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Specification

Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) Research and Evaluation Support

Lot Two

1. Context

Since 2019, the Home Office have mandated the VRP to spend 10% of their budget on evaluation. In 2026/27, the Home Office removed this mandatory requirement but stated that an evidence-base is vital and evaluation is still encouraged where appropriate. The VRP seeks to commission the support of an individual and or team to provide hands on expertise and help build capacity within the existing systems to conduct and plan robust research and evaluation.

In previous years, the VRP have worked with academic institutions and evaluation organisations to evaluate commissioned interventions by the VRP, understand the VRP's impact and grow the evidence base. Whilst the Home office has not mandated a percentage spend of the 2026/27 budget, there is clear encouragement and recognition of the importance of building the evidence base.

Evaluating interventions often requires robust planning before the setup of a project to ensure a robust methodology can be implemented to enable findings that are statistically sound and reliable. The VRP would like to implement evaluation activity for the current year and plan for possible future VRP funding, so robust methodologies are in place ahead of time. Alongside the work of the VRP, local agencies commission violence prevention interventions to provide support to children and young people. This commission will also provide evaluation support and guidance to local partners around setting up and delivering evaluation activity.

2. Service Specific Requirements

We aim to commission an individual or team who have extensive expertise in research and evaluation. The commissioned service will provide support to the VRP's internal data and evaluation team and local violence reduction leads to build the evidence base around violence prevention and reduction. The individual or team will provide support around evaluating

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commissioned interventions in the current financial year and support with planning methodologies for future evaluation work.

The individual or team will support each of the seven local authorities in the West Midlands, providing expert advice to help understand impact of locally commissioned interventions. The commissioned service will collaborate with local serious violence leads and provide guidance and support around evaluation. Support will help build and collect data to improve evidence and processes, encouraging sustainable activity for interventions that prevent and reduce serious violence.

Alongside supporting the VRP's internal data team and local violence leads, the individual and or team will undertake a gaps analysis into the current violence prevention system. This research will help identify areas where there are opportunities to respond to serious violence and where provision is insufficient or absent, based on the evidence base, local data, and stakeholder insight.

The gaps analysis is proposed to be a combination of interviews or focus groups with local stakeholders and secondary research. Interviews or focus groups with local partners will gain rich insight into identified gaps or areas of strength in local authority areas. Completing this exercise across the West Midlands will help identify areas of weakness or strengths in which the VRP can provide support regionally. These insights will be supplemented by desktop-based research such as youth endowment fund guidance, VRP networks and academic research to provide key recommendations based upon insight and evidence. The information from this report will help feed into strategic planning, ensuring that future commissioning and interventions are targeted, evidence informed, and responsive to local needs.

3. Skills and Qualification requirements

- Academic background: Post graduate qualification or higher in social science, criminology, public health, data science, or a related research field.
- Demonstrate strong technical expertise and analytical capability in standard office IT software and statistical analysis tools such as SPSS, Microsoft Excel, R or related statistical programmes.

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- Detailed knowledge and extensive experience in implementing research methods, including both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.
- Highly skilled and capable in analysing, processing and interpreting complex datasets and utilising advanced statistical methods.
- Experience and proven track record in designing and delivering a range of qualitative and quantitative research evaluation programmes in public sector and or crime reduction programmes.
- Strong interpersonal and relationship skills to engage with a range of audiences including experience in working in a multi-agency environment, specifically, statutory serious violence duty partners.
- Ability to produce clear high-quality reports designed to disseminate findings in a range of formats including but not limited to reports, presentations and infographics.
- Experienced in conducting comprehensive gaps analysis and providing actionable recommendations on identified gaps, prioritised developments and associated risks.
- Strong presentation and communication skills with experienced background in presenting complex research methods to a range of partners, stakeholders and decision makers.
- Experienced and detailed knowledge surrounding ethical and safeguarding practices such as informed consent, confidentiality, data protection legislation, GDPR and conducting ethical research.

4. Key Performance Indicators

- Local Authority Engagement: 100% of the 7 West Midlands local authorities offered and received at least 2 dedicated advisory sessions by March 2027.

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- At least 2 formal reviews and expert guidance on methodological plans for on-going interventions by March 2027.
- At least 1 proposed methodology and support to setup evaluation for commissioned intervention by March 2027.
- Clear scope and methodology outlined for gaps analysis proposed by month 2 of the project.
- High quality written report detailing gaps analysis including information on each of the seven local authority areas by March 2027.
- 100% attendance at scheduled monthly internal performance and evaluation meetings.

5. Key Deliverables and Timeline

- Monthly reviews: progress meetings with the VRP Data and Evaluation Manager.
- Draft gap analysis: completed and submitted by February 28, 2027.
- Final gap analysis report: completed and submitted by March 31, 2027.
- Local authority support: continuous advisory input across all seven West Midlands local authority areas until March 31, 2027.

6. Contract Price and Duration

This is a short-term contract scheduled to conclude on 31st March 2027, with a suggested budget envelope of around £30,000. There may be an option to extend the contract by up to a further year. This is subject to future VRP funding and need.