



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Supporting Policing Activity in the Whole Area Model

### Background

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is a charity with a mission that matters. We're here to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and creating a movement to put this into practice.

The best available evidence shows that – on average – diverting children from the criminal justice system reduces reoffending and violence. However, we also know that diversion delivery is patchy across England and Wales. This has been described as a “postcode lottery” by HMIP in a recent thematic inspection on the effectiveness of out of court resolutions.

The Whole Area Model (WAM) is YEF's new change programme aimed at strengthening diversion practice. Since launching in July 2025, we have onboarded four police forces and their aligned youth justice services (YJS) who will receive on-the-ground support to shift their practices, processes and policies to be more informed by the evidence-base.

### Project objectives

We are looking to commission one or more policing consultants to work alongside our WAM sites to develop specific areas. Key objectives include:

- 1. Strengthening child-centred policing practices:**  
Deliver and/or support training and associated resources for officers and staff to improve awareness and application of child-centred policing, diversion, and other relevant topics
- 2. Supporting diversion policy and practice improvements:**  
Review and advise on local policies and processes (e.g. OOCR frameworks, deferred prosecution schemes, eligibility criteria, decision-making templates) to promote consistency, equity and evidence-informed practice.
- 3. Embedding robust decision-making:**  
Work with police and partners to strengthen approaches to diversionary decision-making, including supporting joint decision-making panels, scrutiny arrangements, and approaches to reducing net-widening.
- 4. Reducing unnecessary use of custody:**  
Support forces to review and improve processes relating to children in custody and voluntary attendance, helping to identify alternatives and strengthen safeguarding and support pathways.
- 5. Improving operational pathways into diversion and support:**  
Help police teams clarify referral processes, eligibility criteria, and frontline

understanding of how children and victims access support services, working alongside youth justice and local partners.

6. **Ensuring relevance of wider WAM activity to policing:**

Work alongside the data and communications specialists to ensure outputs (such as data flow maps, child-friendly diversion resources), tools and learning are grounded in policing contexts and can be applied by frontline teams.

7. **Sharing learning and supporting sustainability:**

Capture emerging learning and produce practical resources that help other forces strengthen diversion and child-centred policing approaches.

**Budget**

We are looking for applicants to provide a proposed budget based upon the details included in this call.

We expect that the policing consultant(s) will work with each police force for up to 10 days. This will include both in-person and online delivery, and cover the following activities (though not exhaustive): facilitating meetings, delivering presentations and training, peer observations, reviewing documentation and providing feedback.

Your budget should be inclusive of travel. The police forces we're working with are Kent, Leicestershire, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire.

**Outputs and timeframe**

Final outputs will be agreed with the appointed supplier, but at a minimum are expected to include:

1. A slide deck and presentation summarising key insights from the project (e.g. what were the barriers? What support was provided? What's been achieved?)
2. Short and accessible resources which can be shared with the police forces involved in WAM, as well as with police forces across England and Wales. This is likely to include:
  - **A training package on diversion for police officers** – covering the application of the Child Gravity Matrix, joint decision-making arrangements, and wider best practice on diversion. It is expected this will align with YEF/CJI's Diversion Practice Guidance.
  - **PACE complaint voluntary interview guidance** – covering practical arrangements like how to identify appropriate venues, while also considering system challenges like how children are supported and tracked.

Timelines are provisionally outlined below:

Activity	Expected time frame
----------	---------------------



<b>Proposal deadline</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
<b>Questions accepted until</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2026
<b>Interviews</b>	w/c 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026
<b>Preferred bidder appointed (including contractual work completed)</b>	w/c 9 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Support provided</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 – 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2026

### **How to apply**

We invite bidders to prepare proposals of no more than 1500 words, excluding references.

In the proposal, we expect bidders to include the following:

- Your expertise in policing.
- Your experience of working within or with police forces to drive evidence-based practice, particularly in relation to diversion, and children and young people.
- Your proposed approach to working with our four WAM sites and developing the resources listed above.

All proposals will be reviewed by the YEF, using the **criteria provided in Appendix 1**.

The YEF is happy to consider bids from consortiums, as long as consideration is given to communication and how the teams will work well together. The YEF would expect to contract with one lead member of the consortium.

**Please send proposals and / or any questions to [change.yef@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:change.yef@youthendowmentfund.org.uk).**

**Appendix 1: YEF scoring criteria**

1. Relevant experience of the project team (50%)
  - a. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates expertise and understanding of policing, and specifically:
    - Child-centered policing (including strategy, policy and practice)
    - Out of court resolutions
    - Custody (including policy and processes)
    - Governance, oversight and scrutiny within a policing context
  - b. The extent to which the consultant(s) demonstrates a track record of delivering high quality change projects within and/or with police forces, particularly in relation to children and young people.
  - c. The extent to which the consultant(s) demonstrate an understanding and track record of good project management and robust quality assurance procedures
2. Approach (50%)
  - a. Suitability of the approach to deliver against the project objectives, balancing the need to provide robust insights, and flexibility / tailoring with the need to be proportionate, targeted, and low burden.
  - b. Suitability of proposed strategies to access participant groups and maximise participation rates, especially senior leaders, frontline practitioners and beneficiaries where relevant.
  - c. Suitability of the proposed techniques to use learning to produce resources which can be shared with other police forces and youth justice services.

Scoring criteria	
0	Totally fails to meet the requirement - information not available
1	Meets some of the requirements with limited supporting information
2	Meets some of the requirements with reasonable explanation
3	Fully meets the requirements with detailed explanation and evidence
4	Exceeds the requirements with extensive explanation and evidence