

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Social Inclusion & Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 30/04/2025

Subject: Gangs, Violence & Exploitation Unit (GVEU)

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Responsible Director: Mark Raisbeck, Director of Public Realm

SUMMARY

This report is written to provide an update on the work of the Gangs, Violence & Exploitation Unit for financial year 2024/25 alongside sharing information on upcoming projects for the 2025/26 financial year.

There are no decisions required from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The GVEU is providing young residents with professional and vocational skills to contribute to the borough's economy, ensuring young people in the borough have the best start in life.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	The GVEU supports young people at risk of gang activity, violence and exploitation and their families to live long, healthy fulfilling lives through early intervention and prevention.

Doing things with local residents, not to them	The GVEU has co-produced and co-delivered projects for young people with parents, carers, young people and voluntary/community sector (VCS) partners to understand and address the needs and requirements of diverse communities.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The GVEU delivers a financially efficient service and has successfully bid for significant funding from external sources.
Taking pride in H&F	As part of the Community Safety Partnership, the GVEU works to make H&F a safe borough for everyone through preventing youth and gang violence and exploitation. We facilitate community programmes and cultural activities for young people with partners, including local theatres and VCS partners whom we fund to deliver co-produced projects.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The GVEU has worked closely with the Climate Change team by linking them in with the communities we work with to further raise their profile and aims.

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

Introduction

1. Following the inception of the Gangs, Violence & Exploitation Unit (GVEU) in 2020, the GVEU team has continued to expand to meet the needs of young people, and their families, in the borough.
2. The team is managed by the GVEU Unit Manager and consists of various staff posts including four Council-funded Metropolitan Police officers.
3. As of March 2025, the Unit has supported 155 young people during the four years' of the GVEU's service through our outreach workers, who provide each young person with support and assistance in engaging in a variety of important interventions with a focus on early intervention and preventative measures in relation to gangs, violence and exploitation. GVEU Outreach Workers each

exceptionally support caseloads of, on average, 10-12 young people simultaneously. Due to the nature of the GVEU's cohort, our Outreach Workers provide high level systemic and trauma informed practice to meet the complex needs of young people.

4. Since the inception of the GVEU, our work and reputation has grown significantly within the borough, across the BCU and regionally. Our work is now significantly recognised by London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), which is part of the Mayor of London Office for Policing & Crime, as being one of best practice with unique projects that recognise the needs and aspirations of our communities. Due to this, the VRU requested that we spoke at their London wide conference regarding our project offers which generated interest from across London.
5. The VRU has, and continues, to provide additional funding to the service which allows us to commission further bespoke services for our young people as explained further below.
6. In line with our commitment to centring the voices of young people and our communities, the GVEU has invited Said Mohamud, Chief Executive Officer of Minaret Community Centre and Dominique Alexander, Ambassador of the GVEU's Young Person's Action Group (YPAG) to attend April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC to share their experiences of delivering or benefitting from GVEU-funded services.

Violence Reduction Unit – 'My Ends' Project

7. The GVEU successfully bid for, and secured, £280,000 from the VRU to deliver their 'My Ends' programme, through community-led initiatives in hyper-local areas to tackle violence, including diversionary projects for young people and their families in H&F. This includes support networks for parents and carers, as well as sport, music, arts and drama activities for young people.
8. Funding from the VRU is allocated to intervention work in specific areas of the borough based on identified needs. The GVEU collaborates with the police, external partners, and residents to understand and map issues related to gang activity, violence, and exploitation, which informs the strategic placement of projects. Alongside listening to our statutory and community partners, the GVEU carried out detailed analysis of crime and deprivation data to inform our decisions.
9. Previously, this funding (previously 'Community Capacity Building' grants) has focused on other hyper-local areas in South Fulham and White City Estate.

Work Delivered 2024/25

'My Ends' Funding 2024/25

10. The 'My Ends' funding for the 2024/25 financial year was allocated to communities in the wider West Kensington area (including Burne Jones House, Samuel Richardson House, Southern Housing Estate, West Kensington Estate and Lillie Road Peabody Estate). The GVEU, alongside partners, decided to

focus on the West Kensington area due to it being disproportionately affected by youth violence over a number of years (an increase of 12% in the West Kensington Estate and 9% in the Lillie Road Peabody Estate)¹. We also noted levels of deprivation across the above areas, which fall into the second and fourth lowest deciles in the borough in terms of deprivation².

11. The funding has delivered the following projects which were decided through our regular My Ends Partnership meetings;

Minaret Parent & Carer Project and Youth Project - in attendance at April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC

12. In line with our commitment to community-led initiatives, the GVEU has established a strong partnership with the [Minaret Community Centre](#), a culturally focused hub in Fulham that serves the Somali and broader East/North African communities in the borough. This is in recognition that within the West Kensington area, the Somali community has been disproportionately affected by youth violence.
13. Through this collaboration, the GVEU has funded a year's worth of weekly Parent & Carer sessions (please see **Appendix A** for images) to be delivered by Minaret Community Centre to address the increasing stress and challenges faced by parents in and around the wider West Kensington area. These sessions raise awareness about identifying signs of gang involvement, violence, and exploitation among young people, and provide access to support services. We have also funded Minaret to deliver 12 months of weekly sessions to young people in West Kensington, equipping them with the knowledge to recognise and avoid gang involvement, violence, and exploitation (please see **Appendix B** for images). The positive impact of this partnership has been acknowledged by local online press platform [Fulham SW6](#).
14. Said Mohamud, Chief Executive Officer of Minaret Community Centre, will be attending April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC to elaborate on this partnership and share testimonials from young people, parents, and carers who have participated in these projects.

Rebel Records

15. The GVEU's partnerships with local communities can also be seen through our longstanding project with [Rebel Records](#), an independent recording studio and label based in Fulham.
16. The project was initiated based on feedback received from parents and carers of young people in the borough who highlighted their young people's interest in drill music production. Rather than dismissing this, we recognised its potential and harnessed it to achieve positive outcomes. The project highlights the importance of dedication, focus, and avoiding negative influences through

¹ Rostek, B, LBHF BI Service 'Burne Jones House, Samuel Richardson House, Southern Housing Estate, West Kensington Estate and Lillie Road Peabody Analysis'

² Rostek, B, LBHF BI Service 'Burne Jones House, Samuel Richardson House, Southern Housing Estate, West Kensington Estate and Lillie Road Peabody Analysis'

music creation, giving young people access to the Rebel Records studio to learn music production, writing skills, and the basics of the music industry.

Motor Vehicle Training Programme with the Harrow Club

17. As part of the 'My Ends' Grant 24/25, the GVEU is collaborating with local youth club, [The Harrow Club](#), to deliver a motor-vehicle training programme designed to attract young people who have engaged in or are at risk of engaging in the theft of bikes or other vehicles. By engaging local young people in legal, safe and fun vehicle-related activities, the GVEU hopes to increase participants' connection with the community and skill levels whilst reducing crime.

Residential with the Harrow Club

18. Similarly, the GVEU and the Harrow Club are collaborating to provide an opportunity for young people to leave London and spend a week in a rural location engaging in 'Debate Boxing', encouraging young people to express themselves through reasoned debate rather than arguing and regulated boxing rather than fighting. As such, benefitting participants' physical and emotional wellbeing and equipping them with skills such as teamwork, planning, public speaking and boxing techniques.

Upcoming Work for 2025/26

'My Ends' Funding 2025/26

19. The 'My Ends' funding for 2025/26 has been allocated to interventions in and around the Clem Attlee Estate.
20. The GVEU and partners identified the absence of local positive activities for young people in the heart of the Clem Attlee Estate and have therefore proposed several of the projects to be delivered from the Clem Attlee Community Hall.
21. As with the West Kensington Area, the GVEU allocated the 2025/26 'My Ends' funding to the Clem Attlee Estate Area following consultation with partners and data analysis. The Clem Attlee Estate is one of the most deprived areas in the borough³. Thus, the GVEU recognises the need for positive diversionary intervention for young people in and around the Clem Attlee Estate Area.

Street Dance and Boxing Sessions

22. We recognise the importance of physical activity for young people and will be delivering street dance sessions and boxing sessions to young people in the Clem Attlee Community Hall, contributing to their physical and emotional wellbeing and promoting community cohesion among young people in and around the Clem Attlee Estate.
23. During these sessions, the GVEU Community Development Outreach Worker will deliver sessions for participants raising awareness of gang activity, violence and exploitation and how to access support. The GVEU has also funded Street

³ Rostek, B, LBHF BI Service 'Clem Attlee Estate'

Dance classes at the Queen Caroline Community which have received high engagement and positive feedback from residents, with a parent of a Street Dance class attendee sharing: *"Thank you very much for setting up these sessions. It's great for the local children to have somewhere safe to enjoy themselves and take part in a constructive task, where their confidence and community spirit can grow!"*.

'Grillz' Course

24. Following an innovative idea made by a young person to introduce a 'Grillz' making workshop, the GVEU are delivering a dental jewellery production course to young people aged 16-21.
25. Over the two-day weekend course, participants will be taught how to make their own custom Grill by a fully qualified dental technician. Alongside providing participants with technical skills, the project will highlight the importance of focus, concentration and dedication with their custom Grill to take home symbolising the result of harnessing the above skills.

Rebel Records Continuation

26. Following several successful phases of Rebel Records as part of the 2024/25 'My Ends' spend as detailed above, the GVEU will continue to deliver the project as part of the 2025/26 spend, targeting young people from the Clem Attlee Estate.

DJing Course with Rebel Records

27. Acknowledging the success of the Rebel Records project and recognising young people's interest in music production, the GVEU are funding Rebel Records to deliver a DJing programme to young people, aged 13-17, from the Clem Attlee Estate.
28. As one of the closest youth clubs to the Estate, we will be working with The Brunswick Club to engage young people from in and around Clem Attlee. The project will be based on a mobile DJ setup that will attend youth clubs, youth events and venues to teach young people how to DJ. The course will be able to work with individuals on a 1 on 1 basis, or groups of up to 6. Participants will be shown how the equipment works, the basics of beat matching, beat counting, mix transitions and EQ and FX features. As such, the project will be a creative outlet for young people.

Shakespearian Theatre Programme with Intermission Youth

29. The GVEU wants to create spaces for young people at risk of gang involvement, violence or exploitation to express themselves through creative outlets. Therefore, we are collaborating with [Intermission Youth](#), a charity who use Shakespeare to reflect young people's lives, to deliver a theatre programme for young people at the Clem Attlee Estate Community Hall. The project will foster self-expression, teamwork, confidence, motivation, self-esteem, creativity, and literacy in participants.

Monologues from the Manor

30. Similarly, during 'Monologues from the Manor', a programme to be delivered to young people during the summer holidays, participants will learn how to produce a range of monologues to be performed and recorded for film and/or theatre and intended for showcase. The project will encourage participants to express their collective feelings and attitudes towards social issues and growing up in the combined area. It will give young people an understanding of various aspects of creative practices in music and theatre.

Glow & Grow Beauty Course

31. The GVEU are committed to providing safe spaces for young women and girls at risk of violence and exploitation, in line with the Council's commitment to tackling Violence Against Women & Girls.
32. We have listened to young women and girls who have expressed their interest in the beauty industry and introduced the 'Glow & Grow' project, in collaboration with local youth organisations [West Youth Zone](#) and The Harrow Club. Through this programme we delivered a 5-week makeup course to a cohort of ten girls, followed by an accredited individual lash extension course and an accredited nail extension course (please see **Appendix C** for images).
33. One participant shared: *"I will use these skills for the rest of my life. With the lash extension and acrylic nails accreditation, I could turn this into a career!"*. Following a successful delivery of Glow & Grow to the first cohort of participants, the GVEU will be tailoring it to the needs of communities in and around the Clem Attlee Estate for the 2025/26 My Ends spend.

Mentoring Programme for Young Women and Girls with Kairo's Girls

34. In line with the need to address the impact of gang activity, violence and exploitation on young women and girls, the GVEU will be funding Kairo's Girls, a mentoring service & safe space for vulnerable girls who are at risk due to their age, gender and socioeconomic disadvantage, to deliver a programme of workshops exploring various societal issues including gangs, exploitation, healthy relationships and social media to girls aged 11-17 from in and around the Clem Attlee Estate.

Barbering Course

35. The GVEU recognise the importance of vocational skills. Therefore, we are delivering a barbering course to equip young people with the skills needed should they wish to pursue a career in barbering. Participants will be taught about building a career in barbering, how to perform basic haircuts, skin fades, and various styles to expand their portfolio.

eBook

36. As outlined, the GVEU delivers a variety of projects that provide young people with vocational, entrepreneurial and professional skills. We want to ensure that project participants have long-term access to resources, ensuring the outputs of

projects are sustainable. We are therefore designing a digital eBook on building and marketing a personal brand to be of access for all young people on GVEU projects. The eBook will be a resource open to every young person that engages with GVEU projects and will be accessible through a QR code to be downloaded to devices for further reference.

Parent & Carer Sessions with Funpact

37. To continue raising awareness on gang activity, violence and exploitation amongst parents and carers in the borough, the GVEU will be collaborating with parent-led charity, [Funpact](#), to introduce innovative way for parents and carers to communicate and interact with their young people. We will draw on information and insight given in the previous Parent and Carers meetings delivered across the borough to steer how these sessions are facilitated. Funpact have previously delivered, via our funding, a similar successful project on White City Estate.

Ongoing Work

School Engagement

38. The Unit's Community Development Outreach Worker has led on the GVEU's engagement with local schools, including Special Educational Needs schools and Pupil Referral Units, delivering engaging workshops to raise awareness of gang activity, violence and exploitation and promote the work of the GVEU to young people across the borough.
39. The success of these sessions has been evidenced by the positive feedback received from schools following on from workshops. Brackenbury Primary School praised the workshop, sharing that *the children 'responded positively to the session and through further discussion in class the children spoke confidently about what they had learnt and said they enjoyed the session'*.
40. Parayhouse Special Educational Needs School expressed their appreciation for a session an Outreach Worker and our Community Development Outreach Worker delivered, stating *'it was great to see the consideration you put into adapting the presentation with prompts and role plays so that the young people received the clear messages around positive and negative relationships and how these can lead to coercion and exploitation'*.

Lyric Theatre Partnership

41. The GVEU are funding the [Lyric Hammersmith Theatre](#) to deliver a touring production raising awareness of county lines exploitation for children in Year 6 and Year 7 across schools, youth clubs and pupil referral units across the borough in June 2025.
42. We consulted with young people in schools, PRUs and youth clubs and the police and local partners to understand how county lines exploitation has impacted the borough and how we can best engage children through the production (please see **Appendix D** for images). Our strong relationship with schools in the borough has aided our ability to promote the production to local schools.

Notting Hill Carnival

43. Since the inception of the GVEU, we have continued to deliver interventions for young people during Notting Hill Carnival weekend. In preparation for the August Bank Holiday weekend, the GVEU works in partnership with Children's Services, the Voluntary & Community Sector, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster City Council. Annually, the partnership produces safety planning guidance for young people, delivers additional youth club sessions across the weekend and facilitates conversations with young people's lead practitioners on whether a young person is attending Notting Hill Carnival and any enforcement conditions they must follow, alongside conversations with parents/carers where possible.

Young Persons' Action Group (YPAG) – in attendance at April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC

44. As evidenced, addressing the interests and needs of our young people is of the utmost importance to the GVEU. The 'Grillz' project recommendation was made by a young person at one of the GVEU Young Persons' Action Group (YPAG) sessions.
45. The GVEU drew inspiration from the successful practices of the VRU's YPAG and presented the initiative to some of our young people, who responded positively. The GVEU facilitates monthly YPAG sessions with young people who are either open to the GVEU, have been open to us in the past, or who have taken part in our projects. This has enabled us to gain a fruitful understanding of the needs and interests of young people, to inform our service delivery and co-production.
46. The GVEU are proud to introduce Dominique Alexander, a member of our YPAG who was previously supported by a GVEU Outreach Worker, will be attending April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC to share the impact that the GVEU has had on her life. Dominique will be sharing:
- The benefits of having long-term support from an outreach worker
 - Her experience on the GVEU's Rebel Records Project
 - Her experience as an Ambassador on our newly-formed YPAG

Conclusion

47. In line with our KPIs, over the last 12 months the GVEU has continued to build relationships across the Council, NHS, Police, schools and the VCS, having engaged with over 850 residents through schools and community organisations through our Community Development Outreach Worker. We also fund detached outreach, enabling partner organisations to deliver weekly outreach sessions with young people, tasked to areas of concern on a fortnightly basis; through this detached outreach the GVEU has supported 471 young people over the last 12 months.
48. Police Constable, Laura Searle, from the Proactive Offender Management Unit in central and west London, said, "*The Gangs Unit has become an irreplaceable*

partner in our work. Their approach to building trust within our communities helps prevent crime and saves lives."

49. We are pleased to announce that we have successfully secured an additional £300,000 of funding from the VRU for 2025-2028 and are actively exploring further innovative ideas on how to utilise this. We look forward to continuing to support young people, families and communities over the coming 12 months.

LIST OF APPENDCIES

Appendix A – Minaret Parents & Carers Project

Appendix B – Minaret Young People's Project

Appendix C - Glow & Grow Project

Appendix D – Lyric Theatre, Cross the Lines Consultation

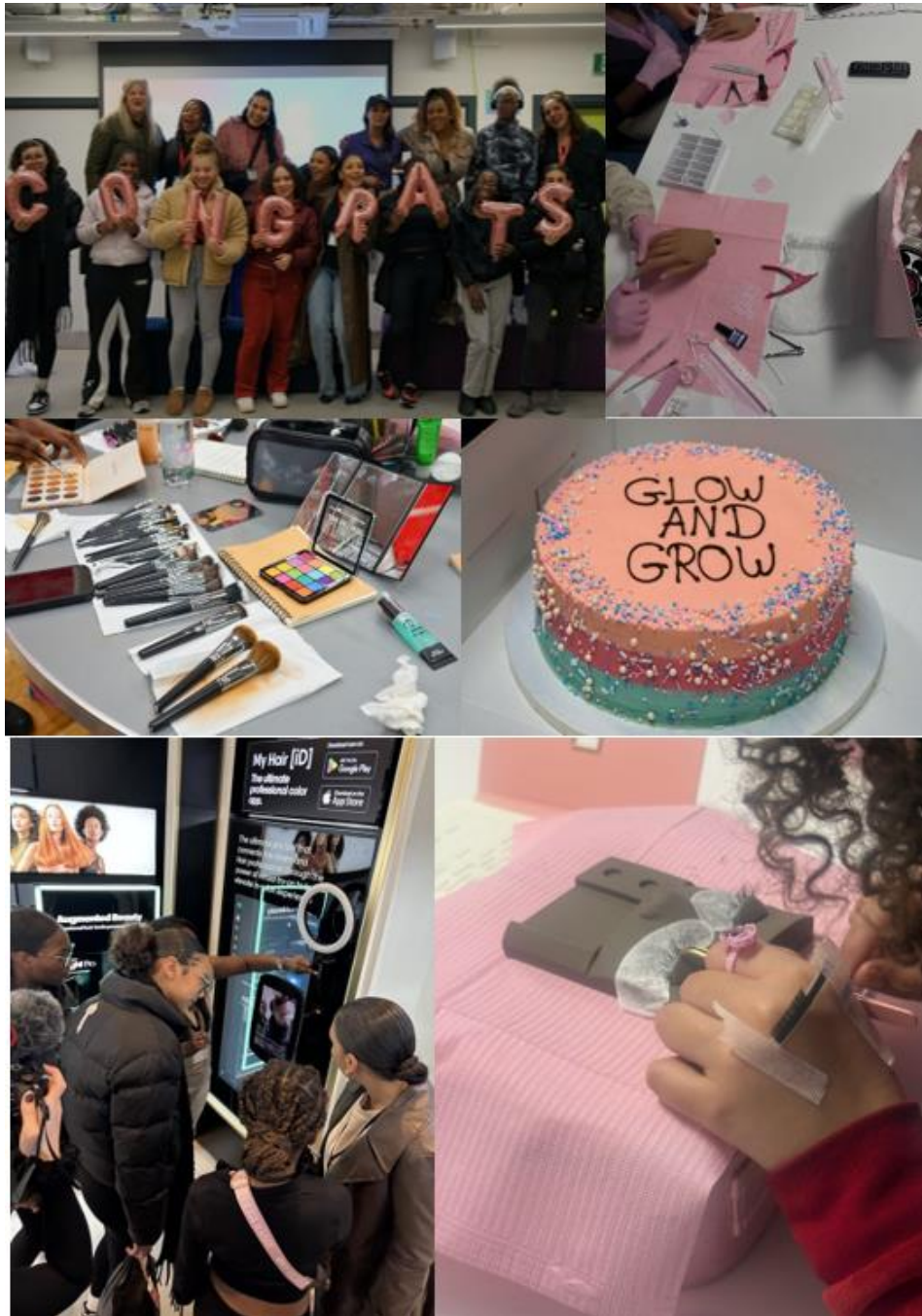
Appendix A – Minaret Parents & Carers Project



Appendix B – Minaret Young People's Project



Appendix C - Glow & Grow Project



Appendix D – Lyric Theatre, Cross the Lines Consultation

