

**DMPC Decision – PCD 927****Title Home Office Winter Contingency Funding for Violence and Vulnerability****Executive Summary:**

The VRU has been provisionally allocated £409,600 from the Home Office to distribute to charitable organisations and social enterprises with the means to rapidly boost their support offer, helping to ensure that children and young people are kept safe from serious violence, county-lines activity and other forms of exploitation.

This funding can be used for costs incurred from 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2020 but must only be used to fund activity until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Whilst Projects maybe ongoing beyond this point in time, the Grant shall not be used to pay for their continuance.

The Home Office confirmed conditions of funding to the Violence Reduction unit on 14<sup>th</sup> of January. This provides two and a half months, from notification in which to comply with the conditions of the grant. These timescales are not viable to run a new commissioning process.

Given the requirement for rapidly boosting support to young people and delivery by 31<sup>st</sup> of March, the only option is to provide an additional grant to an organisations that has an existing grant agreement for provision of services that reduce the risk of violence and vulnerability for young people under 25.

COVID19 has has a considerable impact on VRU commissioned services and their delivery. Therefore the majority of providers will be unable to take on additional projects and deliver them by 31<sup>st</sup> of March due to managing current programmes already impacted by COVID.

Out of the VRU's commissioned providers, there is only one charitable organisation that is still delivering to target in this financial year, the DIVERT programme. This programme provides a range of support for vulnerable young people both within and outside of police custody and has the capacity for deliver spend of the allocated funding by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

This decision seeks the approval to submit proposals to the Home Office for allocation of the Winter Contingency funds to the DIVERT programme. And to put in place the necessary grant agreement variations to enable the disbursement of funds.

**Recommendation:**

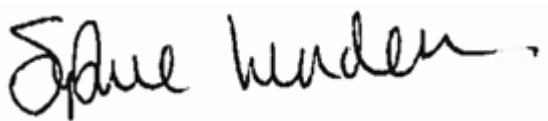
The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

1. Approve entering into of a grant agreement with the Home Office for additional awarded grant income of £409,600 for 2020/2021 delivery.
2. Direct award of grant funding to DIVERT for £409,600 for spend within 2020/2021.

**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 "Edue Warden", written over a light gray rectangular background.**Date****8/2/2021**

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

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

- 1.1 On 11 December the government announced that £2.048m was to be made available for VRUs to distribute to local charities and social enterprises. Prior to the December holidays the amount being made available to London was advised (£409,600) and the purpose and conditions for funding confirmed in a draft grant agreement on 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2021.
- 1.2 To be eligible for funding, organisations must be registered charities, charitable incorporated organisations, or a social enterprise; this includes companies limited by guarantee and community interest companies. These can include existing delivery partners and/or new organisations which are able to rapidly boost their support offer, helping to ensure that children and young people are kept safe from serious violence, county-lines activity and other forms of exploitation.
- 1.3 Through the Vulnerable Children's Charities (VCC) grant in 2020, Home Office funding was provided specifically to small and micro charitable organisations. Whereas the VCC funding stream was provided with a view to ensuring that small and micro charitable organisations could continue to operate, there is no limitation on the size of a charity/social enterprise in order to be deemed eligible to receive the Winter Contingency funding nor a limit of the amount awarded to any organisation. This provides more flexibility in how the grant can be allocated.
- 1.4 Whilst the funding can be used for costs incurred from 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2020, there is a requirement that it must only be used to fund activity until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Whilst Projects maybe ongoing beyond this point in time, the Grant shall not be used to pay for their continuance. The amount of time from notification of funding to completion of delivery, is extremely limited and significantly reduces the options for how the grant may be awarded to upscale at pace and complete delivery in a matter of weeks.

### **2. Issues for consideration**

- 2.1 The VRU has looked at the option of running a new commissioning process to enable providers not currently commissioned by the VRU, to tender for a grant award to deliver services at pace in line with the funding requirements set out by the Home Office.
- 2.2 A new commissioning process would require the writing of a grant specification and advertising an invitation to apply. The invitation to apply would need to be open for at least two weeks to allow for applications to be made. Assessment of applications and undertaking of due diligence would usually take a further two weeks. There would then be a similar period required as a minimum to notify successful organisations, write, issue and sign grant agreements, and then create the necessary financial registration to enable future payment. This would leave only about 4 weeks for services to recruit staff and deliver services at scale.
- 2.3 The timescales and work required to run a new commissioning process, are incompatible with rapid upscaling of services and delivery completion by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- 2.4 The only option is to provide an additional grant to an organisations that has an existing grant agreement for provision of services that reduce the risk of violence and vulnerability for young people under 25.

- 2.5 COVID19 has has a considerable impact on commissioned services and their delivery. Many providers have had to curtail services, especially those that provide face-to-face support services. The VRU has actively supported these providers by ensuring flexibility and extending project end dates to deliver agreed outcomes which is now being achieved. As these providers are struggling with capacity to deliver on existing work due to COVID, they will be unable to take on additional work and deliver by 31<sup>st</sup> of March.
- 2.6 Out of the VRU's commissioned providers, there is only one charitable organisation that is still delivering to target in this financial year, the DIVERT programme. This programme is led by Bounce Back a registered charity, and provides a range of support for vulnerable young people both within and outside of police custody. It's programme delivery and service provision is with those aged 10-25, the target age range for the Home Office funding.
- 2.7 DIVERT has the capacity for delivery against Home Office requirements and spend all of the allocated funding by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- 2.8 The project proposals from DIVERT would upscale case worker coverage in custody suites, extending hours and days of operation in some suites and will enhance access to training and employability opportunities. The proposals include running a specific course based upon COVID restrictions and social distancing, to compliment existing courses. The funding will enable provision of a digital hub to improve digital access and training in technology skills. It will also enable the development of an "app" to both support referrals of clients and signpost them to training courses and employability. The funding also delivers new work with Youth Offending Teams for those aged between 10-18 who are at risk of violence and vulnerability. This funding is adaptable and flexible in response to COVID-19 therefore further restruictions are considered and supported in the Divert proposal.
- 2.9 The DMPC is asked to approve the proposal to award a grant to DIVERT, as the sole existing VRU commissioned provider, that has the ability to fulfil the terms and conditions of the funding, by the delivery deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

### **3. Financial Comments**

- 3.1 The VRU intends to bid for £409,600 of grant funding from the Home Office. The funding is only for use in 20/21, for activities and costs incurred between 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Underspends from this fund cannot be carried forward into future years.
- 3.2 The VRU is unable to claim back the costs associated with administering this funding from this funding source. The costs are contained within the VRU's existing approved budget.
- 3.3 There will need to be a corresponding expenditure and income budget added to MOPAC's 20/21 budget. The budget will sit in the VRU budget lines.

### **4. Legal Comments**

- 4.1 This decision is in line with the MOPAC's Scheme of Consent and Delegation, in which 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:
- Approve bids for grant funding made and all offers made of grant funding; and/or where appropriate a strategy for grant giving.

- 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 The funding will be allocated to DIVERT via a direct grant agreement, using MOPAC's standard term and conditions (MOPAC being the contracting authority). The VRU will incorporate the appropriate terms and conditions from the Grant Agreement between MOPAC and Home Office into the agreement and variations with the recipients of funding to ensure money is spent in compliance with these terms.
- 5.2 Whilst this is a Single Tender Action and therefore a contract exemption, according to the MOPAC Contract Regulations section 3.1 in conjunction with section 8.22 and in the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation (See Annex 1), the evidence provided to support this award is satisfactory to justify the decision.
- 5.3 MOPAC contract regulations (2.3.4) and scheme of delegation (4.13) also states that the DMPC reserves the right to approve call in for all contract exemptions (single tender action) for £100,000 or above.
- 5.4 The VRU has considered the possibility of other organisations delivering in this timeframe set by the Home Office, with no other contracted plausible options being able to deliver.

## **6. Public Health Approach**

- 6.1 The spend plan takes a public health approach to tackling violence, which means looking at violence not as isolated incidents or solely a police enforcement problem. Instead, this approach looks at violence as a preventable consequence of a range of factors, such as adverse early-life experiences, or harmful social or community experiences and influences.

## **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. As part of a need's assessment for Covid-19 related extraordinary funding has identified/will be asked to identify if they support victims with protected characteristics.

**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**

*Tick to confirm statement (✓)*

**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.

✓

**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.

✓

**Director/Head of Service:**

The Head of Service 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 3/2/2021**