

DMPC Decision – PCD 1713

Title: Violence Against Women and Girls Commissioning Decisions - 2024-2029**Executive Summary:**

As outlined in the Mayor's [election manifesto](#) earlier this year, keeping Londoners safe has been – and will continue to be – his top priority for this new mayoralty. This includes redoubling efforts to reduce Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The development of his new Police and Crime Plan (PCP), as well as his refreshed VAWG Strategy, will be informed through consultation with Londoners, and will set out MOPAC's strategic priorities for this term.

To help deliver on the Mayor's commitments, MOPAC commissions a wide range of specialist services for victims-survivors of VAWG and funds various innovative initiatives across London to help prevent and reduce VAWG. MOPAC receives funding from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to partially fund some of these services.

The following 10 services/initiatives have been identified as key programmes supporting the delivery of the Mayor's ambition to tackle VAWG:

- London's Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC's)
- London Holistic and Advocacy Wrap-Around Service (LHAWAS)
- London Stalking Support Service (LSSS)
- Prevention and Action through Community Engagement and Training (P&ACT)
- CouRAGEus
- Specialist support for LGBT+ victims-survivors of domestic abuse
- VAWG Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Expert Reference Group (ERG)
- Women's Night Safety Charter (WNSC)
- Safer Spaces Now
- VAWG Leadership Training

This decision requests approval to commit further investment by procuring, continuing and/or extending these vital services and initiatives that help ensure that VAWG is prevented and where it does occur, victims-survivors continue to have access to the specialist support they need to help them cope and recover from their experience. Where applicable, services will be extended to enable MOPAC to recommission specialist support for victims-survivors that reflect the Mayor's new PCP and refreshed VAWG Strategy.

The total financial commitment from 2024-2029 is £18,643,937.

Recommendation:

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

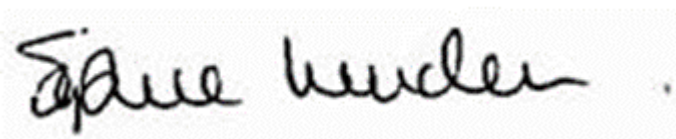
1. Approve the 2024-2029 funding and the subsequent extension of all relevant services commissioned by MOPAC, up to a total maximum of value of £18,643,937.
2. Approve the initiation of the procurement process for an enhanced VAWG Expert Reference Group (ERG) off, up to a maximum total value of £350k from 2025-29.
3. Note that the budget allocation from the MoJ is still subject to confirmation. If the level of funding assumed is not received, budget allocations for all affected services will be reduced accordingly.
4. Note that any further extensions, uplifts, or new funding allocations confirmed are subject to DMPC approval and/or additional funding being identified.
5. Delegate authority to sign and execute all related contracts and grants, including modifications and innovations, to the Chief Financial Officer, in accordance with the general power of delegation in paragraph 1.7 of the MOPAC Scheme of Consent and Delegation.

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 18/10/2024

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Mayor of London's Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2022-2025 makes clear his long-term ambition is to eradicate VAWG in our city, so that every woman and girl can participate fully in London life without experiencing or fearing harassment, abuse or violence from men.
- 1.2. Our first principle for tackling VAWG is not for women to change the way they live their lives in order to feel safe - it's men that need to change – to challenge their attitudes and to challenge sexist, harassing and demeaning behaviour amongst their peers. The Strategy has taken a public health approach – focusing on the complex underlying causes of these offences, alongside tackling perpetrators and ensuring that victims have the support they need. The Mayor's, 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' approach recognises that protecting Londoners is not just about policing.
- 1.3. Much as we don't view other types of violence as isolated incidents or solely as a police enforcement problem, we need to treat VAWG in the same way. We need to approach the problem as a preventable consequence of a range of factors, from adverse early-life experiences to harmful social or community experiences or influences, looking at its root causes and opportunities for prevention.
- 1.4. As a new Police and Crime Plan (PCP) is developed, consulted on and published, and the Mayor's VAWG Strategy is refreshed, there is a need to make decisions relating to the delivery of services and initiatives supporting women and girls affected by these harmful attitudes, behaviours, and criminal offending. These decisions also include specialist support for all members of LGBT+ communities in London affected by domestic abuse.
- 1.5. These services and initiatives are part of the Mayor's focus on tackling VAWG and supports the recommendations from Baroness Casey's review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to improve women's trust and confidence in the MPS.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. All funding arrangements to projects and services which are due to expire in March 2025 have been considered under their own merits and specific context. This includes:
 - how these will continue to contribute towards the Mayor's aims to make London the safest and most welcoming city in the world
 - how they will help the ongoing reform of Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and contribute to improving the trust and confidence of women and girls in London
 - where there is a statutory duty for the provision of specific services
 - supporting MOPAC in responsible commissioning, providing stability as well as driving innovation and growth in the VAWG sector; and

- ensuring that they have demonstrated satisfactory performance and value for money.

2.2. The following services and initiatives have been identified as key programmes supporting the delivery of the Mayor's ambition to redouble efforts to reduce VAWG. Also included in the below are details of the services and projects to be extended and/or recommissioned:

- **London's Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC's):**
SARCs, referred to as The Havens and delivered by the Kings College Hospital Trust, are specialist medical and forensic services available to anyone who has been raped or sexually assaulted, regardless of whether they choose to report the offence to the police. Their provision is a core function of Police and Crime Commissioners and are co-commissioned by MOPAC with NHS England – London Health and Justice team (NHSE). They are the only service that offers the forensic medical examinations, a specialist medical procedure which contributes to the criminal justice process as part of victims' access to justice.
Commissioning Decision: Extend until 31 March 2029, core service.
- **Mayor's VAWG Services Fund services:** Based on a comprehensive evidence pack developed by MOPAC's Evidence and Insight (E&I) team, the VAWG Services Fund was developed with the sole purpose of ensuring organisations were able to manage the increasing VAWG demand on services, enabling women and girls the best chance to cope and recover. The below services have continued to provide specialist support to women and girls in London since 2020, utilising open, competitive Mayoral and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funding opportunities.
 - **London Holistic and Advocacy Wrap-Around Service (LHAWAS):** Delivered by Southall Black Sisters, the service supports women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) who have been affected by violence. It offers advocacy, accommodation funding, legal services and 1:1 support.
Commissioning Decision: Extend until 30 March 2029, decommission and signpost provider to alternative suitable funding (Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation). A novation to the new charitable company entity Southall Black Sisters will be required as the entity with which we have the Agreement (Southall Black Sisters Trust) appears to be in the process of winding down.
 - **London Stalking Support Service (LSSS):** Delivered by The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, it is a dedicated pan-London stalking support service for victims that will offer advocacy and trauma informed support, with an online portal to support early identification.
Commissioning Decision: Extend until 31 March 2026 and seek to recommission new pan-London stalking service from 1 April 2026.
 - **Prevention and Action through Community Engagement and Training (P&ACT):** Delivered by Asian Women's Resource Centre, it is a Pan-London service providing long-term support to women and girls affected by Harmful Practices. Focused on risk identification, support, and community engagement.

Commissioning Decision: Extend until 31 March 2027 and seek to recommission new pan-London harmful practices service from 1 April 2027.

- **CouRAGEus:** Delivered by the Women and Girls Network, the service supports the total and sustainable recovery of young women and girls affected by violence through specialist advocacy and counselling support via a tiered support system.

Commissioning Decision: Extend until 31 March 2027 and seek to recommission new pan-London young women and girls service from 1 April 2027.

- **Specialist support for LGBT+ victims-survivors of domestic abuse:** Delivered by Galop, the service work with and for LGBT+ victims and survivors of interpersonal abuse and violence.

Commissioning Decision: Extend until 30 September 2026, to be recommissioned as part of pan-London Domestic Abuse Service from 1 October 2026.

- **VAWG Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Expert Reference Group (ERG):** Currently delivered by the Women's Resource Centre, the VAWG VCS ERG is an independent non-statutory body that ensures that those with expertise in tackling VAWG have a strong voice and representation on the Mayor's VAWG Board. It also facilitates more effective engagement between the VAWG sector and the MPS and act as a forum for consultation on the MPS's work to improve trust and confidence in women and girls across London.

Commissioning Decision: Extend current project until 30 September 2025; and recommission new and enhanced expert support from 1 October 2025.

- **Women's Night Safety Charter (WNSC):** Part of London's commitment to the UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces global initiative and overseen by the Safer Business Network, the Charter was developed to encourage local authorities, businesses, venues, and other organisations to prioritise women's safety. Over 2,600 business have now signed up to the Charter and its pledges.

Commissioning Decision: Extend until 31 March 2026, priority initiative.

- **Safer Spaces Now:** Led and procured by the MPS, MOPAC contribute to this programme that helps to educate and establish a culture that confronts and prevents sexual violence, harassment and domestic abuse at festivals and events; providing all women and girls access to specialist support, reporting, and ongoing localised referral pathways.

Commissioning Decision: Extend until 31 March 2026, priority initiative.

- **VAWG Leadership Training:** Delivered by SafeLives, MOPAC contribute to the London places of this leadership training programme that is specifically for Black and minoritised colleagues working in the tackling VAWG field in conjunction with H.O.P.E. Training and Consultancy. The aim of the training is to build capacity and confidence among professionals from racialised communities working with people who cause harm in intimate and family relationships.

Commissioning Decision: Extend until 31 March 2026, priority initiative.

2.3. Table 1 below provides a breakdown of the funding decisions required for all ten services/projects from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2029, where applicable. Any

services that may require recommissioning as part of MOPAC's future commissioning intentions and not already included in this decision, will require formal decisions will therefore be required:

Service/ Project	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
Sexual Assault Referral Centres (NHSE)	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£14,134,250
London Holistic and Advocacy Wrap-Around Service (Southall Black Sisters)	-	£477,898	-	-	-	£477,898
London Stalking Support Service (The Suzy Lamplugh Trust)	-	£375,000	-	-	-	£375,000
Prevention and Action through Community Engagement and Training (Asian Women's Resource Centre)	-	£533,230	£533,230	-	-	£1,066,460
CouRAGEus (Women and Girls Network)	-	£867,326	£867,326	-	-	£1,734,652
Specialist support for LGBT+ victims-survivors of domestic abuse (Galop)	-	£238,451	£119,226	-	-	£357,677
VAWG Expert Reference Group	-	£65,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£365,000
Women's Night Safety Charter (Safer Business Network)	-	£108,000	-	-	-	£108,000
Safer Spaces Now (via MPS)	-	£15,000	-	-	-	£15,000
VAWG Leadership Training (SafeLives)	-	£10,000	-	-	-	£10,000
TOTAL	£2,826,850	£5,516,755	£4,446,632	£2,926,850	£2,926,850	£18,643,937
Core	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£2,826,850	£14,134,250
MoJ	-	£1,365,178	£819,504	-	-	£2,184,682
VAWG £5m	-	£1,324,727	£800,278	£100,000	£100,000	£2,325,005

3. Financial Comments

3.1. This decision seeks DMPC approval to commit £18,643,937 from 2024/25 to 2028/29. Of which:-

- £14,134,250 is core funding;
- £2,184,682 is funded through MoJ. There is no confirmation of MoJ funding beyond 2024/25, and future funding allocations are subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review. In the event funding is reduced, budget allocations will be

reduced accordingly. The grants/contracts will include terms that allow MOPAC to reduce the value of any of the individual contracts to offset the impact of any potential future reduction in external funding; and

- £2,325,005 is funded from the VAWG £5m budget which match funds many of the services on a 50:50 basis with MoJ.

- 3.2. Whilst the decision needs to be considered alongside the acknowledgement of the budget challenges that MOPAC is facing, particularly from 2026/27 it is recognised that the only flexibility with funding MOPAC has relates to core funding and in VAWG this is used to fund the SARCs provision. SARCs is a statutory service which is needed to support rape prosecutions through collection of forensic evidence. If this funding were reduced this would have serious consequences on the outcomes of rape prosecutions.

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 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. 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.
- 4.5. 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 the award of all individual grants whether to secure or contribute to securing crime reduction in London or for other purposes.
- 4.6. 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.
- 4.7. These recommendations are in line with the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation and Consent.
- 4.8. Officers must ensure the Financial Regulations and Contract Regulations are complied with.

- 4.9. Officers should ensure that contracts are put in place with and executed by MOPAC and the provider(s) before any commitment to fund is made.
- 4.10. Officers confirm that sufficient assurance has been carried out to this Decision to determine that the DMPC has legal authority to agree the recommendations.

5. Commercial Issues

- 5.1. This decision requests approval to continue providing funding to NHSE for the centres. Any resulting procurement process will not be conducted directly by MOPAC, but by NHSE.
- 5.2. Further, this Decision requests approval to issue grant agreements or grant modifications to:
- Galop for the provision of specialist support for LGBT+ victim survivors of domestic abuse at a value of £357,677 for 18 months to 30 September 2026.
 - The Safer Business Network for the provision of support for the women's night safety charter at a value of £432,000 for four years.
 - Southall Black Sisters for the provision of support for women with NRPF at a value of £477,898 over six months. A novation will also be required as the Southall Black Sisters Trust entity, charity number 1081702 which MOPAC's Grant Agreement is with appears to have been replaced by the Charitable Company Southall Black Sisters, charity number 1204937. This decision is to authorise the novation to be issued and delegation for signing to the Chief Financial Officer.
 - The Suzy Lamplugh Trust for the provision of a pan-London stalking support service at a value of £375,000 for 1 year.
 - Asian Women's Resource Centre for the provision of a pan-London harmful practices support service for women and girls at a value of £1,066,460 for 2 years.
 - Women and Girls Network for the provision of a support service for young women and girls affected by violence through advocacy and counselling at a value of £1,634,652 for 2 years.
- 5.3. In accordance with 4.4. above, the approval of the award of grant funding at any value is reserved to DMPC (4.8 Scheme of Delegation).
- 5.4. Finally, this Decision requests approval for a contract variation to WRC at a value of £15k to allow time to conduct a full procurement exercise. This contract was originally procured via an exemption to competitive tendering at a value of £90k over three years. The value of the forthcoming procurement is £400k over a period of four years via an open and competitive process.
- 5.5. In accordance with 5.12, the Chief Executive can approve the procurement strategy for contracts between £50,000 and £499,999 in value. In accordance with paragraph 6.1 of MOPAC's Scheme of Delegation, approval of a variation less than £50,000 is not reserved to the DMPC, Chief Executive Officer nor any other post and therefore is delegated to the relevant MOPAC Director.

- 5.5.1. The commercial actions contained in this Decision were agreed at Commercial Assurance Group on 12th and 19th September 2024. The actions proposed can be taken in compliance with procurement legislation and MOPAC's Contract Regulations.

6. Public Health Approach

- 6.1. VAWG is a public health issue. Grant awards to these services is informed by the Mayor's public health approach to violence reduction and therefore part of MOPAC's contribution to overall efforts support victims and perpetrators of violence. 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.
- 6.2. Further details on the public health approaches of each project or service can be found in the decisions referenced in section 9.

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 of funding for the projects and services listed in 2.2 to 2.3 will not alter the data protection measures in place for each. Where required, DPIAs will be updated to reflect the extension of the corresponding project or service.

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. The providers listed in 2.2 to 2.3 will be required to have due regard to the protected characteristics of the people and communities relevant to this piece of work
- 8.3. Equality comments for each specific project or service can be found in the decisions referenced in section 9. As part of the quarterly performance monitoring of each service we collect demographics information, which helps us to understand who is accessing each service and how any barriers to accessing may be overcome.
- 8.4. Given the findings of institutional racism, misogyny and homophobia in the Casey review there should be enhanced assurance that the recommendations incorporate actions to address this. MOPAC will adopt an intersectional and culturally sensitive approach as part of this programme of activity.

9. Background/supporting papers

Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs):

- [PCD 1439 Sexual Assault Referral Centres \(SARCs\) 2023-24](#)

Mayor's VAWG Services Fund:

- [PCD 633 Mayor's VAWG Fund Tranche 4 – VAWG Services Fund](#)
- [PCD 1077 Mayor's VAWG Fund Tranche 4 – VAWG Services Fund: 6-month ext 2022/23](#)
- [PCD 1190 Additional Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support Funding](#)
- [PCD 1235 Acceptance of Ministry of Justice funding](#)
- [PCD 1236 Ministry of Justice funding - Mayor's VAWG Fund Tranche 4 services](#)

Specialist Support for LGBT+ victims-survivor of domestic abuse:

- [PCD 1517 Victim Services Commissioning](#)
- [PCD 1691 Commissioning of Domestic Abuse Victim Services for 2024/25 to 27/28](#)

VAWG Expert Reference Group:

- CEOD 23-2022 Women's Resource Centre - Direct Award Contract FY 2022 to 2025
- DD16 2023 VAWG Expert Reference Group Uplift and Contract Variation FY2324

Women's Night Safety Charter:

- PCD 1024 Women's Night Safety Charter
- [PCD 1394 PCD 1394 Women's Night Safety Charter 2023-24 2024 25](#)

Safer Spaces Now

- DD08 2023
- DD19 2023

VAWG Leadership Training:

- DD01 2024

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.	✓
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.	☐ ✓
Commercial Issues The Procurement, Contracts and Grants 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 - GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report. - A DPIA is not required.	✓
Drafting Officer Senior Policy and Commissioning Manager in VAWG Team has drafted this report in accordance with MOPAC procedures.	✓
Director/Head of Service: The Head of Tackling VAWG 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** 15/10/2024