

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMBERSIDE**

**SUBMISSION FOR:
DECISION**

OPEN

Title: Creation of a Violence Reduction Unit

Date: 18 July 2022

1. Executive Summary

The PCC has been offered funding by the Home Office to create a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in conjunction with partners, following a successful application.

2. Recommendation(s)

Accept the grant offered by the Home Office and host the VRU's hub, in accordance with the model developed with partners.

3. Background

VRUs are a Home Office-funded initiative to lead and co-ordinate the local response to serious violence, using an evidence-based whole-system or "public health" approach.

VRUs are multi-agency partnerships that include PCCs, police, local authorities, youth offending teams, the local NHS Integrated Care Board and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. They are provided with a budget to resource some core capacity, commission evidence-based interventions that contribute to reducing serious violence, and improve data sharing between agencies. They must complete a Strategic Needs Assessment and Response Strategy, amongst other key pieces of work.

18 VRUs were established in 2019/20, and the Home Office has now decided to fund (via PCCs) a further two – Humberside and Cleveland – for an initial period of three years. Future funding beyond that is not guaranteed. A local match contribution (which can be in-kind) is also required to draw down the grant.

The following funding is indicatively available to Humberside:

	Grant	Match required	Total
2022/23	1,414,226	88,000	1,502,226
2023/24	1,058,313	132,000	1,190,313
2024/25	1,047,170	176,000	1,223,170
Total	3,519,709	396,000	3,915,709

The OPCC worked with the specified local partners to develop an application to secure the VRU funding, which has now been approved by the Home Office. The proposed Humberside model is quasi-hub-and-spoke, with a strategic board chaired by the PCC and a central function to be hosted by the OPCC on behalf of the partnership, and local authority-level activity to tie into work on the forthcoming Serious Violence Duty and deal with local variations.

4. Options

Option 1: Decline the grant offer

The PCC is not mandated to take on this funding and role so could decline to accept the grant offer, which would remove any financial risk but lead to a loss of funding, opportunity and influence for Humberside.

Option 2: Accept the grant offer and host the VRU's hub (**recommended option**)

The recommended option is to accept the grant offer and take on the role of hosting the VRU "hub". Subject to successful delivery, this will result in an additional £3.5m investment in Humberside and unlock the potential to secure additional funds from other sources on top of this.

It is important to state that although the funding is channelled via PCCs, VRUs are designed to be multi-agency and proper governance will need to be put in place to achieve this. To deliver the VRU functions, the OPCC will also need to recruit, host and manage a number of additional staff (to be funded out of the VRU grant). An in-kind match contribution can be provided through contributing some existing OPCC staff, with the potential for exploring partner contributions in due course.

5. Risks

Not accepting the grant would carry a major reputational risk.

Accepting the grant would also entail a number of risks:

- Normal employment risks associated with taking on additional staff, albeit funded from the grant. Since the VRU is being funded for more than two years, redundancy rights will apply in addition to any conveyed by continuous service. This has been

mitigated as far as possible by including redundancy provision in the budget. Should any unforeseen employment-related costs arise, the first recourse would be to seek permission to re-profile the grant, but were this not to be possible then they would (unless other agreement were reached) fall on the PCC.

- Reputational risks – although the PCC is one of several partners, by taking on the grant and the hosting of the VRU's hub a greater level responsibility may be implied. This is also a flagship policy tool for the Home Office so a good deal of scrutiny is to be expected.
- For the OPCC, taking on an initiative of this size will be demanding and as such could risk diverting attention from other priorities. This should be mitigated as far as possible by taking on dedicated VRU staff, but they will still require managing.
- The financial risk associated with a grant of this size, given that payment will be in arrears and the Home Office has the ability to require funds to be repaid if used improperly. Careful attention will need to be given to grant conditions to ensure there is no likelihood of this happening.

6. Driver for Change/Contribution to Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan

The VRU has the potential to contribute to all three Police and Crime Plan aims: it will stimulate community involvement, it will focus on evidence-based interventions that reduce crime, and it will bring organisations together to work more effectively, whilst securing significant additional investment.

7. Financial Implications

The intention is to fully fund VRU costs from the grant. The VRU will be established as a separate cost centre to ensure expenditure is transparent.

8. Legal Implications

The grant terms are similar to terms previously accepted by the PCC.

9. Equalities Implications

No specific implications are envisaged from accepting the grant, but future VRU decisions will need to take equalities implications into account.

10. Consultation

Development of the VRU has been discussed widely within the OPCC to ensure the implications are fully understood, including with the PCC, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer/Deputy Chief Finance Officer and Data Protection Officer.

Consultation was also undertaken with the other required core members of the VRU.

11. Communication Issues

To date, publicity around the VRU has been kept to a minimum pending funding approval. There is now an opportunity to announce, in conjunction with partners, that the funding has been secured and the VRU will go ahead.

12. Background documents

Home Office VRU application guidance

13. Publication

The report is open.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside

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 my code of conduct.

Any such interests are recorded below.

The above decision has my approval.

Signature



Date 18 July 2022

PLEASE COMPLETE AND APPEND THE FOLLOWING TABLE TO ALL REPORTS THAT REQUIRE A DECISION FROM THE COMMISSIONER

This matrix provides a simple check list for the things you need to have considered within your report. If there are no implications please state

I have informed and sought advice from HR, Legal, Finance, OPCC officer(s) etc prior to submitting this report for official comments	Yes
Is this report proposing an amendment to the budget?	No
Value for money considerations have been accounted for within the report	Yes
The report is approved by the relevant Chief Officer	Yes
I have included any procurement/commercial issues/implications within the report	Yes
I have liaised with Corporate Communications on any communications issues	Yes
I have completed an Equalities Impact Assessment and the outcomes are included within the report	Not applicable
I have included any equalities, diversity and or human rights implications within the report	Not applicable
Any Health and Safety implications are included within the report	Not applicable
I have included information about how this report contributes to the delivery of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan	Yes