

DMPC Decision – PCD 1613

Title: Harmful Practices – education champions

Executive Summary:

The Mayor's tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2022-2025 aims to tackle VAWG, including harmful practices, through better education. The Mayor has committed to helping prevent harmful practices by investing and supporting community-based education solutions for harmful practices in London.

Research has shown that Harmful Practices have serious and long-lasting physical, emotional and psychological effects on those who experience them. The response to harmful practices and the support available for those experiencing them is piecemeal, with limited strategic coordination and integration into wider safeguarding and VAWG services.

Engaging with affected communities is crucial with the need for the expertise of trusted community groups to carry out this work in London, to test community-based education approaches and inform future commissioning decisions in this area.

This decision is seeking approval for MOPAC to launch a competitive grant process targeted at those organisations with the relevant cultural experience and expertise to deliver this pilot project and inviting them to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). The maximum grant value is up to £370,000 with mobilisation and delivery of the pilot taking place across financial years, up to 2.5 years from grant award.

Recommendation:

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

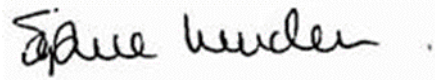
1. Approve the launch of the competitive grant process and the subsequent allocation of up to £370,000 for the purpose of this work from the VAWG Strategy budget.
2. Approve the carry forward of £20,000 from the 2023/24 VAWG Strategy budget.

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

Handwritten signature of E. J. Henderson.

Date 01/03/2024

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Mayor's tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2022-2025 aims to tackle VAWG through better education, including harmful practices. The Mayor has committed to helping prevent harmful practices by investing and supporting community-based education solutions for harmful practices in London.
- 1.2. The research around harmful practices – including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), 'Honour' Based Violence (HBV), Forced Marriage (FM), and Faith Based Abuse (FBA) – clearly highlights the serious and long-lasting physical, emotional and psychological effects on those who experience them. The context in which harmful practices take place is complex, set against a backdrop of power, control and constructs of gender, where (actual or perceived) family love can mask abuse by multiple perpetrators and 'normalise' violent practices.
- 1.3. The response to harmful practices and the support available for those experiencing them is piecemeal, with limited strategic coordination and integration into wider safeguarding and VAWG services.
- 1.4. Specialist Black, Asian and Racialised Minority women's organisations have been identified as an important factor both for immediate safety and wider empowerment of those affected. However, with too few services available (and those that are, under pressure), responses are often inconsistent and opportunities to support women and girls can and are being missed.
- 1.5. In November 2021, MOPAC convened a roundtable meeting with the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Advisory Board chaired by the Mayor to discuss FGM and what could be done to tackle this important human rights issue. Attendees included activists and role models who had supported the Mayor's 'FGM stops here' campaign.
- 1.6. Feedback from this roundtable included the need for MOPAC to work with and listen to communities, for them to be empowered to steer conversations and activity to eradicate the practice. Feedback also included the need for education and awareness raising around all harmful practices.
- 1.7. MOPAC is aware that there needs to be training available for practitioners and has provided funding for this to a variety of front-line agencies to improve their response to harmful practices via the Prevention & Action through Community Engagement and Training service (P&ACT) it commissions.
- 1.8. However, there is more to do and supporting community groups with expertise to educate their communities and champion eradicating harmful practices, will help fill the gap identified at the roundtable.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. In December 2023, MOPAC held a market engagement event with the London Harmful Practices Working Group (LHPWG). The LHPWG is a strategic multi-agency forum, chaired by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Together the LHPWG members work to ensure a partnership approach in tackling all forms of harmful practices.
- 2.2. Membership of LHPWG is made up of representatives from MOPAC, Home Office, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), CPS, MPS, City Of London Police, NHSE, the Royal College of Midwives, NSPCC, Banardos, Hestia, Thirtyone:eight, as well as representatives from the VAWG sector including, Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC), Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO), Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development (Forward), Southall Black Sisters, Women's Health & Family Services (WHFS), Sister Circle, Sharan and Ashiana.
- 2.3. The aim of the event was to seek LHPWG's input and advice from experts in this field in developing the pilot project and our approach to commissioning it.
- 2.4. The event identified that there is not a clear indication of what similar work is being done in London in this space but that there is still clearly a need to work with the community to increase awareness and tackle the use of Harmful Practices and improve trust and confidence in statutory agencies for reporting Harmful Practices.
- 2.5. Providers with expertise and experience are very limited and learning from this pilot will help inform future commissioning decisions and activity in this space.
- 2.6. This decision is seeking approval for MOPAC to launch a competitive grant process targeted at those organisations with the relevant cultural experience and expertise to deliver this pilot project and inviting them to submit an Expression of Interest.
- 2.7. The Casey review found the MPS to be institutionally racist and sexist, and it had failed to protect women and girls from gendered crime and violence. This work is part of the Mayor's renewed focus on tackling VAWG to improve women's trust and confidence in the MPS, in particular those from those from minoritised communities.

3. Financial Comments

- 3.1. The total budget requirement for this work is £370,000. This will be funded from the 2023/24 (£20,000) and 2024/25 (£350,000) VAWG Strategy budget. A carry forward of £20,000 from the 2023/24 budget is being requested as part of this decision.

4. Legal Comments

- 4.1. MOPAC's general powers are set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). Section 3(6) of the 2011 Act provides that MOPAC must "secure the maintenance of the metropolitan police service and secure that the metropolitan police service is efficient and effective." Under Schedule 3, paragraph 7 MOPAC has wide incidental powers to "do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of the Office." Paragraph 7(2) (a) provides that this includes entering into contracts and other agreements.
- 4.2. Section 143 (1) (b) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides an August 2019 6 express power for MOPAC, as a local policing body, to provide or commission services "intended by the local policing body to help victims or witnesses of, or other persons affected by offences and anti-social behaviour."
- 4.3. There are further relevant powers set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 at sections 17(1) (a) to (c) which place MOPAC under a duty to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all it can to prevent, crime and disorder (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment) reoffending in its area, and the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area. The proposed arrangements are consistent with MOPAC's duties in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 4.4. Paragraph 4.8 of the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation and Consent provides that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (DMPC) has delegated authority to approve all bids for grant funding.

5. Commercial Issues

- 5.1. This report seeks to undertake a competitive grant process to award £370k for prevention of harmful practices.
- 5.2. The Scheme of Delegation requires the approval of DMPC for all grant awards.
- 5.3. The actions proposed can be taken in compliance with procurement legislation and MOPAC's Contract Regulations.

6. Public Health Approach

- 6.1. Funding awards to services are informed by the Mayor's public health approach to violence reduction and therefore part of MOPAC's contribution to overall efforts led by the Violence Reduction Unit. The public health approach to violence prevention is being led by London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), which supports the MOPAC work through preventative programmes supporting young people.

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.

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.
- 8.2. Tackling Harmful Practises is part of the Mayor's Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. This project will work towards raising awareness of the negative effects of Harmful Practices experienced by women and girls predominantly. The providers who carry out this work will be required to have due regard to the protected characteristics of the people and communities relevant to this piece of work.

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:

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 (✓)</i>
Financial Advice: The Strategic Finance and Resource Management Team has been consulted on this proposal.	✓
Legal Advice: Legal advice is not required.	✓
Commercial Issues The Contracts and Procurement Management Team has been consulted on this proposal.	✓
Equalities Advice: Equality and diversity issues are covered in the body of the report.	✓
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.	✓
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.	☐✓
GDPR/Data Privacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report. 	✓
Drafting Officer Juliet Tewungwa has drafted this report in accordance with MOPAC procedures.	✓
Director/Head of Service: The Director of Commissioning and Partnership has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the MOPAC's plans and priorities.	✓

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****Date** 27/02/2024