

**DMPC Decision – PCD 1114****Title: VRU Girls and Young Women Evaluation****Executive Summary:**

This paper requests the approval of £100,000 of Violence Reduction Unit Funding to evaluate the girls and young women's programmes.

The girls and young women's programme align with the VRUs objectives to prioritise wellbeing and achievement in school and to support individuals to become more resilient. We know there are many risk factors connected to girls and the affiliation with wider criminal networks. Exposure to violence in the home and a lack of positive family support or role models can influence a girl's decision to associate themselves with wider criminal networks. The association can provide status and protection to vulnerable girls who may have low self-esteem and reduced personal support networks. The vulnerabilities and needs of girls are often not identified and addressed as they are for boys, with girls needs more likely to go under the radar until crisis point.

The delivery is divided into two Lots:

Lot 1 is to add capacity to the delivery of a targeted and intensive training offer to staff working with young women and girls in a school setting. The training should take a gendered and trauma informed, culturally competent approach.

Lot 2 is to develop and deliver a collaborative community-based support service from the perspective of a young woman. The service is to offer support through safe spaces and mentoring based on the differing needs at crucial age points from 9-25 yrs., e.g. transitions, healthy relationships (inc. exploitation/grooming), employment. This includes a bespoke offer for 18-25-year olds on how to navigate the adult system.

This decision seeks to approve the allocation of £100,000 for the VRU to enter a competitive tender process to commission an external evaluation partner to focus on Lot 2, to understand and demonstrate impact of interventions in relation to stated outcomes and objectives, with the aim to apply learnings to future commissioning of services.

**Recommendation:**

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:


1. Approve the VRU to enter and a competitive tender process for evaluation of the young women and girls programmes.
2. Approve the £100,000 cost of the competitive tender process to be funded from the 2022/23 VRU Mayoral core funding, noting this is subject to confirmation of the Mayoral core funding.

3. Approve from the £100,000 cost, £70,000 expenditure in 2022/23 and £30,000 carry forward from 2022/23 for expenditure against the project in 2023/24.
4. Approve delegated authority to the VRU Director for awarding the contract to the successful provider, following a competitive tender process.

**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 14/03/2022

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

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

- 1.1. The VRU strategy illustrates the commitment to prioritise wellbeing and achievement in school and to support individuals to become more resilient. The VRU have undertaken a range of insight and analysis activities to understand the needs of girls and young women in London. This has included desktop research and stakeholder engagement workshops.
- 1.2. VRU data and insight has highlighted that there is a wider understanding of the needs of boys, the disproportionality boys face in the criminal justice system and the interventions to support them. Due to this, much of the available funding is focused to support boys and young men, often missing the differential needs that girls and young women have.
- 1.3. We know there are many risk factors connected to girls and the affiliation with wider criminal networks. Exposure to violence in the home and a lack of positive family support or role models can influence a girl's decision to associate themselves with wider criminal networks. The association can provide status and protection to vulnerable girls who may have low self-esteem and reduced personal support networks.
- 1.4. The vulnerabilities and needs of girls are often not identified and addressed as they are for boys, with girls needs more likely to go under the radar until crisis point.
- 1.5. The VRU published a tender in November 2021 to commission two delivery Lots:
  - 1.5.1. Lot 1 is to add capacity to the delivery of a targeted and intensive training offer to staff working with young women and girls in a school setting. Lot 1 aims to upskill staff, improve knowledge, and increase confidence to identify and deal with the early signs of vulnerability and risk for young women and girls, as well as improving engagement and feelings of safety.
  - 1.5.2. Lot 2 is to develop and deliver a collaborative community-based support service from the perspective of a young woman. The service is to offer support through safe spaces and mentoring based on the differing needs at crucial age points from 9-25 years, including a bespoke offer for 18-25-year-olds. Lot 2 aims to improve ability to access, navigate and engage in relevant services and specialist support, as well as increasing sector capacity to support young women and girls.

### **Evaluation**

- 1.6. The VRU takes a public health approach to reducing violence, which is rooted in good multi-agency working and close working with communities, focused on prevention, and informed by the systematic use of evidence.

- 1.7. It is widely acknowledged that the evidence base is limited and therefore the VRU is committed to contributing to the evidence base of 'what works' in reducing serious violence through evaluating its funded interventions, including the Girls and Young Women strand, to answer the question 'what works and for whom?' which must also happen before policy and programmes can be effectively scaled up and sustained.
- 1.8. The VRU is therefore seeking to commission an external evaluation partner to focus on Lot 2, to understand and demonstrate impact of interventions in relation to stated outcomes and objectives, with the aim to apply learnings to future commissioning of services. The evaluation partner will be required to work in close collaboration with the appointed provider, to develop a suitable evaluation framework for this programme.
- 1.9. The total budget of £100,000, within 22/23 and 23/24, will enable evaluation of Lot 2 for a 12-month period from 1 May 2022 to June 2023.

## **2. Issues for consideration**

- 2.1. The strand of work which focuses on the criminality which girls associated with criminal networks face is primarily led by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. (MOPAC).
- 2.2. The VRU has completed desktop research to understand the girls and young women's sector and emerging needs. The VRU have also engaged with sector specialist organisations through two workshops to further develop the specification options.
- 2.3. From sector engagement it is clear there is a need for safe spaces for girls and young women to access support and secondly the upskilling of teachers and staff working in youth settings to better understand how to take a gendered approach when working with young women and girls.
- 2.4. Furthermore, in January 2021 at the VRU Partnership Reference Group, there was a steer and agreement that the VRU should develop more opportunities to support girls and young women as a gap in provision for earlier intervention and prevention was prominent.
- 2.5. Through the evaluation of the programmes, the VRU plans to demonstrate impact in relation to the below aims across both Lots:
  - Demonstrate impact and practice, improving existing best practice in this sector.
  - Create a unified training model which can be replicated.
  - Improve wellbeing of girls and young women.
  - Reduce disengagement within schools' settings.
  - Upskill staff and improve knowledge of gender informed approaches and how to identify and deal with the needs of young women and girls.
  - Increase feelings of safety and provide safe spaces.

### 3. Financial Comments

- 3.1. The total cost of the project amounts to £100,000 which will be funded from the VRU 2022/23 Mayoral core funding.
- 3.2. The project expenditure will take place over two financial years, £70,000 in 2022/23 and £30,000 in 2023/24. This therefore requires DMPC approval to carry forward 2021/22 budget of £30,000 into year 2023/24.

### 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.

### 5. Commercial Issues

- 5.1. VRU is seeking approval to carry out a competitive Open tender process to procure an evaluation partner for Lot 2 of the Young Women and Girls programmes for the value of £100k for the period of 12 months.
- 5.2. Section 2.3 in the MOPAC Contract Regulations state that the DMPC is responsible for the approval of; All requests to go out for tender for contracts of £500,000 or above, or where there is a particular public interest if below £500K.
- 5.3. To note that the term of the contract will be 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 to 30 June 2023. The total contract value to be £100,000.
- 5.4. It is proposed an evaluation methodology with a Technical: Commercial ratio of **70:30** will be used to select the most economically advantageous tender. The author of the report has demonstrated clear rationale for the proposed procurement route and contracting arrangements.
- 5.5. Please see below the indicative timetable for the proposed procurement.

Procurement activity	Timeframe guide
ITT Issued	W/C 7th March 2022
Tender Submission Deadline	W/C 4 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
Evaluation of tenders	W/C 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2022

Clarification/Interviews or Post Clarification Questions (if required)	W/C 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
Standstill Period	W/C 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
Contract Award Letters issued	W/C 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2022
Contracts Finder Award Notice to be Issued	W/C 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2022
Contract Mobilisation commencement	W/C 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2022
Service Commencement	May 2022

- 5.6. As stated in MOPAC Contract Regulation, all tender documentation shall include as a minimum the following:
1. A specification that describes the MOPAC's requirements in sufficient detail to enable the submission of competitive offers.
  2. A requirement for tenderers to declare that the Tender content, price or any other figure or particulars concerning the Tender have not been disclosed by the tenderer to any other party (except where such a disclosure is made in confidence for a necessary purpose).
  3. A requirement for tenderers to complete fully and sign all Tender documents including a form of Tender and certificates relating to canvassing and non-collusion.
  4. Notification that Tenders are submitted to the MOPAC on the basis that they are compiled at the tenderer's expense.

## 6. **Public Health Approach**

- 6.1. London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) is taking a public health approach to violence reduction, that is contextual; looking at the context and influences that impact on individuals at significant points in their life.
- 6.2. Evidence-based practice is fundamental to the implementation of a public health approach to reducing violence. Therefore, more research including the delivery and gathering of good practice and 'what works' is required to deepen and broaden the evidence base around violence reduction, diversion and prevention in London.
- 6.3. The key areas which are being focussed on as part of this approach are:
- 6.3.1. Children and Young People – reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences and building resilience.
  - 6.3.2. Wellbeing and achievement in schools - Institutions providing responsible leadership; London partners having mutual accountability to invest in what works.

## 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. Lot 1 will aim to improve the knowledge and upskill staff in school settings, to address the gap in understanding the needs and vulnerabilities of young women and girls and how to address these. Lot 2 will address the lack of dedicated support and safe spaces for young women and girls via specialist provision. For 18-25 year olds a bespoke offer will be developed, addressing the support difference between children and adult services, specifically focused on navigating the adult system (e.g. housing, employment, mental health, physical health, sexual health). BAME women are particularly over-represented in the criminal justice system, the service is to be tailored to meet their needs. The services are also open to transgender women after an individual assessment of the needs of each case.
- 8.3. Initial screening will take place around equality impact and if required a full EQIA will take place.

## **9. Background/supporting papers**

- 9.1. [PCD 1016](#).

**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>
<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> 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.	✓
<b>GDPR/Data Privacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report</li> <li>A DPIA is not required.</li> </ul>	✓
<b>Director/Head of Service</b> The Assistant Director VRU 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 have 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 25/02/2022



