

DMPC Decision – PCD 1792**Title: VRU Home Office funding 2025-2026 and LCPF 2025-2028 (PCD 1792)****Executive Summary:**

The Violence Reduction Unit's (VRU) budget enables the VRU to fund a range of ambitious and crucial measures to support families, keep young people in education and safe after-school through activities and opportunities, targeted interventions to support girls and young women, the vital role played by youth workers and mentors, and support and resources for communities to tackle the issues affecting their neighbourhoods.

On 10 February 2025, the Home Office confirmed that they will be funding all 20 VRUs the same amount for one year using the same allocation formula as they had done for 2024-2025. This would include £9,397,400 grant allocation for London VRU for 2025-2026, with full delivery in 2025-2026 once a VRU application was agreed and grant agreements signed.

Careful consideration has already been made in assessing and reviewing Home Office proposed commissioned activity in line with MTFP, assuming Home Office grant funding at the level now confirmed for 2025-2026.

As already planned via MTFP, the VRU are looking to allocate all the £9,397,400 of the Home Office funding to a range of programmes as detailed in this decision which prioritise funding into local neighbourhoods via local authorities, youth practitioner support to young people in hospitals and custody suits and enhancing positive opportunity via short programmes for young people.

Further to the above, on 12 February 2025, the Home Office confirmed that they will be funding VRUs grant funding for the Serious Violence Duty for 2025-2026, the same allocation as 2024-2025 of £932,764. The VRU are looking to allocate this to the 32 local authorities equally, to spend in-year to support their delivery of violence reduction strategies locally.

This decision also sets out the proposed VRU allocation of London Crime Prevention Funding (LCPF) to local authorities over the period 2025-26 to 2027-2028 of £14,145,000 which equates to an annual spend of £4,715,000.

Budget assumptions for 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 will need to be reviewed once grant funding for those years is confirmed as part of future Comprehensive Spending Review.

Recommendation:

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

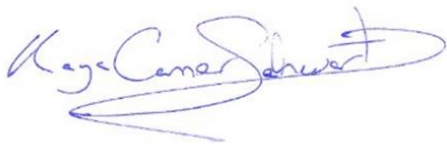
1. Accept Home Office Serious Violence Duty funding of £932,764 for 2025-2026.
2. Delegate authority to the VRU Director to approve application to the Home Office on the utilisation of Home Office Serious Violence Duty grant funding for 2025-2026 to support local delivery of violence reduction initiatives across each of the 32 boroughs up to 31st March 2026.
3. Upon Home Office application approval, approve the allocation of Home Office Serious Violence Duty Funding of £932,764 across all 32 Local Authorities equally, including any unclaimed funds to be offered to boroughs equally; all to be spent in 2025-2026.
4. Accept Home Office core funding of £9,397,400 for 2025-2026.
5. Approve the allocation of Home Office core funding in 2025-2026 for the work programme at a cost of £9,397,400 to be spent in 2025-26.
6. Delegate authority to the VRU Director to approve application to the Home Office on the utilisation of Home Office core grant funding for 2025-2026 to support continuity of programme delivery up to 31st March 2026.
7. Upon Home Office application approval, the VRU seek approval to extend the following for 2025-2026 utilising Home Office core grant funding and Mayoral funding:
 - a. Extend HBYW commissioning contacts/grants (total value £2,575,157 of which £2,452,286 is Home Office core grant funded and £122,871 Mayoral Funded):
 - Grant -MOPAC 881 to Oasis Community Partnership - modification to the value of £416,881 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
 - Grant - MOPAC 882 to Catch 22 (previously Redthread) - modification to the value of £527,910 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
 - Grant - MOPAC 883 to St Giles Trust - modification to the value of £128,691 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
 - Contract -MOPAC 878 to Catch 22 (previously Redthread) - exercise extension option to the value of £748,334 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
 - Contract -MOPAC 879 to St Giles Trust - exercise extension option to the value of £495,080 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
 - Contract -MOPAC 880 Solace Women's Aid - exercise extension option to the value of £258,261 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
 - b. Extend HBYW evaluation and learning partner contacts:
 - Learning Partner - Contract -MOPAC 962 to Social Finance - exercise extension option to the value of £125,000 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 (Home Office funded as part of the £0.735m evaluations spend)
 - Evaluation Contract -MOPAC 965 to Behavioural Insights Team - exercise extension option to the value of £125,000 for delivery from 1st November 2025 to 31st October 2026 (£0.041m to be Home Office funded as part of the £0.735m evaluation spend and £0.083m Mayoral funded)
 - c. Extend grant funding – approval of the grant funding between VRU and the Greater London Authority (GLA) for the delivery of the Sports programme. The extension will be to the value of £1,000,000 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.
 - d. Extend DIVERT grant agreement – approval of the grant agreement held between the VRU and BounceBack. The extension will be for 12 months, from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 and will be valued at £1,073,000.

- e. Extend Engage grant agreements – approval of the extension of grant agreements held between the VRU and 12 Local Authorities for the delivery of the Engage programme (LB Camden, LB Redbridge, LB Enfield, LB Lewisham, LB Lambeth, LB Croydon, LB Hillingdon, LB Barnet, LB Hackney, LB Newham, LB Kingston and LB Hammersmith). The extensions will be for 12 months, from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026, and will be valued at £2,125,000.
- f. Social Switch 2 contract – Social Switch 2 contract – approve the allocation of £700,000 to be funded through the Home Office grant to Catch 22 for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 (NB: There is already a contract held between VRU and Catch 22 for the delivery of the Social Switch 2 Online Harms programme for 2023-2026).
- 8. Approve the allocation of new VRU LCPF grants to 32 local authorities, to a total value of £14,145,000 mayoral funding over the 3 years 2025-2028. This equates to a spend of £4,715,000 per year.

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 21/02/2025

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 London's VRU was established by the Mayor of London to pioneer a partnership approach to tackling violence that is rooted in prevention and early intervention. We know the best time to stop violence is before it starts. This includes measures to support families, funding to keep young people in education and safe after-school through activities and opportunities, targeted interventions to support girls and young women, investment in the vital role played by youth workers and mentors, and support and resources for communities to tackle the issues affecting their neighborhoods. The VRU's work is divided into five key priority areas: Children and Young People: Reducing Harm; Children and Young People: Positive Opportunities; Families; Education; Community and Place.
- 1.2 Along with our refreshed strategy, the VRU has established an Outcomes Framework, which sets out the shorter-term change needed to achieve and progress the longer-term goals. The Framework allows the VRU to take a data-driven approach, measure progress against outcomes and demonstrate impact. The ability to robustly monitor and evaluate programmes, as well as listening to London's communities, is critical in developing an understanding of what works and supports while advocating for effective policy and systems change.
- 1.3 The VRU has balanced budget for 2025-2026 as part of the MTFP, which included an assumed £9,397,400 from the Home Office core grant. Now this has been confirmed we can fully commit our full spend for 2025-2026 with the confirmed Home Office contribution being vital to that. This is further vital in supporting the VRU's overall approach to violence reduction and prevention, and to continue supporting our stakeholders, partners and Londoners. This is only one year settlement, and more than one-year funding would be beneficial in supporting the VRU's approach to a long-term solution, however mayoral longer-term funding has enabled that flexibility to continue.
- 1.4 Careful consideration has been made in assessing and reviewing Home Office current commissioned activity as part of budget planning; establishing what activity the VRU would want to continue into further years of funding (2025-2026) which would form part of the VRU application into the Home Office, this can be seen in the table below. The VRU evaluation and research programme has supported this review.

Type of expenditure / Service	Programme	2025-2026 £m
Commissioning:		
Communities and Young People	Sports Interventions	1.000
	Hospital Based Youth Work	2.452
	Social Switch 2	0.700

Communities and Young People total		4.152
Community Safety & Prevention	Divert	1.073
	Engage	2.125
Community Safety & Prevention total		3.198
Commissioning total		7.350
Evaluations (10% of commissioning)		0.735
VRU Staffing		1.312
Total		9.397

- 1.5 The Home Office has now confirmed a Serious Violence Duty grant for London, to come to the VRU for 2025-26, this amounts to of £932,764. The VRU provides strategic leadership for the delivery of Serious Violence Duty in London, supporting continued investment in a multi-agency approach to tackling violence which contributes to the delivery of the Government's Safer Streets Mission and establishment of the Young Futures Programme.
- 1.6 Introduced by government through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, the Serious Violence Duty, which commenced on 31st January 2023, requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, the causes of that violence and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence.
- 1.7 This funding is specified by the Home Office as being allocated to labour and non-labour costs only. The VRU intends to allocate funding equally across the 32 London Boroughs to spend on local violence reduction initiatives aligned to priorities identified within the boroughs' serious violence strategies.
- 1.8 The VRU London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF) was introduced in 2019 and provides funding to all 32 London Boroughs to develop and deliver violence prevention/reduction initiatives aligned to local violence priorities, ranging from mentoring and outreach services, parent and carer support, minimising exclusions projects and reducing reoffending programmes.
- 1.9 This funding supports elements of delivery aligning to the VRU coordinated borough Violence and Vulnerability Action Plans and recently introduced Serious Violence Duty Strategies, which set out each Community Safety Partnership's strategic response to violence and vulnerabilities.
- 1.10 The last round of VRU LCPF funding was for 3 years from April 2022 – March 2025. (PCD 1263) This comprised of part Mayoral funding and part Home Office funding. Going forward, for years 2025-26 to 2027-28, the VRU intends to provide LCPF funding to local authorities from Mayoral funding and no longer with a contribution from Home Office core grant. This will allow us to continue longer-term funding for local authorities.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1 Due to the one-year settlement offer from the home office core grant of £9,397,400 for 2025-2026 only, re-commissioning cycles would take too long to process and go back out to market for some of the programmes involved. Therefore, the only solution for this year ahead, to ensure retention of commissioned staff and continuation of services for young Londoners, would be to review and extend current grants and contacts already in place. With the plan to fully review and recommission if and when multi-year funding was made available again, assumed for 2026-2027 onwards. This would involve the below arrangements:

The VRU seek permission to:

- Exercise a 12-month extension modification to the grants listed below from 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026.

Grant number	Organisation	Extension Value	Total grant value	Delivery sites
MOPAC 881	Oasis Community Partnership	£416,881	£1,250,643	North Middlesex Hospital St Thomas' Hospital
MOPAC 882	Catch 22 (previously Redthread)	£527,910	£1,583,727	Homerton University Hospital King's College Hospital St George's Hospital St Mary's Hospital
MOPAC 883	St Giles Trust	£128,691	£386,073	Royal London Hospital
	TOTAL	£1,073,482		

- Exercise a 12-month extension for the contracts listed below from 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026.

Contract number	Organisation	Extension Value	Total contract value	Delivery sites
MOPAC 878	Catch 22 (previously Redthread)	£748,334	£1,970,834	Lewisham Hospital Queen Elizabeth Hospital Croydon Hospital
MOPAC 879	St Giles Trust	£495,080	£1,237,700	Newham Hospital Whittington Hospital
MOPAC 880	Solace Women's Aid	£258,261	£753,769	All four Major Trauma Centres
	TOTAL	£1,501,675		

- Total Programme extension – £2,575,157 of which £2,452,286 is funded through the Home Office settlement and £122,871 is funded through Mayoral funding.*

- Exercise up to 12-month extension of the Hospital Based Youth Work Learning Partner from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

Contract number	Organisation	Extension Value	Total contract value
MOPAC 962	Social Finance	£125,000	£354,455

- Exercise up to a 12-month extension of the Hospital Based Youth Work Evaluation Partner from 1st November 2025 to 31st October 2026. Total programme extension £125,000 of which £41,250 value is funded through the Home Office settlement up until March 2026 and £83,750 value is funded through mayoral funding up to October 2026.

Contract number	Organisation	Extension Value	Total contract value
MOPAC 965	Behavioural Insights Team	£125,000	£374,930

- PCD 1329 which approved a funding award across the hospital-based youth work programme included direct awards in the form of grants as part of this funding. PCD 1329 referenced exploring a longer term, collaborative and transformational approach to proving impact and funding the hospital based youth work system. Much of this work is under way, through the work of the commissioned impact evaluation and the learning partner work with two learning reports due in summer 2025. The view to exploring a more transformational funding approach was in line with receiving a future three-year settlement from the Home Office which would enable longer term planning and funding collaboration. As we have only received a one-year settlement, and with very tight timeframes provided, this has meant retendering the direct award sites is not possible; especially when there is also long history of embedded hospital stakeholder community as well as match funding required to ensure delivery.

2.3 Sports:

- Extension of current Sports grant funding to the Greater London Authority (GLA) to the value of £1,000,000 for 2025-2026. This brings the total contract value to £4,000,000 across 4 years (2022-2026). Previous PCD 1149 (2022-2023) and (2023-2024 & 2024-2025 – PCD 1263).

2.4 Custody based interventions:

- Extension of current Divert grant agreement with BounceBack Foundation for £1,072,714 for 2025-2026. This brings the total contract value to £4,106,449 across 4 years. (2022-2026). Previous PCD (2022-2023 -PCD 1095 &1149) and (2023-2024 & 2024-2025 – PCD 1263)
- Extension of current Engage grant agreements with all twelve Local Authorities (LB Camden, LB Redbridge, LB Enfield, LB Lewisham, LB Lambeth, LB Croydon, LB Hillingdon, LB Barnet, LB Hackney, LB Newham, LB Kingston and LB Hammersmith) to a total of £2,125,000 for 2025-2026. This brings the total contract value to

£7,450,000 across 4 years. (2022-2026). Previous PCD (2022-2023 – PCD 1095 & 1149) and (2023-2024 & 2024-2025 – 1263)

2.5 Social Switch 2 Online Harms Project:

- The £700,000 of £1,160,000 budgeted amount for 2025-2026 to be funded through the Home Office core grant to Catch 22 and the remainder funded through Mayoral funding carry forward reserve. There is a contract already in place to the value of £3,900,000 across 3 years (2023-2026). Previous PCD 945 & 1170 (2022-2023) for first iteration of Social Switch and (2023-2024 & 2024-2025 – PCD 1263) for Social Switch 2.

2.6 LCPF:

- New grants to all 32 Local Authorities totalling £14,145,000 for the next three years 2025-26 to 2027-2028 which will be funded from Mayoral funding and no longer with a contribution from Home Office core grant. This longer-term funding will enable boroughs to develop more sustainable programmes over a longer term (2025-2028).
- The VRU has taken an evidence-based approach to targeting of resources and investment and has utilised the Area Prioritisation Tool (APT) to determine which boroughs are most in need of funding to address violence and exploitation concerns. The tool scans across data sets focused on Violence affecting Children and Young People, wider violence offences, health, and public perception data. Boroughs have been allocated funding based on their scores provided by the tool. Boroughs will fall within one of 4 funding bands; £200,000, £145,000, £100,000 and £50,000.

3. **Financial Comments**

Home Office grant 2025-26 £9.397m

- 3.1. The draft budget submission published in November 2024 assumes over the 3-year period from 2025-26 to 2027-28 £9.397m per annum Home Office grant funding.
- 3.2. The table below details the programmes to be funded from the 2025-26 confirmed grant.

Type of expenditure / Service	Programme	2025-2026 £m
Commissioning:		
Communities and Young People	Sports Interventions	1.000
	Hospital Based Youth Work	2.452
	Social Switch 2	0.700
	Communities and Young People total	4.152
Community Safety & Prevention	Divert	1.073
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Community Safety & Prevention total	3.198
Commissioning total	7.350
Evaluations (10% of commissioning)	0.735
VRU Staffing	1.312
Total	9.397

Serious Violence Duty grant 2025-26 £932,764

- 3.3 The 2025-26 serious violence duty grant of £932,764 is an additional grant to the draft budget submission published in November 2024. This additional grant income and expenditure of £932,764 will be included within the MOPAC final budget for 2025-26 only which will be published at the end of March 2025.

HBYW 2025-26 commissioning extension – total spend:

- 3.4 The total value of the HBYW commissioning extension is 2025-26 is £2.575m of which £2.452m is to be funded from the Home Office core grant and £0.123m Mayoral Funded. Additionally, match funding has also been sought by some of the providers.

HBYW Evaluations (part of the evaluations £0.735m HO grant funding):

- 3.5 The draft budget submission published in November 2024 assumes Home Office funded expenditure for evaluations of £0.735m per annum. The remaining evaluation expenditure is funded from Mayoral and carry forwards. The HBYW evaluation contracts within this decision assumes:
- The HBYW Learning partner contract extension of £0.125m is funded from the £0.735m Home Office evaluation grant in 2025-26
 - The HBYW evaluation contract of £0.125m spans 2025-26 and 2026-27, with £0.041m to be funded from the Home Office evaluations grant in 2025-26 and £0.084m mayoral funded in 2026-27.

Social Switch 2:

- 3.6 The total budget for continuation of the Social Switch 2 contract in 2025-26 is £1.160m with £0.700m funded from the Home Office core grant and the remaining £0.460m funded from the Social Switch 2 carry forward reserve.

VRU – LCPF 2025-26 to 2027-28:

- 3.7 The draft budget submission published in November 2024 assumes over the 3-year period from 2025-26 to 2027-28 £4.715m per annum for VRU – LCPF, a total of £14.145m.

4. Legal Comments

- 4.1. 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:

4.1.1. Approve bids for grant funding made and all offers made of grant

funding; and/or where appropriate a strategy for grant giving.

4.1.2. Approve the strategy for the award of individual grants and/ or the award of all individual grants whether to secure or contribute to securing crime reduction in London or for other purposes.

4.2. Officers must ensure that any variations to existing grant agreements are undertaken in accordance with MOPAC's Scheme of Consent and Delegation and Contract Regulations and that appropriate documentation is put in place and executed by MOPAC and funding recipients before any alteration to provision of funding occurs.

4.3. 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 unforeseen variations and extensions to contracts with an original value of £500,000 or above, when the variation or extension is greater than 10% of the original value and/or is for a period of more than 12 months.

5. Commercial Issues

5.1. This decision is seeking approval of extension of number of contract and grants, the report details under each programme the extension requirements.

5.2. Due to the one-year settlement offer from the home office core grant of £9,397,400 for 2025-2026 only, re-commissioning cycles for some of the contracts would take too long to process and go back out to market for some of the programmes involved with the home office funding. Therefore, the only solution for this year ahead, to ensure retention of commissioned staff and continuation of services for young Londoners, would be to review and extend current grants and contacts already in place.

5.3. All HBYW Contracts have the provision of extension within each current contract, once DMPC approves for VRU to exercise these extension options, a variation will be produced for each contract and CFO will have oversight of these and further transparency notices will be published on Contracts Finder.

5.4. All grant agreements extensions can be approved by DMPC, all extension will be issued with a grant agreement variation and each of these will be signed by the CFO. These extensions will be added to the contracts register for the purposes of transparency.

5.5. 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 unforeseen variations and extensions to contracts with an original value of £500,000 or above, when the variation or extension is greater than 10% of the original value and/or is for a period of more than 12 months.

- 5.6. Officers will ensure all contractual/grant variations are in accordance with MOPAC's Scheme of Consent and Delegation and Contract Regulations and that appropriate documentation is put in place and executed by MOPAC and funding recipients before any alteration to provision of funding occurs.
- 5.7. This decision is seeking approval to direct award 32 grants to all 32 London Boroughs. The justification for the direct award is, in accordance with section 11 of and Schedule 1 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 the Serious Violence Duty requires local authorities to work together and plan and prevent and reduce violence.
- 5.8. The funding will be via grant agreement to Local Authorities to support local partnership response to Serious Violence Duty.

6. Public Health Approach

- 6.1 Evidence-based practice is fundamental to the implementation of a public health approach to reducing violence. Therefore, more research, evaluation and learning including the gather of good practice and 'what works' is required to deepen and broaden the evidence base around violence reduction, diversion and prevention in London. The delivery to date for programmes relating to the Home Office core grant show promising practise or still require further support to address impact. Where further scoping is required, this has been built into any work plan going forward.
- 6.2 Evaluation of good practice to support identification of impact is built into all VRU processes, alongside a research strategy that supports future innovation and funding strategies.
- 6.3 As part of the Home Office core grant, 10% of intervention allocations is required to be spent on evaluation and research practise and therefore forms part of the VRU work programme until 2027. This supports the wider learning for London on what works and how are we making an impact.

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. Screening for all programmes will take place around equality impact as part of common practise in the commissioning for the VRU; and where required a full EQIA will be completed.

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 (✓)</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 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 - 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.	(✓)
Drafting Officer Karina Wane Henry has drafted this report in accordance with MOPAC procedures.	(✓)
Director/Head of Service: The director 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 17/02/2025**