

DMPC Decision – PCD 867**Title: Project Alpha Social Media Hub****Executive Summary:**

The purpose of this document is to seek approval to enter into a new grant agreement with the Home Office for funding of £1.48m to continue operating the MPS hosted; NPCC sponsored Project Alpha Social Media Hub for the period 01/04/2020 until 31/03/2021. This will build upon the success of the proof of concept operated during the previous financial year 2019/2020, which was Home Office funded and approved by the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.

The Hub continues to provide a dedicated capability to tackle gang related serious violence and organised criminality that includes county line offending by taking action against online activity. Focusing on investigation, enforcement and disruption work against high harm gangs utilising a range of tactics. Additionally, making referrals to social media companies for the removal of illegal and harmful content intended to incite serious violence. DAC Graham McNulty retains oversight as the NPCC Gangs Portfolio lead.

Existing Hub staff numbers remain unchanged with the awarded funding meeting pay and overtime, training, equipment, research and development and support costs. There has been an increase in costs compared to year one (FY/1 – £1,386,723.00. FY/2 – £1,479,306.16), which reflects an increase in police pay.

The core aims of the Hub are:

- Deliver a strategy and capabilities to tackle the growing issue of threat, risk and harm generated by gangs through their use of social media platforms that perpetuates serious youth violence and facilitates organised crime.
- Develop methodology and best practice in partnership with other Police Forces, agencies and the third sector to enhance the online response of law enforcement. Advancing skills, knowledge and the use of technology to deliver innovative and effective digital solutions.
- Gauge the scale of the online threat and associated demand on law enforcement. Allow for analysis of online gang networks and how they exploit closed and open groups to operate organised criminality – e.g. recruitment into county lines, Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation.
- Continued development of a national intelligence network, which would be the UK's first dedicated open source Intelligence function designed to tackle gang criminality and the associated violence.

Recommendation:

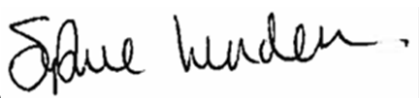
The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

1. Approve entering into a new grant agreement for £1,479,306.16 with the Home Office to fund the Social Media Hub.
2. Note the continuation of Project Alpha Social Media Hub for 2020/21.

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 26/11/20**

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. As traditional communication data fragments with the introduction of new technology and communication providers, Social Media is becoming an ever-increasing key element within serious gang related violence and organised criminality that includes County Lines. This is relevant throughout London and across the UK.
- 1.2. With the proliferation of social media as a method of communication, there is a clear business need to develop new solutions to meet increasing demands.
- 1.3. The scale of the current complex risks posed by gangs in relation to the exposure of young people and the vulnerable to violence and criminal and sexual exploitation is extensive and affects every police force area.
- 1.4. The need for increased collaboration within law enforcement and with industry providers to deliver a better understanding of scale and risks and develop solutions collaboratively.
- 1.5. The Hub proof of concept operated during the previous financial year was Home Office funded and approved by the Deputy Major for Policing and Crime on 12/03/2019.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. This information is contained in the restricted section of the report.

3. Financial Comments

- 3.1. A Home Office grant of £1,479,306.16 from the Serious Violence Strategy Fund will fully fund the Social Media Hub for the twelve-month period 01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021. Providing continued operational delivery following previous Home Office funding for the project during the 2019/2020 financial year. This budgeted amount is inclusive of all staff pay, overtime, training, equipment, research and development and support costs, with no additional costs to the MPS.
- 3.2. Continued equivalent funding for the project has been included within the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy Unit three year funding review (decision pending). At the end of the funding period and if no further funding is made available, there will be a phased exit strategy for staff to transition back into existing MPS posts.
- 3.3. A full breakdown of the costs is contained within restricted section of the report.

4. Legal Comments

- 4.1. The Home Office will pay the Grant to the Metropolitan Police in exercise of the power conferred by Section 56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004).
- 4.2. There are no legal reasons as to why this grant, the terms of which are set out within the grant agreement, cannot be accepted. Legality reviewed throughout the funding period.

- 4.3. Paragraph 4.8 of the MOPAC Scheme of Consent and Delegation provides the DMPC with delegated powers to approve for grant funding made and all offers made of grant funding; and/or where appropriate a strategy for grant giving.

5. GDPR and Data Privacy

- 5.1. The MPS is subject to the requirements and conditions placed on it as a 'State' body to comply with the European Convention of Human Rights and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018. Both legislative requirements place an obligation on the MPS to process personal data fairly and lawfully in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals.
- 5.2. Under Article 35 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Section 57 of the DPA 2018, Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) become mandatory for organisations with technologies and processes that are likely to result in a high risk to the rights of the data subjects.
- 5.3. Data Protection Impact Assessment completed. The project will ensure a privacy by design approach, which will allow the MPS to find and fix problems at the early stages of any project, ensuring compliance with GDPR. DPIAs support the accountability principle, as they will ensure the MPS complies with the requirements of GDPR and they demonstrate that appropriate measures have been taken to ensure compliance.

6. Equality Comments

- 6.1. This business case has undergone a full Equalities Impact Assessment. Due regard has been taken to the Equality Act's Public Sector Equality Duty under Sec 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Consideration has been taken to assess equality impact caused by the proposed business change including effective engagement and analysing relevant equality information. As a result, no negative impact has been identified to any individual at this stage.

7. Background/supporting papers

- 7.1. Decision PCD 545 in March 2019 approved funding for this work in 2019/20.

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 – YES

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION

Tick to confirm statement (✓)

Financial Advice:

The Strategic Finance and Resource Management Team has been consulted on this proposal.

✓

Legal Advice:

The MPS legal team has been consulted on the proposal.

✓

Equalities Advice:

Equality and diversity issues are covered in the body of the report.

✓

Commercial Issues

Commercial issues are not applicable.

✓

GDPR/Data Privacy

- GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report.
- A DPIA has been completed.

✓

Director/Head of Service:

The Interim Chief Finance Officer 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 11/11/2020

MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

Project Alpha Social Media Hub

MOPAC Investment Advisory & Monitoring meeting 23rd July 2020

Report by DSU Mike West on behalf of the Chief of Corporate Services

Part 1 – This section of the report will be published by MOPAC. It is classified as OFFICIAL – PUBLIC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Hub continues to provide a dedicated capability to tackle gang related serious violence and organised criminality that includes county line offending by taking action against online activity. Focusing on investigation, enforcement and disruption work against high harm gangs utilising a range of tactics. Additionally, making referrals to social media companies for the removal of illegal and harmful content intended to incite serious violence. DAC Graham McNulty retains oversight as the NPCC Gangs Portfolio lead.

Existing Hub staff numbers remain unchanged with the awarded funding meeting pay and overtime, training, equipment, research and development and support costs. There has been an increase in costs compared to year one (FY/1 - £1,386,723.00. FY/2 - £1,479,306.16), which reflects an increase in police pay.

The core aims of the Hub are:

- Deliver a strategy and capabilities to tackle the growing issue of threat, risk and harm generated by gangs through their use of social media platforms that perpetuates serious youth violence and facilitates organised crime.
- Develop methodology and best practice in partnership with other Police Forces, agencies and the third sector to enhance the online response of law enforcement. Advancing skills, knowledge and the use of technology to deliver innovative and effective digital solutions.
- Gauge the scale of the online threat and associated demand on law enforcement. Allow for analysis of online gang networks and how they

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| <p>exploit closed and open groups to operate organised criminality – e.g. recruitment into county lines, Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued development of a national intelligence network, which would be the UK's first dedicated open source Intelligence function designed to tackle gang criminality and the associated violence. |
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Recommendations

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, via the Investment Advisory and Monitoring meeting (IAM), is asked to approve:

1. To enter into a new grant agreement for £1.48m with the Home Office to fund mutually agreeable outcomes for the Social Media Hub.
2. The continuation of Project Alpha Social Media Hub with existing staff levels to address the threat, risk and harm of gang violence and organised crime perpetuated through online activity.

Time sensitivity

A decision is required from the Deputy Mayor by 06/08/2020. This is to allow continued operational delivery for FY 20/21 to achieve desired outcomes.

Non-confidential facts and advice to the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

Introduction and background

1. As traditional communication data fragments with the introduction of new technology and communication providers, Social Media is becoming an ever-increasing key element within serious gang related violence and organised criminality that includes County Lines. This is relevant throughout London and across the UK.
2. With the proliferation of social media as a method of communication, there is a clear business need to develop new solutions to meet increasing demands.
3. The scale of the current complex risks posed by gangs in relation to the exposure of young people and the vulnerable to violence and criminal and sexual exploitation is extensive and affects every police force area.
4. The need for increased collaboration within law enforcement and with industry providers to deliver a better understanding of scale and risks and develop solutions collaboratively.
5. The Hub proof of concept operated during the previous financial year was Home Office funded and approved by the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime on 12/03/2019.

Issues for consideration

This information is contained in the restricted section of the report

Contributes to the MOPAC Police & Crime Plan 2017-2021¹

The work the Hub will undertake directly impacts upon serious violent crime and the criminality of urban street gangs/Organised Crime Groups. It will also seek to reduce the criminal and sexual exploitation of young people.

Financial, Commercial and Procurement Comments

A Home Office grant of £1,479,306.16 from the Serious Violence Strategy Fund will fully fund the Social Media Hub for the twelve-month period 01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021. Providing continued operational delivery following previous Home Office funding for the project during the 2019/2020 financial year. This budgeted amount is inclusive of all staff pay, overtime, training, equipment, research and development and support costs, with no additional costs to the MPS.

Continued equivalent funding for the project has been included within the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy Unit three year funding review (decision pending). At the end of the funding period and if no further funding is made available, there will be a phased exit strategy for staff to transition back into existing MPS posts.

A full breakdown of the costs is contained within restricted section of the report.

Legal Comments

The Home Office will pay the Grant to the Metropolitan Police in exercise of the power conferred by Section 56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004).

There are no legal reasons as to why this grant, the terms of which are set out within the grant agreement, cannot be accepted. Legality reviewed throughout the funding period.

Paragraph 4.8 of the MOPAC Scheme of Consent and Delegation provides the DMPC with delegated powers to approve for grant funding made and all offers made of grant funding; and/or where appropriate a strategy for grant giving.

Equality Comments

This business case has undergone a full Equalities Impact Assessment. Due regard has been taken to the Equality Act's Public Sector Equality Duty under Sec 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Consideration has been taken to assess equality impact caused by the proposed business change including effective engagement and analysing relevant equality information. As a result, no negative impact has been identified to any individual at this stage.

Privacy Comments

The MPS is subject to the requirements and conditions placed on it as a 'State' body to comply with the European Convention of Human Rights and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018. Both legislative requirements place an obligation on

¹ [Police and crime plan: a safer city for all Londoners | London City Hall](#)

the MPS to process personal data fairly and lawfully in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals.

Under Article 35 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Section 57 of the DPA 2018, Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) become mandatory for organisations with technologies and processes that are likely to result in a high risk to the rights of the data subjects.

Data Protection Impact Assessment completed. The project will ensure a privacy by design approach, which will allow the MPS to find and fix problems at the early stages of any project, ensuring compliance with GDPR. DPIAs support the accountability principle, as they will ensure the MPS complies with the requirements of GDPR and they demonstrate that appropriate measures have been taken to ensure compliance.

Real Estate Implications

This information is contained in the restricted section of the report

Environmental Implications

There are no identifiable benefits to the London Environment Strategy

Background/supporting papers

This information is contained in the restricted section of the report

Report author: **Mike West, Det Supt, work number 07785 518789**

Part 2 – This section refers to the details of the Part 2 business case which is NOT SUITABLE for MOPAC Publication.

The Government Security Classification marking for Part 2 is:
OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE [OPERATIONAL]

Part 2 of MPS Project Alpha Social Media Hub is exempt from publication for the following reasons:

Exempt under Article 2(2)(a) of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011 (Sec 31 Law enforcement)

The paper will be exempt until 01/04/2025 in accordance with MPS policy pending review.