

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol](#) ar [Atal trais ar sail rhywedd drwy ddulliau iechyd y cyhoedd](#)

This response was submitted to the [Equality and Social Justice Committee](#) consultation on [The public health approach to preventing gender-based violence](#)

PGBV 13

**Ymateb gan: Prifysgol Nottingham Trent mewn cydweithrediad â Rhaglen Gydweithredu Gwasanaethau Brys Essex ar gyfer prosiect VAWG Minerva |
Response from: Nottingham Trent University in collaboration with Essex
Emergency Services Collaboration Programme for the Minerva VAWG project**



The public health approach to preventing gender-based violence

Equality and Social Justice Committee - Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

April 2023

Written Evidence submitted by Nottingham Trent University in collaboration with Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Programme for the Minerva VAWG project

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This submission builds on a collaborative research and engagement project between the Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Programme and six colleagues from the School of Social Sciences at Nottingham Trent University (NTU). The project has been supported by STAR funding from the Home Office and NPCC. The second tranche of this funding was secured this month and will support the introduction of perceptions of unsafe places data and evaluation of the tool.
- 1.2. Minerva has been developed to support a multi-agency approach to tackle VAWG in public places through a two-stage process of data analysis & visualisation and multi-agency engagement to inform and support new innovative approaches. As it stands the Minerva project has developed new insights based on police report data and a selection of open data sources to create a range of Minerva Zones across Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This approach has informed new ways of mapping and understanding VAWG hot spots, moving partners away from a volume and historic incident-based approach. New funding by the Police and Crime Commissioners Office has supported the development of zones where innovative approaches will be tested over the coming year. The second phase of Minerva will bring together this multi-agency approach (led by the CSPs) to evaluate how these approaches work across Essex and will also test the value of integrating perception-based data gathered using an open self-reporting function to be launched later this year.
- 1.3. This submission will share some of the key lessons learnt to date with the committee and also invites Assembly Members to engage with the team to hear more as the project develops. In so doing this submission aims to provide evidence to the first and third ask of the inquiry. To learn more please contact [REDACTED]
- 1.4. Whilst we do not yet have data on the approaches impact on reported incidents or perceptions the approach has already begun to improve understanding of VAWG and bring partners together to design innovative solutions to VAWG in the public realm.

2. About the authors

- 2.1. Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Programme - The EESCP has been set up to build a culture of collaboration and continue to unlock resources to reinvest so we can provide even better emergency services in Essex.
- 2.2. NTU colleagues all work within the School of Social Sciences with subject expertise in emergency services and wellbeing (Professor Rowena Hill) victimisation risk, crime and spatial analysis (Dr James Hunter and Associate Professor Andy Newton) bullying and harassment (Professor Lucy Betts) criminology, hate crime and islamophobia (Associate Professor Irene Zempi) and policy engagement (Rich Pickford)
- 2.3. [Nottingham Civic Exchange](#) is Nottingham Trent University's pioneering civic think tank with a primary focus on issues relating to the city and the region. Nottingham Civic Exchange enables discovery by creating a space where co-produced approaches are developed to tackle entrenched social issues. Nottingham Civic Exchange supports the role of NTU as an anchor institution in the city and the region. Nottingham Trent University holds engagement with communities, public institutions, civic life, business and residents at the core of its mission.

3. Evidence

- 3.1. As we know VAWG remains a top NPCC and Home Office policing priority to ensure public confidence and a feeling of being safe. Building on expertise within Essex and at Nottingham Trent University we set out to explore how we could develop an approach to promote multi-agency working to better understand and tackle VAWG across Essex. Through two rounds of STAR funding the team feel they have some lessons to share on working collaboratively and using data innovatively to make a difference.
- 3.2. We feel that Minerva (currently piloted across Essex) delivers better intelligence, evidence-informed, multi-partnership, problem-solving approaches that target resources to create safer spaces and communities. It supports innovation itself, not just innovative approaches to understanding VAWG.
- 3.3. The Minerva approach has successfully created a spatial mapping tool, presenting crime data in an innovative way, supporting decision-making and challenging assumptions concerning the location and scale of VAWG. It enables the user to identify different types of VAWG hot spots and statistically significant neighbourhood-level and physical-environmental drivers of VAWG. This approach enables partners to generate innovative problem-solving methods to shape their thinking to tackle VAWG. Existing police approaches to crime mapping consistently target resources upon neighbourhoods with high volumes of crime, seldom integrating socio-physical drivers that determine spatial concentrations of crime. Minerva challenges this approach by:
 - Providing an additional innovative evidence base, adopting alternative approaches to crime-mapping, challenging assumptions, positively disrupting thinking on drivers of VAWG, and shaping the narrative to change

policing/partners' current approach towards VAWG using problem-solving partnership methods.

- Developing analysis to understand challenges and improve ways of working.
- Providing a solid foundation for decision-making to help policing and partners understand how and what resources to deploy to sustainably tackle VAWG.
- Enhancing the ability of policing and partners to be more data literate and data-driven, strengthening their confidence to make decisions and give an evidence base to resource deployment in a sustainable way.
- Recognising using data science and technology has become integral to policing's ability to deliver an effective and efficient service through collaboration and partnership working to tackle society-wide issues.

- 3.4. This has resulted in the development of a distinctive Minerva approach that places community safety partnerships at the forefront of identifying neighbourhoods to target and designing innovative approaches that focus on localities beyond night-time economy locations. Through the development of the innovative online Minvera Maps, assumptions concerning the location and drivers of VAWG incidents have been challenged. A key catalyst for this has been the development of new approaches to identifying and mapping crime hot spots that are partnership led. Whilst the online resource enables users to identify neighbourhoods containing high volumes of VAWG incidents, the maps also allow for the identification of localities where VAWG incidents are over-represented or where their VAWG profile does not conform to the scale of incidents present in surrounding neighbourhoods to create more nuanced and locally rooted conversations about how to make a difference.
- 3.5. The partnership approach has aimed to improve data literacy and provide space to explore and consider alternative approaches together. Since we have begun we have supported the identification of a series of Minerva Zones that are away from more traditionally associated areas of attention by Police linked to the night-time economy and have generated concerted engagement with colleagues working in transport and public spaces such as parks. We believe the use of the Minerva maps alongside a concerted effort to work in a partnership method creates the space unique conversations to tackle VAWG related issues and to also deepen engagement on a number of other related topics.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. Other Police Forces and agencies should explore the value of using spatial analysis and visual maps in a partnership environment to provide new ways to explore complex issues such as VAWG that bring partners together and improve how these topics are understood and tackled.
- 4.2. Concerted and intentional approaches to partnership work require both dedicated resource and time to develop.
- 4.3. Police Forces and key stakeholders need to move beyond hot spot and high-volume based approaches ensuring data science models and technology play a significant

role in tackling the potentially unseen patterns that can be uncovered from these methods.

- 4.4. Data literacy and confidence needs to be enhanced and nurtured to ensure the benefits of these new approaches are realised. This needs to be done across the full spectrum of partners.
- 4.5. Time must be spent to draw together partnerships that can come together to make meaningful and equitable engagement on high priority areas such as VAWG. For Minerva this has been through the Community Safety partnerships but also include engagement with transport providers, open space workers and education providers to provide more balanced perspectives and ideas.
- 4.6. The sharing and analysis of data (both open source and organisationally held) needs careful management and support but should not be a barrier to tackling issues such as VAWG going forward.
- 4.7. Dedicated resource (time, people and funding) all play an important role to support partnership engagement in VAWG to ensure the broadest stakeholder group can play a meaningful role in any project work.