

DMPC Decision – PCD 1485 VRU Girls and Young Women Mentoring**Title: VRU Girls and Young Women Mentoring****Executive Summary:**

The Violence Reduction Unit Girls and Young Women mentoring programme- *Maia and Lift*- will be extended for 3 months, from September 2023 to December 2023.

Alongside the service extension, the VRU will continue, at pace, with a competitive re-commissioning process. The recommission will build upon learning from the Maia and Lift programme and incorporate the findings from an independent evaluation and extensive stakeholder engagement. This extension will enable a continuation of service between the incumbent provider and the award of a new contract for delivery of community-based mentoring support for girls and young women in January 2024.

Allocation of funding for the VRU Girls and Young Women's programme beyond FY 23/24 was previously agreed in PCD 1147. However, we seek approval to carry these funds into financial year 2025/26. This will enable the VRU to award the successful provider a 24-month contract that will fall across 3 financial years (January 2024- January 2026). The funds are within VRU budget but will be redistributed across financial years, as follows;

23/24: £199,901
24/25: £780,000
25/26: £585,000
Total value: £1,564,901

The VRU is seeking to include an optional extension of 2 years 26-28 for the programme and the evaluation partner with the budget of £1,643,147 and £116,314 respectively, subject to a suitable funding stream being available. This will give the VRU the opportunity to take the learning from the evaluation report and assess the next steps whilst the vital support to girls and young women continues.

The VRU will run a competitive tender process to identify an independent researcher to conduct an evaluation to run alongside the programme, enabling a longitudinal evaluation, and to develop learning materials and guidance that can be disseminated widely and shared as best practice when support girls and young women. This decision therefore also requests approval for the allocation of up to £145,393 across 30 months for an evaluation partner to explore and highlight the key learning from the programme.

Recommendation:

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to :

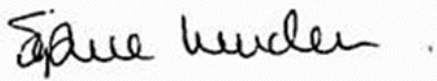
- Approve a variation to the current contract awarded to Advance for the value of £156,000. The cost of the variation is within VRU budget.
- Approve that the funds allocated to the VRU Girls and Young Women's programme be redistributed across FY 23/24, 24/25 and 25/26. This variation is within VRU budget.
- Approve delegating the final contract decision for the new Girls and Young Women Mentoring programme, and evaluation, to the Director of the VRU.
- Approve allocation of up to £145,393 for an evaluation/learning partner
- Approve the option to extend the Girls and Young Women's programme for 2 years FY 26/27 and 27/28 with the budget of £1,643,147, subject to a suitable funding stream being available
- Approve the option to extend the Evaluation and Learning Partner contract for 2 years FY26/27 and 27/28 with the budget of £116,314 subject to a suitable funding stream being available

Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct. Any such interests are recorded below.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date: 03/08/2023

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE DMPC

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The VRU Girls and Young Women's programme provides tailored support to girls and young women (aged 9-25) with the aim of improving wellbeing, self-esteem, and resilience, and reduce vulnerability to becoming involved in criminal networks.
- 1.2 The programme was designed following sector engagement, which highlighted how the vulnerabilities and needs of girls will often go unidentified and unaddressed, with girls' support needs more likely to go under the radar until crisis point. The programme is therefore focussed on prevention and early-intervention and improving knowledge of gender-informed approaches when supporting girls at risk of being involved in crime.
- 1.3 Following an open competition, a contract was awarded to Advance for delivery of the Maia and Lift programme, to the value of £848,970.
- 1.4 Working in partnership with Chance UK, Working Chance, and Woman's Trust, the programme supports young women and girls who identify as female or non-binary young people assigned female at birth between the ages of 9 to 25, through mentoring and group work. The programme aims to build their trust, self-identity, and confidence, as well as the skills and ability to recognise when and where to go for support.
- 1.5 The service works in the London boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Camden, Islington, and Westminster, working with young women and girls who are at risk of domestic abuse and have one or more other risk factors, including:
- Mental ill-health,
 - Deprivation,
 - Alcohol and drug use,
 - Risk of becoming NEET (risk of/exclusion, low school attendance),
 - Risk of exploitation and/or risk of contact with the criminal justice system.
- 1.6 In March the VRU received an interim report from an independent evaluation into Maia and Lift programme, undertaken by Ecorys, this report found the following:
- Achieving mobilisation and delivery within a 12-month timescale was considered a key challenge
 - Working in partnership with Chance UK, Working Chance and Woman's Trust increased the reach of the programme, as they have been able to benefit from shared connections and relationships
 - Emerging themes and learning from the Girls and Young Women and families within the programme will help to shape future programmes
- 1.7 As well, as the learning from the interim evaluation, the VRU have been undertaking extensive stakeholder engagement with experts in the girls and young women's sector and with our YPAG members, thought this we found:

Current themes and trends highlighted

- An increase in peer-on-peer violence (not the same as historic/traditional established gangs as there is less labelling group tensions as gang tensions when linked to GYW.
- An increase in school exclusion for girls and an increase of female perpetrators or perpetrator behaviour

Appropriate referral pathways

- Early engagement being key with first time entry to service such as the Police, Youth Offending Services, Transitional multi-agency panels for 18+ and Hospital A&E department – IDVAs could be key for a referral pathway

Ideal GYW mentoring programme

Long-term mentoring connections is key and being Non-judgmental

- 1.8 The VRU have drafted a new service specification which will be launched in August 2023 . As an evidence-based organisation, the service specification will incorporate the learning from our evaluation and primary research conducted by the team, the VRU are now looking to commission a contract that can deliver a community-based mentoring service for girls and young women.
- 1.9 The service will offer mentoring based on the differing needs at crucial age points from 9-25 years; with support for Girls and Young Women (GYW) that (are):
- Transitioning through the education system, including the crucial transition from primary to secondary school
 - Displaying risks of being involved in the criminal justice system
 - Showing signs of being affected by unhealthy relationships (inc. exploitation/grooming, peer on peer abuse / criminal networks)
 - Requiring careers and employment support
 - Impacted by violence and abuse in the home, and other adverse childhood experiences
- 1.10 The VRU have previously taken the approach of awarding contracts with the contract term ending no later than VRU's confirmed funding pot. This approach has led to contracts ending where programmes are working well and are providing a great impact to the community. Due to the limitations of the procurement regulations, contracts are not extended or are extended for a few months to carry out the commissioning activity and re appoint a new delivery partner. This ultimately negatively impacts service users and organisations who recruit staff for the purpose of delivering the work.
- 1.11 Including optional extension will give the VRU the opportunity to take learning from the current provision, reflect and make future decisions on redesigning or extending the existing provision (if it is working well). There is greater value for money when exercising optional extensions, financial savings can be achieved due to avoiding mobilisation/ set up costs for new contracts as well as more competitive bids when going out to tender.
- 1.12 The VRU's approach is early intervention and prevention at all stages, by providing a seamless continuation of service we are creating the conditions for long-term engagement which can lead to more tangible outcomes in the longer term.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1 Extending the Maia and Lift programme will enable continuity whilst a competitive tender process is run, for mobilisation of a new service in January 2023.
- 2.2 The service has already been extended by 3 months (from June 2023- September 2023 and approved via PCD 1328) whilst the VRU received and considered the outcomes of the independent evaluation. By extending the contract by a further 3 months (to December 2023), the VRU value continuity and this further extension would also avoid a gap in service delivery between Maia and Lift, and the new contract.
- 2.3 The VRU are currently working at pace with a competitive re-commissioning process. The recommission will build upon learning from the current programme, incorporate the findings from the evaluation and extensive stakeholder engagement. Upon conclusion the specification for the new programme may share similarities and in summary TUPE may apply.

2.31 Where activities cease to be carried out by one entity and are carried out instead by another, TUPE may apply to transfer employees assigned to that activity across to the new service provider – a service provision change. The "activities" that are carried out by another entity must be activities which are fundamentally the same as the activities carried out by the entity who has ceased to carry them out.

3. Financial Comments

3.1 The £156,000 cost to extend the programme further and the current funding allocated to the Girls and Young Women's Programme will be funded from the VRU's 2023/24 core budget.

3.2 The VRU are looking to award a 24-month contract that will fall across 3 financial years from January 2024 for a new mentoring service for girls and young women. The funds are within VRU budget, but we require approval to distribute them over the following financial years;

23/24: £199,901

24/25: £780,000

25/26: £585,000

3.3 The VRU are seeking permission to commission a contract to a learning and evaluation partner-up to £145,393 across 30 months for an evaluation partner to explore and highlight the key learning from the programme. The funds are within VRU budget and will be distributed as follows;

23/24: £18,174.22

24/25: £72,696.88

25/26: £54,522.66

3.4 Approve the option to extend the Evaluation and Learning Partner contract for 2 years FY26/27 27/28 with the budget of £116,314 subject to a suitable funding stream being available.

4. Legal Comments

- I. 5.2 Paragraph 4.13 of the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation and Consent provides that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (DMPC) has delegated authority to approve all requests to go out to tender for contracts of £500,000 or above.
- II. 5.3 The Mayor's Office for Policing Crime is a contracting authority as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations"). All awards of public contracts for goods and/or services valued at £181,302 or above will be procured in accordance with the Regulations.
- III. Officers can confirm that the DMPC has the legal authority to agree this decision in Accordance with the legal framework.

5. Public Health Approach

The VRU operate within a public health approach which means taking a whole-systems approach to reducing violence, working with all partners and across the early intervention space.

The public health approach is applied in terms of tackling the root causes of violence by giving young people a sense of agency (built on information, trauma-informed decision-making, and practical skills), targeting support to children who may be at higher risk of exclusion or violence due to disproportionality & systemic discrimination.

The key areas which are being focussed on as part of this programme are:

- Children and Young People – reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences and building resilience.
- Wellbeing and achievement in schools - Institutions providing responsible leadership; London partners having mutual accountability to invest in what works.

6. Commercial Issues

6.1 Regulation 72 of The Procurement Contract Regulations 2015 provides the conditions that must be met to modify a contract, based on the following justifications the variation to the Girls and Young Women's Programme meet all the requirements:

- 6.1.1 The original contract term was included in the ITT documentation. An option to extend was not included as the expectation was all the services would be delivered within the contract term and the overall nature of the contracts has not changed. The Supplier will be delivering similar services during the extension period and the modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract
- 6.1.2 A change in provider for the extension period will cause a significant inconvenience for Girls and Young Women currently using the service.
- 6.1.3 The increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract which is demonstrated as follows:

		Percentage of the original contract
Original contract value	692,970	0%
Extension 1	156,000	23%
Extension 2	156,000	23%
Total Value	1,004,970	46%

6.2 The original contract value for Lot 2 awarded to Advance was £692,970; with the 3 months extension approved DMPC Decision PCD 1328 brings the contract value to £1,004,970.

6.3 The Girls and Young Women's Programme ran as a pilot from March 2022 – June 2023. From findings gained within the interim report provided by the evaluation partner; we now know that by providing 12-month contracts for programmes similar to the above, was proving difficult to measure sustainable change; therefore, we are seeking for the allocated funds to be shared across the three financial years of 23/23, 24/25, 25/26.

6.4 This report is seeking approval to include total costs including any future extensions in the tender documentation in order to avoid any unforeseeable extensions to contracts and to mitigate the risk for non-compliance with the procurement regulations. Once the VRU has confirmed funding and is ready to utilise the optional extensions to the new Girls and Young Women Programme and the Evaluation/Learning Partner the VRU will seek DMPC approval before the funding is allocated.

- 6.5 The VRU is seeking approval to carry out a competitive tender process to procure the Girls and Young Women programme and the Evaluation/Learning Partner. Both services are over the OJEU thresholds. Accordingly, the procurement will be subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended) (“the Regulations”); specifically, those applying to social and other specific services as contained in Regulation 74 of the Regulations, the so called “Light Touch Regime”.
- 6.6 The report proposes using the Open Procedure to tender on the basis that the market for this type of service is relatively small it is proposed that the opportunity will be published on an open basis without the need to shortlist organisations to proceed to the tendering stage - One stage Open Procedure. The author of the report has demonstrated clear rationale for the proposed procurement route and contracting arrangements.
- 6.7 As stated in MOPAC Contract Regulation, all tender documentation shall include as a minimum the following:
- 6.7.1 A specification that describes the MOPAC’s requirements in sufficient detail to enable the submission of competitive offers.
 - 6.7.2 A requirement for tenderers to declare that the Tender content, price or any other figure or particulars concerning the Tender have not been disclosed by the tenderer to any other party (except where such a disclosure is made in confidence for a necessary purpose).
 - 6.7.3 A requirement for tenderers to complete fully and sign all Tender documents including a form of Tender and certificates relating to canvassing and non-collusion.
 - 6.7.4 Notification that Tenders are submitted to the MOPAC on the basis that they are compiled at the tenderer’s expense.
- 6.8 Following the evaluation of the tender responses and the relevant compliance checks the approval to award the contracts will be sought from the VRU Director in line with the delegated authority.

7 GDPR and Data Privacy

7.1 MOPAC will adhere to the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and ensure that any organisations who are commissioned to do work with or on behalf of MOPAC are fully compliant with the policy and understand their GDPR responsibilities.

7.2 The existing programme has followed GDPR and Data Privacy guidance and will continue to adhere to these.

8 Equality Comments

8.1 MOPAC is required to comply with the public sector equality duty set out in section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This requires MOPAC to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations by reference to people with protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

9 Background/supporting papers

None

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and will be made available on the MOPAC website following approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? No

If yes, for what reason:

Until what date: N/A

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered as likely to be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a **Part 2** form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION		<i>Tick to confirm statement (<input type="checkbox"/>)</i>
Financial Advice: The Strategic Finance and Resource Management Team has been consulted on this proposal.		Yes
Legal Advice: Legal advice is not required.		Yes
Equalities Advice: Equality and diversity issues are covered in the body of the report.		Yes
Public Health Approach Due diligence has been given to determine whether the programme sits within the Violence Reduction Unit's public approach to reducing violence.		Yes
Commercial Issues The Contract Management Team has been consulted on the commercial issues within this report. The proposal is in keeping with the GLA Group Responsible Procurement Policy.		Yes
GDPR and Data Privacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report and the GDPR Project Manager has been consulted on the GDPR issues within this report. A DPIA is not required. 		Yes
Head of Unit: The Director has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the MOPAC's plans and priorities.		Yes

Chief Executive Officer

I have been consulted 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 Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.

Signature

Hanahucherd.

Date 01/08/2023