

DMPC Decision – PCD1623

Title: Community Engagement funding 2024/25

Executive Summary:

The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) is responsible for making arrangements for obtaining the views of communities and victims of crime on matters concerning policing in London and for overseeing the delivery of policing by the Metropolitan Police Service.

These functions are discharged through a variety of mechanisms, including the Community Monitoring Groups (CMGs) and Safer Neighbourhood Boards (SNBs), which are established mechanisms for delivering local police accountability and engagement, and through targeted engagement on specific areas of work.

In addition, MOPAC has supported the provision of a digital Neighbourhood Watch communications platform, Online Watch Link (OWL) and it is proposed that this will continue until 1 November 2024.

This decision seeks approval of the 2024/25 funding for the community engagement work programme referenced above up to a maximum of £741,500.

Recommendation:

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to approve the allocation of the 2024/25 Community Engagement Fund £741,500 as follows:

1. Funding of up to £700,000 for the continuation of the borough level community engagement mechanisms, including the award of new grant agreements to the Safer Neighbourhood Boards as set out in Appendix 1, and associated funding for local community engagement and crime reduction projects;
2. Award a further contract via exemption from competitive tendering for up to £41,500 (cumulative value of £211,500) to secure OWL's continued operation until 31 October 2024.
3. Delegate the signing of related grants and contracts to the Director of Strategy in line with the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation.

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

Spivey Under

Date 18/03/2024

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 (PCP) sets out the Mayor's ambitions for policing and community safety in London. There are four key priorities set out in the PCP and the community engagement programme is key to delivery across all the priorities, including MOPAC and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) efforts to improve trust and confidence.
- 1.2 SNBs are a core part of MOPAC's current community engagement framework and are a central conduit for supporting engagement at a local level in Boroughs, promoting trust and confidence and helping to ensure transparency and accountability of MPS delivery. This funding programme empowers the SNBs to take decisions on funding local initiatives to tackle the most pertinent issues in their area.
- 1.3 This decision sets out the key elements of the 2023/24 community engagement programme and seeks approval for the associated budget.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. The 2024/25 community engagement programme comprises of mechanisms for community scrutiny and engagement as we develop and transition to a new framework, including the roles of Community Monitoring Groups and Safer Neighbourhood Boards.
- 2.2. Funding for the provision of the Online Watch Link (OWL) digital communication system for local Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, is also included on an interim basis whilst the MPS procure and embed a new pan-London neighbourhood safety communication system. This will ensure that there is a continuation of service for those who use the platform and will enable a smooth transition between to the pan-London approach.
- 2.3. This work programme supports the strongest ever neighbourhood policing strand of the New Met for London plan, as well as MOPAC priorities, providing forums for engagement, scrutiny and partnership with the MPS, and a tool for enabling digital engagement.
- 2.4. MOPAC has made an annual commitment to fund provision of OWL, OWL has been awarded £170k since December 2019. This funding has been granted through direct award as there very few organisations that offer similar products. Additionally, OWL is the only platforms currently working with the MPS and local councils in London. There is also a significant user base made up of members of the public who have chosen to sign up and interact with this platform making it unique. MOPAC have committed to supporting a digital communications platform, to enable local Neighbourhood Watch Schemes.

3. Financial Comments

- 3.1. The budget requirement is £741,500 in 2024/25. This will be funded from the MOPAC Strategy and MPS Oversight Directorate 2024/25 budget.
- 3.2. The funding will be allocated as follows:

- 3.3. up to £41,500 to maintain the provision of a digital Neighbourhood Watch communications platform. The payment mechanism set out in the contract provides for payment in arrears as a way of managing risk.; and
- 3.4. up to £700,000 to maintain the existing community engagement, (i.e. Safer Neighbourhood Boards) that will continue to operate at the borough level. Appendix A lists the individual allocation to each SNB and is inclusive of £5,200 ringfenced for administrative costs.

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 approve business cases for revenue or capital expenditure of £500,000 or above.
- 4.2. The activities set out in this decision are in accordance with MOPAC's responsibilities under section 14 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the 2011 Act), to make arrangements for obtaining the views of the community on policing in the area. MOPAC's general powers are set out in the 2011 Act. Section 3(6) of the 2011 Act provides that MOPAC must "secure the maintenance of the metropolitan police force and secure that the metropolitan police force is efficient and effective." Under Schedule 3, paragraph 7 of the 2011 Act, MOPAC has wide incidental powers to "do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of the Office". Paragraph 7(2) (a) provides that this includes entering into contracts and other agreements.
- 4.3. In addition, section 143 (1) (b) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides an express power for MOPAC, as a local policing body, to provide or commission services "intended by the local policing body to help victims or witnesses of, or other persons affected by, offences and antisocial behaviour." Section 143(3) specifically allows MOPAC to make grants in connection with such arrangements and any grant may be made subject to any conditions that MOPAC deems appropriate. The proposals set out in this decision support MOPAC's duties under and are in accordance with MOPAC's powers under that section.
- 4.4. Under Section 5.23 of MOPAC's Scheme of Delegation, grant agreements under the value of £150,000 may be signed by the relevant MOPAC Director in line with their individual Scheme of Delegation.

5. Commercial Issues

- 5.1. This Decision seeks to award grant agreements to the Safer Neighbourhood Boards as set out in Appendix 1 to provide continued funding for these borough level community engagement mechanisms. A funding allocation is made for each Borough and that funding can only be accessed by those Boroughs with a functional SNB in place, and on adherence to the MOPAC grant funding process.
- 5.2. Further, this Decision seeks to award a contract to Direct Path Solutions Ltd for provision of a digital Neighbourhood Watch communications platform, Online Watch Link (OWL) up to 31 October 2024.
- 5.3. Previous contracts have been awarded to the provider for the same requirement since 2019, with a cumulative value so far of £170k, increasing to £211,500 with this further award. A justification for the award is included in paragraph 2.4 above. Any future contract for this requirement (or variation or extension to this contract) should be subject to competitive tendering, with award made in accordance with the requirements of public procurement legislation.
- 5.4. In accordance with MOPAC's Scheme of Delegation, DMPC approval is required for any award of a grant and for awards by exemption from competitive tendering above £100k (the cumulative value of direct awards made to Direct Path Solutions Ltd. so far exceeds this threshold).
- 5.5. Following approval of this Decision, a transparency notice will be published to cover the award to Direct Path Solutions Ltd.
- 5.6. The actions proposed can be taken in compliance with procurement legislation and MOPAC's Contract Regulations.

6. Public Health Approach

- 6.1. A public health approach is rooted in good multi-agency working and close working with communities, focused on prevention, and informed by the systemic use of evidence. The public health approach and working closely with local communities is embedded into the action plan programme and will continue to be incorporated into the work as it is implemented.

7. GDPR and Data Privacy

- 7.1. GDPR matters have been discussed with the Data Protection Officer, who has confirmed that no Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is required for these programmes of work. However, the personal details of any individuals or organisations with whom contact is made for the purposes of the engagement will be managed in accordance with MOPAC's wider Privacy Notice. Any organisation that is contracted to conduct work in support of this programme will be required to sign a MOPAC contract that will specify 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.

- 8.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for activities pertaining to the delivery of the Mayor’s Action Plan and each individual action. The EIA has been reviewed and some areas for further development have been identified. SNBs and CMGs are under review. In the interim, there are two key areas in which they can have a positive impact: (i) by addressing the disproportionate impact of crime and policing on different areas and communities and (ii) by seeking to involve and represent diverse communities in police-community engagement. Though these structures may change as a result of the review, these two principles will continue to underscore MOPAC’s community engagement delivery in this area and the allocation of funding to this work will have a positive impact across all protected characteristics.
- 8.4 As a result of the consideration of the equalities impact of this work programme, targeted work to better engage, involve and understand the impact of crime and policing on under-represented communities that have the lowest levels of trust and confidence and/or whose views and experiences continue to be under-represented in the community engagement programme, have been and will continue to be undertaken through the review and our existing community engagement programme. This includes working with LGBTQ, disabled and Black and minoritised communities, and a focus on better understanding intersectionality.

9. Background/supporting papers

- Appendix 1 List of SNB allocations

Appendix A - 2023/24 Safer Neighbourhood Board/local engagement allocations

Borough	Total Allocation (£)
Barking and Dagenham	£22,353
Barnet	£21,314
Bexley	£19,597
Brent	£24,136
Bromley	£20,645
Camden	£21,091
Croydon	£23,151
Ealing	£22,787
Enfield	£22,426
Greenwich	£23,327
Hackney	£24,255
Hammersmith and Fulham	£20,554
Haringey	£24,255
Harrow	£19,648
Havering	£19,611
Hillingdon	£20,146
Hounslow	£21,586
Islington	£24,255
Kensington and Chelsea	£20,210
Kingston upon Thames	£19,005
Lambeth	£24,025
Lewisham	£23,633
Merton	£19,079
Newham	£24,255
Redbridge	£20,230
Richmond upon Thames	£19,597
Southwark	£23,800
Sutton	£18,944
Tower Hamlets	£24,255
Waltham Forest	£24,255
Wandsworth	£22,338
Westminster	£21,083

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 – No

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION	<i>Tick to confirm statement (✓)</i>
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. This has been reviewed and supported by a senior manager within the VRU.	✓
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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report and the GDPR Project Manager has been consulted on the GDPR issues within this report. • A DPIA is not required. 	✓
Drafting Officer Alice Bird has drafted this report in accordance with MOPAC procedures.	✓
Director/Head of Service: The Natasha Plummer 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 12/03/2024

