

DMPC Decision – PCD 1705

Title: The Cyber Helpline Grant Extension

Executive Summary:

MOPAC is responsible for commissioning support for victims of crime in London. Cybercrime and online enabled crime are estimated to account for half of all incidents of crime across England and Wales. In recent years the MPS have reported a significant increase in such incidents. As such, many Londoners are impacted by this form of crime and could potentially benefit from specialist support.

Decision PCD 1491 allocated £170 000 of MoJ core grant funding to address gaps in support for victims of cybercrime. With this funding, MOPAC awarded a grant to The Cyber Helpline to deliver a 12-month pilot delivering expert support to victims of a range of cybercrime from October 2023 to September 2024.

This pilot has demonstrated that there is clear and growing need for specialist support for victims of cybercrime and online enabled crime. As this initial 12-month period comes to a close, MOPAC must now take a decision on the next steps for supporting victims of these type of crimes.

MOPAC will now take forward the learning from the pilot and develop plans for commissioning this form of support on a longer-term basis. To ensure continued provision of support and avoid gaps in service, MOPAC is seeking to extend the current grant agreement by issuing a grant modification letter to The Cyber Helpline for a 6 month extension, with the option to extend by a further six months. A 6 month plus 6 months extension to the existing grant is necessary because of the complexities of commissioning support of this type and the continued uncertainty regarding London's funding settlement from the Ministry of Justice for victims services.

This decision seeks approval to extend the grant agreement with The Cyber Helpline for 6 months with the option to extended by a further 6 months. As with the initial grant, the £85,000 funds for the first 6 months will come from the MoJ core grant. The subsequent 6 months will only be enacted once funding is secured. It is anticipated this will also come from the MoJ core grant once details of that funding are confirmed in early 2025.

Recommendation:

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

1. Approve the extension of The Cyber Helpline service for 6 months, with the option to extend by a further 6 months subject to budget confirmation.

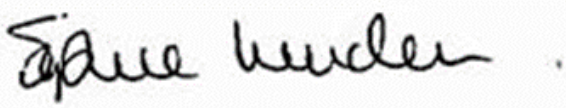
2. Approve the allocation of £85,000 in 2024/25 to fund this service from the MoJ Core Grant.
3. Delegate authority to the MOPAC Chief Financial Officer to sign the necessary grant modification to allocate funding to this service.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Spivey', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Date 24/09/2024

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Since 2014, responsibility for regional commissioning of victim services has been devolved to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). The funding to enable this comes from the Ministry of Justice's (MoJ) via two grant agreements. The current grant agreements with the MoJ are due to expire on 1st April 2025. The timeframes for a confirming MOPAC's funding allocation from the MoJ for 2025/26 onwards is expected to be confirmed in early 2025.
- 1.2. A key priority of the Police and Crime Plan (PCP) 2022-25 is to improve the support available for victims of crime in London. The Mayor has been relentless in his pursuit of ensuring good quality support provision is available in London for those affected by crime, whether they chose to report to the police or not.
- 1.3. As per PCD 1491, MOPAC awarded a grant of £170,000 to The Cyber Helpline to provide support to victims of cybercrime. Unlike other cyber services which offer support to businesses or solely fraud cases, this is the only service commissioned by MOPAC to deliver support to individuals experiencing of a diverse range of cybercrime and online harms. This support is offered whether or not a report has been made to the police and delivered by volunteer cyber-security experts. This grant is due to expire at the end of September which would leave victims of cybercrime without specialist support.
- 1.4. A 6 month extension to this service would allow for continuity of provision and access to support for victims while MOPAC secure funding to procure this support on a longer-term basis. The extension would provide MOPAC with sufficient time to determine how this support should provide in the longer term.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. In the Police and Crime Plan and VAWG Strategy, MOPAC has committed to working with partners to ensure victims of fraud and cybercrime are offered adequate support. Cybercrime is increasingly a factor for victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence/exploitation, and stalking who are being supported by MOPAC commissioned services. However, caseworkers in these services sometimes lack the technical knowledge to advise victims on how to address the cyber-related elements of their victimisation (hacking, revenge porn, cyber stalking, online grooming, etc...).
- 2.2. Together fraud and computer misuse are estimated by the Crime Survey for England and Wales to make up 50% of all incidents of crime. Across the MPS, the number of offences recorded as online or internet enabled crime has risen by 119 per cent between April 2019 and April 2023. These figures suggest a significant number of Londoners are affected by these types of crime.

- 2.3. The Cyber Helpline uses volunteer cyber security experts to provide specialist support for victims of cybercrime and online harm. They work in partnership with other support services to support the holistic recovery of victims and use their cyber knowledge to share understanding and promote a reduction in revictimization.
- 2.4. Under the current service The Cyber Helpline have capacity to support in the region of 6,000 victims a year in London. The 6 plus 6 month extension would ensure provision for up to 6,000 Londoners remains in place.
- 2.5. Reporting of cybercrime to the Police and other law enforcement agencies is low. A report by Crest Advisory surveying the general public found that only around half of victims report their crime.
- 2.6. Since the pilot service began, The Cyber Helpline have worked with MPS to develop referral pathways and share knowledge on cybercrime. This will continue throughout the extension period.
- 2.7. The Service delivers support to victims of cybercrime whether or not they have reported to the police. They do however support evidence gathering and reporting in line with victim wishes which supports with the ongoing and wider ambition of increasing trust and confidence in MPS.

3. Financial Comments

- 3.1. The total budget requirement for this work totals £85,000 in 2024/25 and will be funded from the MoJ core grant budget.
- 3.2. The optional extension of 6 months in 2025/26 is subject to approval of growth in the 2025/26 budget setting process.
- 3.3. No match funding from MOPAC is required to award funding.

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 (1) 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 for MOPAC 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. 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 the award of all individual grants whether to secure or contribute to securing crime reduction in London or for other purposes.
- 4.4. Paragraph 4.6 of the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation and Consent provides the DMPC authority to delegate those functions which are reserved for the DMPC.
- 4.5. These recommendations are in line with the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation and Consent.
- 4.6. Officers must ensure that the funding agreements are put in place with and executed by MOPAC and each of the providers before any commitment to fund is made.

5. Commercial Issues

- 5.1. A Voluntary Ex Ante Notice will be issued prior to extending the grant to inform the wider market of MOPAC's intention and rationale for the extension. It is not anticipated that this will raise questions or concerns from the market.
- 5.2. The market for specialised victim support for victims of cybercrime is small and competition to deliver this service is limited.
- 5.3. Alongside the Voluntary Ex Ante Notice, a PIN will be published to inform the sector and aid MOPAC understanding of interest from the market in future commissions of support services for victims of cybercrime.
- 5.4. The grant modification will be issued on MOPAC's standard grant modification letter template in line with MOPAC's Contract Regulations and national procurement regulations, and follow MOPAC's execution process for clearance and sign off before issuing to the Provider.

6. Public Health Approach

- 6.1. This decision provides funding to enable a better informed and more cohesive partnership approach to improving outcomes for victims in London which will align with and support the VRU's public health approach to tackling the causes of violent crime in London.

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 extension to the service and additional funding will not alter existing data protection measures in place for existing services. Where required, DPIAs will be updated to reflect the extension of corresponding services or funding.

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. Equalities considerations already form part of all existing work through the grant agreement with The Cyber Helpline. MOPAC will ensure that equalities considerations continue to feature in the extension of the grant through performance monitoring and collection of demographics information, which helps us to understand who is accessing each service and how any barriers to accessing may be overcome.

9. Background/supporting papers

- Appendix 1 PCD 1491

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? YES

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. The proposal is in keeping with the GLA Group Responsible Procurement Policy. | ✓ |
| 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. This has been reviewed and supported by a senior manager within the VRU. | ✓ |
| GDPR/Data Privacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report. A DPIA has been completed. | ✓ |
| Drafting Officer Amy McKee has drafted this report in accordance with MOPAC procedures. | ✓ |
| Head of Service: The Head of Policy and Commissioning 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** 23/09/2024