

**DMPC Decision – PCD 1095****Title: VRU Bridge Funding – Use of VRU Reserves to support unconfirmed 2022/23 Home Office grant funding****Executive Summary:**

The Violence Reduction Unit's (VRU) budget enables the VRU to fund a range of ambitious and crucial programmes that are designed to improve the environments, relationships, or behaviours that, if unaddressed and unsupported, may otherwise lead to violence. All the VRU's existing budget is committed to a range of violence reduction programmes and funding project support staff within the VRU. The 2021/2022 budget includes £7 million awarded by the Home Office for this financial year, to be spent in-year only; therefore, any ongoing commissioned activity funded through this £7m cannot continue past March 2022 until further funding is secured.

The Home Office has not announced funding available to VRUs from April 2022; it is anticipated the VRU will be informed as late as February 2022. This would not allow sufficient and adequate time to recommission or extend existing contracts. It would also not be beneficial for current providers to end delivery to then be told at the last minute that the VRU would be able to then provide funding.

Careful consideration has been made in assessing and reviewing Home Office current commissioned activity; establishing what activity the VRU would want to continue into a further year of funding (2022/2023) and providing adequate notice to providers of this intention to extend or recommission.

This paper seeks approval to accept and allocate the £7m anticipated 2022/23 Home Office grant to fund the programmes identified in this report. Whilst waiting for notification of the funding confirmation from the Home Office, this paper also seeks approval to extend contracts for a number of programmes and staff services for a 3 month period April – June 2022/23, whilst Home Office funding for 2022/23 is confirmed. In the event sufficient Home Office is not provided the estimated April to March 2023 costs of £1.63m will be met from earmarked reserves.

**Recommendation:**

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

1. Approve the continuity of service delivery in 2022/23 for the programmes and staffing support listed below at a cost of £1.63m.
2. Approve the use of £1.63m reserves to fund these services if the 2022/23 Home Office grant for the VRU is reduced to an insufficient amount to fund the programmes or is not awarded.
3. Delegate authority to the VRU Director to approve decisions on the utilisation of Home Office funding 2022/23 to support continuity of programme delivery in relation to the 7 programmes up to 31st March 2023, once Home Office funding is confirmed. Noting that decisions will be submitted to the DMPC for approval in line with the scheme of delegation

- Extension of A & E intervention (Redthread and Oasis) contract for the total of £111,765 with an intention to fund via Home Office funding until 31 March 2023 with an annual value of £447,063 once Home Office funding is confirmed.
- Extension of Divert (Bounce Back Foundation) grant agreement for the total of £226,750, with an intention to fund via Home Office funding until 31 March 2023 with an annual value of £907,000 once Home Office funding is confirmed.
- Extension of Engage (London Borough of Camden) grant agreement for the total of £43,730, with an intention to fund via Home Office funding until 31 March 2023 with an annual value of £175,000 once Home Office confirmed.
- Extension of Violence Reduction Plan grant agreement with 32 local authorities for the total of £700,000, with an intention to fund until 31 March 2023 to an annual value of £4,400,000 through a combination of Home Office funding (£2,800,000), and LCPF (£1,600,000) once confirmed.
- Extension of Parent Carer Network agreements for the total of £125,000, with an intention to fund until 31 March 2023 via Home Office funding once confirmed, to an annual value of £1,000,000.
- Extension of local authority borough capacity building grant agreements for the total of £125,000, with an intention to fund until 31 March 2023 to an annual value of £1,000,000 through a combination of Home Office funding (£500,000) and Mayoral Core Funding (£500,000) once confirmed.
- Continued budget approval of capacity to support delivery of research and evaluation for the total of £25,000 with an intention to fund via Home Office funding until 31 March 2023 to an annual value of £75,000.
- Continued budget approval of allocation of staffing and consultancy support for projects within the VRU of £273,900 with an intention to fund until 31 March 2023 to an annual value of £2,383,693 through a combination of Home Office Funding (£1,095,937) and Mayoral Core (£1,287,756).

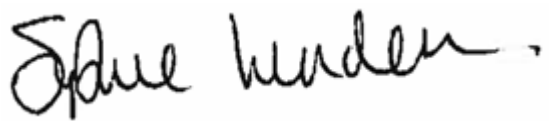
3. Approve receipt of any Home Office funding received in respect of financial year 2022/23.

**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 Henderson", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Date 9/2/2022

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

### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 The Violence Reduction Unit's (VRU) budget enables the VRU to fund a range of ambitious and crucial programmes that are designed to improve the environments, relationships, or behaviours that, if unaddressed and unsupported, may otherwise lead to violence.
- 1.2 All of the VRU's existing commissioning budget is committed to a range of violence reduction programmes. The 2021/2022 budget includes £7m awarded by the Home Office for this financial year, to be spent in-year only; therefore, any ongoing commissioned activity funded through this £7m cannot continue past March 2022 until further funding is secured.
- 1.3 The VRU currently utilises the Mayoral annual £5m contribution towards staffing and sustainable approaches for violence reduction by enabling programmes to spread their spend over a multi-year delivery plan. This is in line with a long-term public health approach to violence reduction.
- 1.4 The funding covers a range of programmes including:
  - DIVERT – specialist diversionary support for those entering custody aged up to 25
  - ENGAGE – a specialist youth service for children entering custody which provides safeguarding and diversionary activities/referrals
  - A&E Intervention – providing young people who have been stabbed or assaulted with a targeted youth work service whilst in hospital and following to support safeguarding & targeted casework
  - Violence Reduction Plans – actions plans delivered with each local authority and policing Community Safety Partnership, focussing on violence reduction, education, safeguarding & analytical activity with all 32 boroughs
  - Parenting Network – high levels of engagement and peer to peer support for parents whose children are facing risk of violence and exploitation
  - Borough Capacity Building – support to help boroughs build capacity to hyperlocal solutions to violence reduction

### **2. Overview of requests & funding**

- 2.1 In section 5 below, *Table 1* provides an overview of recommendations for bridge-funding of continued Home Office commissioned activity in line with MOPAC's Contract Regulations. There is a high likelihood that the VRU will receive Home Office funding for 2022-2023.
- 2.2 Where Home Office funded activity is ending and is not recommended to continue, this is due to programmes / contracts expiring and the VRU not wishing to extend those contracts.

### **3. Issues for consideration**

- 3.1 The Home Office has not yet announced specific funding available to each of the 18 VRUs from April 2022. It is anticipated that the VRU will be informed as late as February 2022. This would not allow sufficient and adequate time to recommission or extend existing contracts. It would also not be beneficial for current providers to end delivery to then be told at the last minute that the VRU would be able to then provide funding.
- 3.2 In the event sufficient Home Office funding is not forthcoming, the proposed use of reserves would act to ensure there is no gap in service and programmes do not begin to give notice for staff and stop accepting new referrals of children & young people & parents. This is to enable the extension of well-performing, beneficial programmes, rather than cease all Home Office commissioned activity until at least July 2022. This would impact young people receiving violence reduction support as intervention would cease for those young people.
- 3.3 The VRU proposes to continue all these programmes but will decide whether some of them (for example, ENGAGE) enters a new commissioning process or gives a continuation of the grant to the same organisation, this decision will be made following the Home Office commitment of funding.
- 3.4 Careful consideration has been made in assessing and reviewing Home Office current commissioned activity; establishing what activity the VRU would want to continue into a further year of funding (2022/2023) and providing adequate notice to providers of this intention to extend or recommission.

#### **4. Financial Comments**

- 4.1 The VRU currently have £7m funding in reserves. This is made up of carry-forward from 2020/21 into 2021/22 and Mayoral funding allocated for 2021/2022 and future years. Of the £7m reserves, £4.8m is allocated for specific project delivery in 2022/23 and £2.2m remains unallocated.
- 4.2 If the 2022/23 Home Office VRU grant is reduced or is not awarded, the VRU requests approval to utilise £1.63m from the remaining £2.2m unallocated reserves to fund the programmes shown in Table 1 below from April to June 2023. This would enable continuation of contracts and delivery for the first 3 months of the year and allow time for the Home Office funding decision to be announced to the VRU and counter measures implemented which may include giving notice to programme providers.
- 4.3 Subject to confirmation of Home Office funding, the VRU are intending to invest in Home Office related VRU programmes and staffing to a total cost of £10.38m, of which it is proposed that £7m will be funded from HO grant, £1.6m will be funded by LCPF and £1.78m funded by Mayoral Core funding. Table 1 below identifies the funding sources for each of the 7 programmes and staffing and consultancy costs.

**Table 1**

Intervention	2022/ 2023 Proposed Budget £	Source of Proposed Budget			Bridge Funding Use of uncommitted reserves to replace Home Office grant (April to March 2022)
		2022/ 2023 Home Office Grant £	2022/ 2023 LCPF £	2022/ 2023 Mayoral Core £	
A&E intervention (Redthread, Oasis)	447,063	447,063			111,765
Engage (Camden Council)	175,000	175,000			43,750
Divert (Bounce Back)	907,000	907,000			226,750
Violence Reduction Plans	4,400,000	2,800,000	1,600,000		700,000
Parenting Carer Network	1,000,000	1,000,000			125,000
Borough Capacity Building	1,000,000	500,000		500,000	125,000
Capacity to support delivery of research and evaluation	75,000	75,000			25,000
Staffing and consultancy of Home Office projects	2,383,693	1,095,937		1,287,756	273,900
<b>Total</b>	10,387,756	7,000,000	1,600,000	1,787,756	1,631,165

## **5. Legal Comments**

- 5.1. 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:
- Approve bids for grant funding made and all offers made of grant funding; and/or where appropriate a strategy for grant giving.
  - 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.
- 5.2. 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.

## **6. Commercial Issues**

- 6.1 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.

- 6.2 This is the second variation on these existing VRU grant agreements proposed for the bridgefunding (please see section 5.3).
- 6.3 The grant agreement for Divert and Engage was awarded via direct grant award. Please note rationale for bridge funding of continued funding for direct awards have been reviewed.

## **7. Public Health Approach**

- 7.1 Evidence-based practice is fundamental to the implementation of a public health approach to reducing violence. Therefore, more research 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 these programmes still requires further support to address the 'what works' question and support ongoing good practise.
- 7.2 Evaluation of good practice to answer the question 'what works and for whom?' which must also happen before policy and programmes can be effectively scaled up and sustained to contribute to population level outcomes (a core requirement for public health programmes).

## **8. GDPR and Data Privacy**

- 8.1 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

## **9. Equality Comments**

- 9.1 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.

9.2 Initial screening for all programmes has already taken place around equality impact and it was established that a full EQIA was not required.

**10. Background/supporting papers**

N/A.

**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: NA

**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

<b>ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION</b>	<i>Tick to confirm statement (☑)</i>
<b>Financial Advice</b> The Strategic Finance and Resource Management Team has been consulted on this proposal.	☑
<b>Legal Advice</b> Legal advice is not required.	☑
<b>Equalities Advice:</b> Equality and diversity issues are covered in the body of the report.	☑
<b>Public Health Approach</b> Due diligence has been given to determine whether the programme sits within the Violence Reduction Unit's public approach to reducing violence.	☑
<b>Commercial Issues</b> Commercial issues are not applicable	☑
<b>GDPR/Data Privacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report</li> </ul>	☑
<b>Director/Head of Service</b> The VRU 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 considered 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 4/2/2022**