April 2019

London Gang Exit: Interim Evaluation Summary and Next Steps

This document presents a summary of the London Gang Exit evaluation to date, and outlines the plans for the final evaluation currently scheduled for early 2020. It should be read with reference to the suite of interim evaluation reports published alongside it on the MOPAC website.

Programme Background

London Gang Exit (LGE) is a holistic support service to help individuals involved in gangs or at risk of gang violence or exploitation. Originally jointly commissioned by the Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) and the London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), the intervention went live in February 2016 and was initially funded until October 2017. MOPAC took over sole funding of the project after this date and LGE is currently funded to March 2020. LGE also receives contributory funding from the Mayor's Young Londoners Fund between 2018-20. The programme is being delivered by Safer London with key delivery partners Catch-22, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and the community CRC. The pan London service is designed to complement and enhance existing local services, matching need to bespoke support across mental health, employment, family support, housing advocacy and specialist support for girls and women. Young people are not compelled to work with LGE, but rather engage on a voluntary basis. The key overarching aims for LGE, measured through a combination of police recorded data and a practitioner/client 'distance travelled' assessment tool are:

- Reduced / ceased harm from gangs
- Reduced / ceased involvement in gangs
- Reduced seriousness and frequency of offending

Evaluation: Overview of Findings to Date

MOPAC Evidence and Insight (E&I) are evaluating LGE in terms of the process of implementation, performance management, impact and value for money. To date, two interim evaluation reports have been completed, as well as three indicative analyses of offending and victimization to inform Payment By Results (PBR) awards over the life of the programme. Safer London routinely provides aggregated performance management information on to inform quarterly contract management meetings (e.g. throughput, service-use demographics, intervention uptake/completion and strategic and operational updates).

- Since launch, over 500 young people have been referred onto the programme, with 134 having completed the full six-month intervention (as of Jan 2019).
- Referrals have been received from all London boroughs, statutory agencies and self-referrals.
- The average age of individuals completing the programme is 19; 70% are male; 89% BAME.

Interim Evaluation Report 1: October 2016

The first MOPAC evaluation report presented key performance data and learning around implementation from a practitioner's survey and interviews. Due to low throughput at this early stage, impact was not assessed. The report highlighted positives in training (upskilling) of practitioners; steady progression with referral numbers; positive engagement with Local Authorities and a shared understanding of current barriers between referral and intervention. Key challenges included staff shortages and inconsistencies in data quality and availability. Communications issues were also highlighted, including the name of the programme, which was considered potentially misleading, raising questions around the clarity of eligibility criteria.

Interim Evaluation Report 2: October 2017

The second MOPAC evaluation report drew on key performance data to date as well as process learning from staff surveys and service users. The report also presented early indicative impact on offending and victimization, emphasizing caution in interpreting results at this early stage. In terms of process, staff strongly believed that LGE was providing short and long-term positive outcomes. Staff also indicated that significant barriers in initial delivery design had been overcome (e.g. centralization of referrals). Overall, service users also reported positive experiences, particularly in terms of staff engagement and flexibility of response.

Analysis indicated a diverse intake of service users in terms of involvement in group violence, violent offending and victimization, reflective of the broad eligibility criteria. Offending was driven by less than half of the overall cohort, whilst one third were victims. Preliminary impact analysis found tentatively positive outcomes in terms of non-proven offending; there was a decrease in the proportion of individuals offending after the intervention (though not statistically significant).

Two Year Performance By Results (PBR): December 2018

The most recent analysis explored police recorded non-proven offending and victimization cases closed between October 2016 and September 2017 inclusive (Year One) and October 2017 and September 2017 (Year Two). Again, findings are indicative only and low case numbers, restricted period of analysis, focus on completed cases only, relatively low prevalence of offending, and before and after methodology mean that robust causal statements as to LGE's impact on offending behaviour are not possible at this stage of the evaluation. The key findings were as follows:

- Across both years overall offending decreased, but not significantly. The decrease was driven by the Year 1 cohort.
- Year 2 analysis found no impact on non-proven offending, including violent offending.
- Consistent with other periods of analysis, victimisation and violent victimisation decreased both overall, and within Year 1 and Year 2 (all statistically significant).

A greater proportion of Year 2 completions had no offending history before or after case opening, across all time-periods explored. Similarly, where offending is recorded, the Year 2 cohort includes less prolific individuals. The Year 2 cohort were more likely to be victims, and particularly victims of violence. This may in part be explained by changes in the types of individuals accepted (i.e. more females at risk of violence/exploitation). This will be explored in detail in the final evaluation report.

The Final LGE Evaluation Report: Expected Early 2020

The final report will explore both the process of implementation and any impact of LGE against key outcomes. The report will be informed by interviews with staff, and clients. To allow for a more robust exploration of impact, primarily on police recorded non-offending and victimisation, analysis will utilise a matched control methodology to generate a comparison group. Data access and quality allowing, needs matching and outcomes of bespoke intervention pathways, as well as additional metrics from the distance travelled assessment and delivery partners, will be factored into impact analysis to best understand what works for whom.