

**DMPC Decision – PCD 842****Title: Place based parent/carers champion network****Executive Summary:**

This paper requests approval for the allocation of £1,005,311 of Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) funding to develop a parent/carers champion network to support a public health preventative approach to violence reduction by supporting place-based needs of our communities identified by boroughs.

The VRU strategy illustrates the commitment to developing resilient families through programmes which support parents who are concerned about their children – enabling them to access information and good practice, share their concerns and support each other. The request for this approval is for a Place-Based Parent Champions network primarily aimed at parents/carers of adolescents who may be at risk of Serious Youth Violence (SYV), grooming and/or exploitation, and parents who may have difficulty navigating systems (education, criminal justice and statutory support services). The network is intended to sit alongside the existing VRU funded parenting programmes and support the development of an evidence base to inform a parenting support needs assessment and the VRU Resilient Family's objective.

Over the last year, the VRU has consulted with and listened to communities, including parents and carers, on what they view the key challenges to be and what needs to be done to reduce violence. The VRU has recognised the role of place-based peer to peer parent support in providing access to information, signposting to relevant support and engaging parents from the widest parts of the community.

In deciding how to allocate the available funding, it is important that parenting networks are available within every borough, in order to support parents with adolescent children and particularly those at risk of serious youth violence, exploitation, grooming or school exclusion. This need across boroughs has meant that funding is to be allocated equitably to all boroughs, with other VRU projects providing further enhanced support at individual borough level.

With an equal allocation of the total funding to each London borough (2020-2021), delivery of the parent champion network will take place through Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) organisations, to train local parents to provide Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) to other parents. Each borough will be required to submit a return detailing the parent/carers support services in their local area prior to funding being awarded. This information will be collated as part of an evidence base to inform a VRU Needs Assessment of parent/carers support in London.

The needs assessment findings will be used to establish how and where place-based parent/carer support should be targeted to best support the VRU's aims. The needs assessment will then inform the work programme and any investment required in future which will be presented in a future paper, along with any funding requirements.

**Recommendation:**

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to approve:

- The equal allocation of £1,005,311 to London boroughs, to support delivery of five-month (1 November 2020 to 31 March 2021) parent/carer champion network projects through VCS organisations via a process of directly assigning grants to the boroughs

**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**

**29/09/2020**

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

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

- 1.1. The VRU strategy illustrates the commitment to developing resilient families through programmes which support parents who are concerned about their children – enabling them to access information and good practice, share their concerns and support each other. This proposal is for a Parent/Carer Champions network for parents of adolescents who may be at risk of SYV, grooming and/or exploitation, and parents who may have difficulty navigating formal systems when supporting their children and young people (such as education, social care and the criminal justice system). The network is intended to sit alongside the existing VRU funded parenting programmes and support the development of an evidence base to inform a parenting support needs assessment and the VRU Resilient Family's objective.
- 1.2. The VRU have undertaken a range of insight and analysis activities to understand the needs of parent/carers in London. This has included stakeholder engagement meetings, parent/carers survey and a stocktake of parenting programmes.
- 1.3. VRU data and insight has highlighted that parent/carers training programmes are primarily provided by local authorities as part of the local offer, aligned with the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme (national standard for child public health). This includes a choice of evidence-based parenting classes. What is unclear from the data and insight is whether provision is sufficient for the population, whether all parents are able to access the support that is offered, and whether classes are equally accessible to all groups within the population; irrespective of ethnicity, language spoken, or cultural acceptability.
- 1.4. VRU stakeholder engagement with parents, carers and services, has revealed that many parents lack trust in traditional services, and at times have difficulty navigating systems unless they are already familiar with them. In addition, data and insight has revealed an overwhelming preference for more informal, peer-support. This award will therefore fund delivery of peer to peer parent/carers support networks, thus improving communication, access to support and the sharing of important information to all parents, including those from marginalised and minoritised communities.
- 1.5. The total programme budget of £1,005,311, within 2020/21, will support delivery for a five-month period from 1 November 2020 to 31 March 2021. The funding will be equally divided between the London Boroughs who accept this offer of funding, for delivery across the following two areas:

LOCAL AUTHORITY (LEAD / FUNDING RECIPIENT)	
Local Authority	VCS organisation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completing and returning VRU Local Authority return to support mapping of parent/carer support provision in London.</li> <li>2. Management Fees (no more than 10%) including to oversee VCS organisation commissioning and delivery.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training of parent champions to meet local need.</li> <li>2. Facilitate networking and learning between micro/grassroots organisations that support parents/carers. Especially those led by and/or providing targeted support to parents from marginalised and/or minoritised backgrounds.</li> </ol>

- 1.6. As part of the VCS' work to training parent/carer champions and facilitate networking it is expected that the funding will be used to pay for staff/volunteer expenses, venue hire, parent/carer expenses and training resources. We expect the local authority to ensure funds are spent as per the specification outcomes in their role as contract lead.

## 2. Context

- 2.1 Parent Champions are parents and/or carers of children and young people who volunteer on a weekly basis to support local parents in their area, offer advice and guidance and discuss local services. Parent Champions have local knowledge of the agencies, organisations and generally of the barriers in each area. They can provide peer support to local parents, improve referral methods, access to services, provide appropriate knowledge and dispel common misconceptions.
- 2.2 The VRU has consulted with and listened to many parent/carers support grassroots organisations, such as Father2Father, Operation Shutdown, MGUK Foundation and others, who are bridging the gap through the provision of informal support for families who are not being supported by statutory services but require support. These organisations have shared that they often lack resources and their service is not always known about, but parents/carers have spoken about the value of such services.
- 2.3 The deep distrust that many marginalised young people and families have of the agencies, institutions and services that have systemically failed them in the past was recognised as a barrier to support in recent research from VCS organisation, Power the Fight, the effectiveness of therapeutic responses to serious youth violence was explored. A recommendation within the report was for more peer-to-peer parent support networks.
- 2.4 The distrust of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) for Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) families was explored in a recent report by the Ministry of Justice. It was highlighted that the distrust often stems from negative experiences with other systems prior to contact with the CJS. The need for improved partnerships with peer

and community organisations and the need to support parents to access appropriate information, understand and navigate the system was also highlighted.

- 2.5 In addition, we know from a range of high-profile reports that Black and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller boys are overrepresented in school exclusion statistics. Black boys are also overrepresented in CJS and Black and minority ethnic families have higher levels of distrust in statutory services. Support for Black parents/carers to understand and navigate the system is, therefore, even more necessary. This project provides a positive opportunity for peer led support to be developed.
- 2.6 The Early Intervention Foundation states that improved parent/carers, couple and family outcomes have a positive effect on children's outcomes, as evidence through the peer-to-peer Empowering Parents Empowering Communities programme, which has been shown to have a positive impact even within randomised control trial conditions.
- 2.7 Overall, the VRU takes a public health approach to reduce youth violence across London. The importance of supporting parents/carers as part of a whole family approach is recognised, and forms part of a contextual approach to violence reduction.

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

- 3.1. A key focus of the VRU's parenting strand is to support stronger, more resilient family units.
- 3.2. The VRU is currently working with the London boroughs of Camden and Islington Public Health, to deliver an eight-strand project of multi-level parent/carer support across 2020/21 and 2021/22. The strands include: a transition to secondary school parent support programme; social media, benefits and education training for parents; and additional mental health support for parents. The project is focussed on community based, peer-to-peer support in the context of a public health approach to violence reduction. It will be formally evaluated to support the development of an evidence base pertaining to peer-to-peer models of parent support. The pilot has been revised to take into account the impact COVID-19 pandemic and related measures. Additional capacity to provide mental health support for parents is now also included.
- 3.3. This proposal has been developed based on feedback and recommendations from parent/carers and VRU stakeholders and partners to develop a peer to peer support model and ensure communities are at the heart of solutions to tackle violence. This has therefore resulted in the development of the pan-London place-based parent champion network specification, to roll out a model to support local families, offering information, advice and guidance.
- 3.4. As part of this funding, each borough will be required to submit a return detailing the parent/carer support services in their local area prior to funding being awarded. This information will be collated as part of an evidence base to inform a VRU Needs Assessment of parent/carer support in London. The needs assessment findings will be

used to establish how and where place-based parent/carer support should be targeted to best support the VRU's aims. Further investment will be required if we are to ensure parents from the communities underserved by mainstream services have access to more support.

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

- 4.1. The budget requirement for this work totals £1,005,311, within 2020/21, which will support delivery for a five-month period from 1 November 2020 to 31 March 2021. The funding envelope will be equally divided between the London Boroughs who accept this offer of funding. This would be up to 32 boroughs.
- 4.2. The programme will be funded from existing available VRU Home Office 2020/21 grant funding.

#### **5. Legal Comments**

- 5.1. 5Paragraph 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.

#### **6. Commercial Issues**

- 6.1 The funding will be allocated through a direct grant award process to each borough, with the requirement of delivery through a VCS organisation which each borough will stipulate on application for the funding.

#### **7. Public Health Approach**

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. Two key areas which are being focussed on as part of this approach are:
  - Children and Young People –reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences and building resilience
  - Families and Home –Support & enable families to nurture and protect young people

- 7.3 To further support the VRU commitment to create resilient families, we are suggesting an additional condition of the funding. Each borough would be required to submit an outline of parent/carers support within their local area prior to funding being awarded, this will be used to build an evidence base for a Needs Assessment of parent/carers support provision in London.
- 7.4 The funding for the place-based parenting network ensures parents are offered support, advice and guidance, and are signposted to local services by trained parent champions whom they may find more accessible and comfortable with.

## **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.
- 8.2 All contracts and grant agreements will include clear provisions relating to compliance in this area, and in relation to the processing of personal data. These terms have been drafted following consultation with MOPAC's GDPR Project Manager.

## **9. Equality Comments**

- 9.1 Under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act), as a public authority the Deputy Mayor/MOPAC must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics under the Equality Act are age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership status (the duty in respect of this last characteristic is to eliminate unlawful discrimination only).
- 9.2 In London, rates of low pay and unemployment are highest in Pakistani or Bangladeshi people (at 46%). Black Londoners are more likely than people of any other ethnicity to be in insecure employment. Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people are over-represented as both victims and perpetrators of violent incidents, and in the criminal justice system.
- 9.3 The VRU ensures that parent-focussed interventions commissioned in the interests of violence reduction are applicable, available, accessible and appealing to different groups of Black and minority ethnic parents/carers; part of which must include ensuring that parents do not feel stigmatised or 'grouped' based on ethnicity or other characteristic. Co-production, meaningful engagement with parents, and culturally competent service design help to mitigate this risk. A peer to peer support model,

delivered by a diverse range of parents to their peers is one way in which the VRU is mitigating the equality impact of this programme.

- 9.4 The overarching principles and good practice examples cited in the 2007 review *Engaging Effectively with Black and Minority Ethnic Parents in Children's and Parental Services*, commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (now the DfE), are relevant and well-explained to help ensure equity of access to parent/carer support.

## **10. Background/supporting papers**

- 10.1. None.



**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 Director / 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 17/09/2020**