

DMPC Decision – PCD 956

Title Home Office Funding Project Alpha Social Media Intelligence Network 2021/22

Executive Summary:

This paper seeks approval to accept the Home Office offer of grant funding for 2021/22 of £272,708.04. The funding will support the development of the Project Alpha and County Line Social Media Intelligence Network as a proof of concept.

Recommendation:

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:


1. To enter into a new grant agreement for £272,708.04 with the Home Office to fund mutually agreeable outcomes for the County Line and Social Media Intelligence Network.
2. Development of the Project Alpha and County Line Social Media Intelligence Network proof of concept, a proposed national intelligence function in support of the existing County Lines Task Forces (CLTF's) within the MPS, West Midlands and Merseyside Police, the MPS Social Media Hub (SMH) and National County Lines Co-ordination Centre (NCLCC).

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 12/03/2021

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. This proposal will further support the existing Project Alpha Social Media Hub and County Line Task Force activities. The Home Office is funding the development of a national social media intelligence network as a proof of concept.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. The proposed grant funding will support the MOPAC Police & Crime Plan by undertaking activities to directly impact upon gang related serious violence and organised criminality. It will also seek to reduce the criminal and sexual exploitation of young and vulnerable people.

- 2.2. The core aims of the network are:

- Development of a national social media intelligence network in support of the three County Line Task Forces (CLTF), the MPS Project Alpha Social Media Hub (SMH) and National County Line Coordination Centre (NCLCC), creating the UK's first dedicated intelligence function seeking to reduce the threat, risk and harm of London based gangs and their county line activity. In direct support to MOPAC and MPS violence plans.
- Deliver effective best practice in partnership with county Forces, agencies and the industry to enhance the response of law enforcement. Advancing skills, knowledge and the use of technology to deliver innovative and effective solutions.
- Gauge the scale of the threat and associated demand on law enforcement. Allow for analysis of gang network exploitation – e.g. recruitment into county lines, child criminal and sexual exploitation.
- Uplift to National County Line Coordination and National Crime Agency intelligence picture and threat assessment accuracy

- 2.3. The evaluation of the concept will be carried out through the quarterly returns to the Home Office and at year end via the National County Lines Co-Ordination Centre. The Home Office anticipate funding for this project to continue beyond 2021/22.

3. Financial Comments

- 3.1. This proposal seeks approval to accept upto £272,708.04 of Home Office grant funding for 2021/22. The grant will support the funding of three officers as well as equipment and training.

4. Legal Comments

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

- 4.2. The legal powers applicable to the acceptance of this Grant will be under Schedule 3, Paragraph 7 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
- 4.3. Paragraph 4.8 of MOPAC's Scheme of Delegation and Consent requires the approval of the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to approve the receipt of the grant.

5. GDPR and Data Privacy

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. MPS assure that a DPIA has been completed which concluded that the risk of a data breach occurring was low based on current practices.

6. Equality Comments

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. MPS assure that this business case has undergone a full equalities impact assessment with no negative impact identified at this stage.

7. Background/supporting papers

- Appendix 1 MPS Report Project Alpha Social Media Hub Continued Home Office Funding (Financial Year 2021/2022)

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 – YES

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION	<i>Tick to confirm statement (✓)</i>
Financial Advice: The Strategic Finance and Resource Management Team has been consulted on this proposal.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal Advice: The MPS legal team has been consulted on the proposal.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Equalities Advice: Equality and diversity issues are covered in the body of the report.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GDPR/Data Privacy GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report	✓
Director/Head of Service: The MOPAC Chief Finance Officer and Director of Corporate Services 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 9/3/2021



MOPAC

MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

Project Alpha Social Media and County Line Intelligence Network Proof of Concept

MOPAC Investment Advisory & Monitoring meeting 5th March 2021

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

The purpose of this document is to seek approval to enter into a new grant agreement with the Home Office for funding of £272,708.04 to develop the Project Alpha and County Line Social Media Intelligence Network as a proof of concept.

The core aims of the network are:

- Development of a national social media intelligence network in support of the three County Line Task Forces (CLTF), the MPS Project Alpha Social Media Hub (SMH) and National County Line Coordination Centre (NCLCC), creating the UK's first dedicated intelligence function seeking to reduce the threat, risk and harm of London based gangs and their county line activity. In direct support to MOPAC and MPS violence plans.
- Deliver effective best practice in partnership with county Forces, agencies and the industry to enhance the response of law enforcement. Advancing skills, knowledge and the use of technology to deliver innovative and effective solutions.
- Gauge the scale of the threat and associated demand on law enforcement. Allow for analysis of gang network exploitation – e.g. recruitment into county lines, child criminal and sexual exploitation.
- Uplift to National County Line Coordination and National Crime Agency intelligence picture and threat assessment accuracy.

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 £272,708.04 with the Home Office to fund mutually agreeable outcomes for the County Line and Social Media Intelligence Network.
2. Development of the Project Alpha and County Line Social Media Intelligence Network proof on concept, a proposed national intelligence function in support of the existing CLTF's within the MPS, West Mids and Merseyside Police, the MPS SMH and NCLCC.

Time sensitivity

A decision is required from the Deputy Mayor by 19th March 2021. This is to allow continued operational delivery for FY 21/22 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 now 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.

Issues for consideration

Development of the Project Alpha and County Line Social Media Intelligence Network as a proof of concept with Home Office funding. This is to support the County Line Task Force and Project Alpha Social Media Hub, which are both existing Home Office funded projects. All three initiatives are supported by DAC Graham McNulty as the NPCC gangs lead.

Evaluation of the project will take place per quarterly annex returns for ongoing performance, which is a condition included within the grant agreement. Additionally, via an independent evaluation offered at the end of the financial year through the National County Lines Co-Ordination Centre.

Contributes to the MOPAC Police & Crime Plan 2017-2021¹

The work the Network will undertake directly impacts upon gang related serious violence and organised criminality. It will also seek to reduce the criminal and sexual exploitation of young and vulnerable people.

Financial, Commercial and Procurement Comments

The proposal is for the Home Office to fund eleven posts nationally to develop a national network. Three will be recruited from the MPS. A DS with coordination and oversight responsibility for the Intel network and two PC's to support the CLTF and SMH.

Recruitment for the additional nine DC/PC posts would only come from within the relevant County Forces and not the MPS. Two DC/PC posts within each of the other two CLTF (West Mids and Merseyside). The remaining four DC/PC's positions will provide County Line operational and intelligence support. Placement of a single officer in the combined top four forces affected by county lines that originate from within the three CLTS's.

The Home Office will separately enter into Grant Agreements with the other Forces involved in the project to fund their activity. The grant amount of £272,708.04 will fund the MPS element of the network up until 31/03/2022. This budgeted amount meets direct pay and overtime plus training and equipment (specific to role) costs.

Following ongoing consultation with the Home Office Serious Violence Unit, it is anticipate funding to support the project will continue beyond 2021/2022. Continued funding for the Intel Network was included within the Home Office three-year funding review. The review has been reduced to twelve months due to the impact of the COVID pandemic.

The conditions on which the Home Office has made this grant relate to direct pay costs with the addition of overtime, plus training and equipment specific to the role. MPS support costs are not included.

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).

The legal powers applicable to the acceptance of this Grant will be under Schedule 3, Paragraph 7 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Paragraph 4.8 of the MOPAC Scheme of Consent and Delegation provides the

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

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.

There are no legal reasons as to why the funding, the terms of which are set out within the grant agreement, cannot be accepted. This will remain under review throughout the funding period.

Equality Comments

This business case has undergone initial equality screening. 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. A full EIA completed in respect of the SMH.

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 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.

DPIA completed for the SMH. 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. The DPIA concluded the risk of a data breach occurring was LOW based on current practices. Recommendations regarding data storage and retention have been followed with the use of the MPS approved BOX data storage solution and an updated data retention policy.

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:

FOIA Sec 31 Law enforcement

(1) Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—

- (a) The prevention or detection of crime,
- (b) The apprehension or prosecution of offenders,
- (c) The administration of justice,

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