

**DMPC Decision – PCD 1016**

**Title: VRU Girls and Young Women**

**Executive Summary:**

This paper requests the approval of £1,150,000 of Violence Reduction Unit Funding to support the needs of girls and young women.

The programme aligns with the VRUs objectives to prioritise wellbeing and achievement in school and to support individuals to become more resilient. We know there are many risk factors connected to girls and the affiliation with wider criminal networks. Exposure to violence in the home and a lack of positive family support or role models can influence a girl's decision to associate themselves with wider criminal networks. The association can provide status and protection to vulnerable girls who may have low self-esteem and reduced personal support networks. The vulnerabilities and needs of girls are often not identified and addressed as they are for boys, with girls needs more likely to go under the radar until crisis point.

From sector engagement it is clear there is a need for safe spaces for girls and young women to access support and secondly the upskilling of teachers and staff working in youth settings to better understand how to take a gendered approach.

Furthermore, in January 2021 at the VRU Partnership Reference Group, there was a steer and agreement that the VRU should develop more opportunities to support girls and young women as a gap in provision for earlier intervention and prevention was prominent.

Therefore, the funding is to be divided into two Lots:

Lot 1 is to add capacity to the delivery of a targeted and intensive training offer to staff working with young women and girls in a school setting. The training should take a gendered and trauma informed, culturally competent approach.

Lot 2 is to develop and deliver a collaborative community-based support service from the perspective of a young woman. The service is to offer support through safe spaces and mentoring based on the differing needs at crucial age points from 9-25 yrs., e.g. transitions, healthy relationships (inc. exploitation/grooming), employment. This includes a bespoke offer for 18-25-year olds on how to navigate the adult system.

This decision seeks to approve the VRU entering a competitive tender process to allocate £400,000 for Lot 1 and £700,000 for Lot 2. At least £10,000 is ringfenced from each lot for communications to further develop best practice in the sector and build sustainability.

The VRU will commission an evaluation partner once the provider is awarded, which will be based on the proposed delivery model.

The delivery period is over 15 months, including a 3-month mobilisation period.

To ensure alignment, and not duplication, of the existing MOPAC commission Empower, we will ensure that the commissions take a differentiated approach in terms of both delivery method and target audience, but are aligned to achieve the joint outcomes. This will be further reinforced during MOPAC contract management activity during 22/23.

This pilot will also inform future commissioning for both MOPAC and VRU for these outcomes.

**Recommendation:**

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

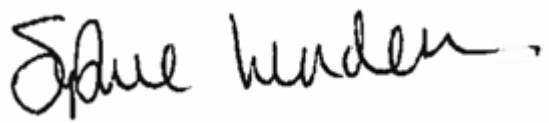
1. Approve the allocation of £1,150,000 from VRU 21/22 core budget (£150k) and growth from the council precept funding (£1m) for spend in 21/22 and 22/23 to enter and approve a competitive tender process to support the needs of young women and girls.
2. Approve required carry forward of 21/22 £1,035,000 VRU budget for spend in 22/23 to deliver this project.
3. Approve delegated authority to the VRU Director for awarding the contract to the successful provider, following a competitive tender process.

**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

15/11/2021

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

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

- 1.1.** The VRU strategy illustrates the commitment to prioritise wellbeing and achievement in school and to support individuals to become more resilient. The VRU have undertaken a range of insight and analysis activities to understand the needs of girls and young women in London. This has included desktop research and stakeholder engagement workshops.
- 1.2.** VRU data and insight has highlighted that there is a wider understanding of the needs of boys, the disproportionality boys face in the criminal justice system and the interventions to support them. Due to this, much of the available funding is focused to support boys and young men, often missing the differential needs that girls and young women have.
- 1.3.** We know there are many risk factors connected to girls and the affiliation with wider criminal networks. Exposure to violence in the home and a lack of positive family support or role models can influence a girl's decision to associate themselves with wider criminal networks. The association can provide status and protection to vulnerable girls who may have low self-esteem and reduced personal support networks.
- 1.4.** The vulnerabilities and needs of girls are often not identified and addressed as they are for boys, with girls needs more likely to go under the radar until crisis point.
- 1.5.** Lot 1 is to add capacity to the delivery of a targeted and intensive training offer to staff working with young women and girls in a school setting. The training should take a gendered and trauma informed, culturally competent approach.
- 1.6.** Lot 2 is to develop and deliver a collaborative community-based support service from the perspective of a young woman. The service is to offer support through safe spaces and mentoring based on the differing needs at crucial age points from 9-25 yrs., e.g. transitions, healthy relationships (inc. exploitation/grooming), employment. This includes a bespoke offer for 18-25-year olds on how to navigate the adult system.
- 1.7.** At least £10,000 is ringfenced from each lot for communications to further develop best practice in the sector and build sustainability. Examples include training materials, accessible portal/app or promotional materials to reach participants
- 1.8.** The VRU will commission an evaluation partner once the provider is awarded, which will be based on the proposed delivery model.
- 1.9.** The total programme budget of £1,150,000, within 21/22 and 22/23, will support delivery for a 12-month period from 1 February 2022 to 28 February 2023 with a three-month mobilisation and implementation period from December 2021 to February 2022.

## **2. Issues for consideration**

- 2.1.** The strand of work which focuses on the criminality which girls associated with criminal networks face is primarily led by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. (MOPAC).
- 2.2.** The VRU has completed desktop research to understand the girls and young womens sector and emerging needs. We have also engaged with sector specialist organisations through two workshops to further develop the specification options.
- 2.3.** From sector engagement it is clear there is a need for safe spaces for girls and young women to access support and secondly the upskilling of teachers and staff working in youth settings to better understand how to take a gendered approach when working with young women and girls.
- 2.4.** Furthermore, in January 2021 at the VRU Partnership Reference Group, there was a steer and agreement that the VRU should develop more opportunities to support girls and young women as a gap in provision for earlier intervention and prevention was prominent.
- 2.5.** Based on the VRU's logic model, and the review of the strategic objectives, there are key opportunity areas that the VRU and partners could help develop and enhance the prevention of this agenda. These include, but are not restricted to:
  - Increasing Healthy Relationships education and addressing harmful sexual behaviours in primary and secondary years.
  - Engaging and educating young people / peer groups in the contexts where women and girls are less safe e.g. periphery of criminal networks and county lines, locations with high rates of VAWG, especially domestic and/or sexual abuse, families known to services for VAWG.
  - Informed targeted support for girls and women, i.e. how are we targeting our young people and practitioner support for girls and young women.
  - Working with system change and multi-agency conferences/meetings to think more about intersectionality and less silo-working.
  - Upskilling workforce to be gender informed and advocating for this across all organisations.
- 2.6.** The VRU plans to build on the above opportunity areas through this strand of work. The programme aims to:
  - Demonstrate impact and practice, improving existing best practice in this sector.
  - Create a unified training model which can be replicated.
  - Improve wellbeing of girls and young women.
  - Reduce disengagement within schools' settings.
  - Upskill staff and improve knowledge of gender informed approaches and how to identify and deal with the needs of young women and girls.
  - Increase feelings of safety and provide safe spaces.

### **3. Financial Comments**

- 3.1.** The total cost of the project amounts to £1,150,000 which will be funded from VRU's approved 2021/22 budget (£150,000 from core funding and £1,000,000 from council tax precept funding).
- 3.2.** The project expenditure will take place over two financial years, £115,000 in 2021/22 and £1,035,000 in 2022/23. This therefore requires approval to carry forward 2021/22 budget of £1,035,000 into year 2022/23.

### **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. As well as the strategy for the award.
- 4.2.** Paragraph 4.13 of the MOPAC Scheme of Delegation and Consent provides that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (DMPC) has delegated authority to approve all requests to go out to tender for contracts of £500,000 or above.
- 4.3.** The Mayor's Office for Policing Crime is a contracting authority as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations"). All awards of public contracts for goods and/or services valued at £181,302 or above will be procured in accordance with the Regulations.

### **5. Commercial Issues**

- 5.1.** VRU is seeking approval to carry out a competitive tender process to procure services for Young Women and Girls.
- 5.2.** Section 2.3 in the MOPAC Contract Regulations state that the DMPC is responsible for the approval of; All requests to go out for tender for contracts of £500,000 or above, or where there is a particular public interest if below £500K.
- 5.3.** To note that the term of the contract will be 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The total contract value to be £1,150,000.
- 5.4.** The proposed procurement has a maximum value of £1,150,000 over 15 months and therefore exceeds the relevant EU thresholds of £663,540. Accordingly, the procurement will be subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended) ("the Regulations"); specifically, those applying to social and other specific services as contained in Regulation 74 of the Regulations, the so called "Light Touch Regime".
- 5.5.** The report proposes using the Open Procedure to tender for 2 Lots on the basis that the market for this type of service is relatively small it is proposed that the opportunity

will be published on an open basis without the need to shortlist organisations to proceed to the tendering stage - One stage Open Procedure.

**5.6.** It is proposed an evaluation methodology with a Technical: Commercial ratio of **70:30** will be used to select the most economically advantageous tender. The author of the report has demonstrated clear rationale for the proposed procurement route and contracting arrangements.

**5.7.** Please see below the indicative timetable for the proposed procurement.

<b>Procurement activity</b>	<b>Timeframe guide</b>
ITT Issued	10 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2021
Tender Submission Deadline	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
Evaluation of tenders	w/c 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
Clarification/Interviews or Post Clarification Questions (if required)	w/c 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
Standstill Period	18 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
Contract Award Letters issued	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
Contracts Finder Award Notice to be Issued	2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov 2021
Contract Mobilisation commencement	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
Service Commencement	Jan 2022

**5.8.** As stated in MOPAC Contract Regulation, all tender documentation shall include as a minimum the following:

5.8.1. A specification that describes the MOPAC's requirements in sufficient detail to enable the submission of competitive offers.

5.8.2. A requirement for tenderers to declare that the Tender content, price or any other figure or particulars concerning the Tender have not been disclosed by the tenderer to any other party (except where such a disclosure is made in confidence for a necessary purpose).

5.8.3. A requirement for tenderers to complete fully and sign all Tender documents including a form of Tender and certificates relating to canvassing and non-collusion.

5.8.4. Notification that Tenders are submitted to the MOPAC on the basis that they are compiled at the tenderer's expense.

## **6. Public Health Approach**

**6.1.** 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.

**6.2.** The key areas which are being focussed on as part of this approach are:

- Children and Young People – reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences and building resilience .

- Wellbeing and achievement in schools - Institutions providing responsible leadership; London partners having mutual accountability to invest in what works

## **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.
- 8.2.** Lot 1 will aim to improve the knowledge and upskill staff in school settings, to address the gap in understanding the needs and vulnerabilities of young women and girls and how to address these. Lot 2 will address the lack of dedicated support and safe spaces for young women and girls via specialist provision. For 18-25 year olds a bespoke offer will be developed, addressing the support difference between children and adult services, specifically focused on navigating the adult system (e.g. housing, employment, mental health, physical health, sexual health). BAME women are particularly over-represented in the criminal justice system, the service is to be tailored to meet their needs. The services are also open to transgender women after an individual assessment of the needs of each case.
- 8.3.** Initial screening is taking place around equality impact and if required a full EQIA will take place.

## **9. Background/supporting papers**

- 9.1.** 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

<b>ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION</b>	<i>Tick to confirm statement (✓)</i>
<b>Financial Advice:</b> The Strategic Finance and Resource Management Team has been consulted on this proposal.	✓
<b>Legal Advice:</b> Legal advice is not required. Commercial advice sought.	✓
<b>Equalities Advice:</b> Equality and diversity issues are covered in the body of the report.	✓
<b>Public Health Approach</b> 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.	✓
<b>Commercial Issues</b> 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.	✓
<b>GDPR/Data Privacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report</li> </ul>	✓
<b>Drafting Officer</b> Elisha has drafted this report in accordance with MOPAC procedures.	✓
<b>Director/Head of Service:</b> The VRU AD 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 26/10/2021**