report that was published in July 2021. This included a commitment to publishing a new national addictions strategy within the financial year in addition to developing a Commissioning Quality Standard and National Outcomes Framework, all of which will have implications for the proposed service.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

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<https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s88365/Report%20Community%20harm%20and%20exploitation%20reduction%20plan.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-drugs-by-dame-carol-black-government-response/government-response-to-the-independent-review-of-drugs-by-dame-carol-black>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-drugs-phase-two-report/review-of-drugs-part-two-prevention-treatment-and-recovery>