

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

DECISION RECORD

To be completed in cases where a decision is required

DECISION OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Date: 14th July 2023

Officers present:

Elizabeth Starr
Andy Champness
Sallie Blair
Nicola Streets
Grace Strong
Kira Hughes
Rupert Matthews

Received in OPCC Date: 5 July 2023

OPCC Ref: EXE0026-23

Title: Mainstream funding for the Violence Reduction Network (VRN) from 1 April 2025

Summary of Issue:

A business case was prepared at the request of the interim Chief Executive of the OPCC to inform decision-making over the future financial sustainability of the Violence Reduction Network (VRN). Drawing on sources of local and national evidence it outlined the case for the OPCC to identify and secure funding from 1 April 2025 to cover the costs of the core team and an operating budget should central grant funding cease. The report is the first step in the production of a wider Sustainability Plan for the VRN which will involve all core members (the Strategic Partnership), and focus on how the VRN should evolve in the future including in relation to extending its remit.

The business case was necessary due to there being no confirmation of funding beyond March 2025 and the risks this creates in relation to staff retention and continuity in the VRN's business and progress. Whilst future external funding is still a possibility, there is no certainty in relation to this and it is unlikely that there will be confirmation until after the General Election next year, which is viewed as an intolerable risk given that the VRN will then be within its last year of confirmed funding.

Recommendations presented:

Three options were presented with the following recommendation:

The OPCC identifies and commits the funding from the budget to the value of £588,542 (just over half of the current annual budget) to create the certainty and stability needed for the VRN to continue its

operations for 12m beyond the current Home Office funding. This would provide the foundations to develop a wider Sustainability Plan and secure commitments from partners. This could also be offset by Home Office funding (or other sources) if further grants are announced. An expectation in relation to income generation could be set and a requirement for efficiencies in the composition of the team could be incorporated into the sustainability planning process.

A number of options were considered to finance the VRN beyond March 2025 including:

- funding the VRN from the commissioning budget,
- mainstreaming it in the base (separate from the commissioning budget)
- the use of reserves (this is a short-term option and would be funded from the Budget Equalisation Reserve as there is insufficient amount in the OPCC reserves).

It was recommended that the VRN is funded from the Commissioning budget. This would result in an increase in the Commissioning budget of approximately £310k for 2025/26.

The following table shows the impact of the VRN on the Commissioning budget and MTFP:

Commissioning MTFP inc VRN Budget Table	Financial Year 2023/2024	Financial Year 2024/2025	Financial Year 2025/2026
	£	£	£
Commissioning Budget (as per MTFP)	4,560,292	4,681,582	4,782,561
Victim Services	1,412,198	1,423,815	1,435,664
Safeguarding and Vulnerability	772,416	772,416	772,416
Community Safety	1,842,890	1,843,574	1,844,272
Total Core Commissioned Services	4,027,504	4,039,805	4,052,352
People Zones (Pay and Non Pay)	121,495	348,476	351,365
VRN	0	0	588,542
Emergent Issues	291,293	293,301	100,000
Transfer to Reserve	120,000	0	0
Total	4,560,292	4,681,582	5,092,260
*Increased Commissioning Budget	0	0	-309,699

Key discussion points

The business case provided a range of local and national evidence of the VRN's impact and achievements since it commenced in September 2019. This included reference to and discussion over the following:

- Health and police performance data showing the positive impact on serious violence (all ages and under 25s) including achievement of the Home Office success measures

- Findings from the national evaluation outlining the positive progress the VRN is making in fulfilling its prescribed function and delivery against the local strategy
- Validation from an independent body through a national readiness assessment for the new serious violence duty. The area received the highest rating, 'Mature, Demonstrating Best Practice'
- Evidence of effectiveness from independent evaluations of VRN funded interventions
- Confirmation that the VRN has secured over £7 million in external funding since April 2021 due to its work to identify and secure resources to advance the local partnership response. This is 14 times the annual cost of the team.
- A summary of a range of achievements the VRN team have secured to advance the local response to preventing violence.

The opportunities of the OPCC providing core funding were explored and it was agreed that the VRN could continue to evolve in a way which flexes with local need and secures the longer-term progress which it was set up to achieve. The risks were also discussed and it was recognised that without financial security the VRN could start to unravel and the longer-term ambitions would not be realised. There will also be a loss in certain interventions and services.

It was agreed that a core budget of £588,542 would secure the team and provide a smaller operating budget and then commissioning of interventions should be progressed through the usual OPCC channels for commissioning as well as ensure the VRN continues to secure external funding for this purpose.

OFFICE OF PCC APPROVAL

Chief Executive or Chief Finance Officer:

I have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that appropriate 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 Police and Crime Commissioner

Signature:

Name: Andrew Champness

Date: 17/7/23

Publication Scheme

Decision of Monitoring Officer:

As Monitoring Officer for the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire I have determined that:

It is appropriate to publish this record of decision made by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

It is not appropriate to publish the contents of the report proposing this course of action prepared by either of the senior post holders in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire (i.e. either the Chief Executive or Chief Finance Officer) because it contains personal and restricted operational information.

It is appropriate to publish details of the decision by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire:

Signature:

Name: Andrew Champness

Date: 17/7/23

Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire

Having received the advice set out above and reviewed relevant documentation my decision in regard of this matter is:

Supported

Signature

Name: Rupert Matthews

Date: 17/7/23