

# Appendix 1: Mapping Community Engagement – a internal MPA review

## Introduction

This report sets out the findings of an internal MPA communication, consultation and community engagement mapping exercise. It presents a comprehensive picture of the current and planned communication, consultation and engagement work undertaken by the MPA.

The findings of this report should be used by the MPA to inform:

- Members about the current and planned communication, consultation and community engagement activities undertaken by the MPA to assist them in determining future communication, consultation community engagement activities;
- the upcoming Police Authority inspections;
- the revision of the joint MPA/Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Community Engagement Strategy 2006 - 2009.

The findings of the mapping exercise must be considered alongside the mandatory community engagement duty placed on all Police Authorities. This is because decisions about what consultation to undertake and when, are to some degree, governed by the MPA's statutory responsibilities.

The Police and Justice Act (2006) requires Police Authorities to

- make arrangements for obtaining the views of the community on policing the force area: and,
- have the cooperation of the community in preventing crime.

In meeting this duty, the MPA must ensure that its existing and planned communication, consultation and engagement mechanisms are effective, elicit useful information and finally allow for a proper dialogue with Londoners.

## Methodology

An interview schedule<sup>1</sup> was produced by the Oversight and Review Unit in partnership with the Planning and Performance Unit. This consisted of 10 questions and was used in face to face and telephone interviews with MPA officers, MPA Members and the London Communities Police Partnership (LCP2)<sup>2</sup>. All MPA

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<sup>1</sup> Annex 1

<sup>2</sup> The London Communities Police Partnership (LCP2) is an independent body, working with the MPA, MPS and Community/Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs) in the 32 London Boroughs. Its mission is to promote and develop the best, most effective police/community engagement within the 32 boroughs, at the pan-London level and beyond. CPEGs are a borough level community engagement mechanism which allow local people to regularly consult with their local police, the MPA, key stakeholders in crime and disorder reduction (such as the local authority and probation service), and each other about strategic policing; including consultation on the Policing Plan development, implementation of Neighbourhood

Secretariat Units<sup>3</sup> were asked to take part in the interviews. Interviews were conducted with all MPA Secretariat units with the exception of Admin, ISIT and Professional Standards. An Internal Audit Assistant Director represented the Audit teams.

Communities, Equalities and People (CEP) Committee Members were also invited to take part in interviews. Three (CEP) Members were interviewed together with one other Member, following a subsequent open invitation to all Members<sup>4</sup>.

This report provides a summary of comments made by interviewees together with examples of communication, consultation and engagement activities. Full interview notes are available on request from the Oversight and Review Unit.

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Policing and crime and disorder reduction. CPEGs are intended to be representative of the local population, and more particularly those groups that interact with the police in disproportionate numbers. Their activities are not limited to committee work but include active community engagement in neighbourhoods and with local groups.

The LCP2 interview involved the Chief Executive of the Partnership and the Chair of Hillingdon CPEG

<sup>3</sup> Units were asked by the interviewers to either nominate an officer to take part in the interview or to invite the interviewers to unit meetings.

<sup>4</sup> Three of the Member interviews were face to face interviews; one took place over the phone.

## Section 1

### Where we are: current MPA communication, consultation and engagement activities<sup>5</sup>

This section outlines:

- draft corporate definitions;
- what we are currently doing in regards to communication, consultation and engagement;
- who we are doing it with;
- feeding back to Londoners;
- how the MPA utilises the information it gathers;
- Community Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs);
- Key findings and recommendations from Home Office research;
- Implications of Met Forward and the Mayoral manifesto; and finally,
- Advice for Members and the MPA Senior Management Team (SMT).

#### ***Developing corporate definitions***

It is essential there is shared corporate understanding of the terms communication, consultation and engagement. This would ensure that activities are planned, labelled and promoted correctly and that Londoners are aware of what is expected of them and how they will input, gain or learn from the activity.

This mapping project was an opportunity to consult with MPA officers and Members on draft corporate definitions for communication, consultation and engagement produced by the Planning and Performance Unit. These are set out below

**Engagement: A process that establishes relationships with citizens, community groups and stakeholders promoting empowerment and involvement**

**Consultation: A process to seek comments, feedback and ideas on specific issues through standard research methodologies such as surveys or focus groups**

**Communication: A process to inform individuals, groups, the media, press or the public of the organisation's policies, actions or position. Examples include press releases, responses to enquiries and production and distribution of publications.**

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<sup>5</sup> The examples given of current and planned communication, consultation and engagement activities by MPA officers may not on every occasion tally with the draft corporate definitions as listed above. However, it was felt that the report had to reflect how activities were labelled by MPA officers.

Extensive feedback was provided on the three definitions by the interviewees. The key issues highlighted were:

- all MPA corporate definitions must be in plain English so that they can be easily understood by Londoners and partner agencies;
- Officers and Members must be clear about the purpose of every communication, consultation and engagement activity, so that there is a shared understanding between the target audience and the MPA;
- MPA corporate definitions must highlight that consultation and engagement are two way processes which can result in outcomes and outputs.

There was considerable debate on the use of the term 'empowerment' in the engagement definition. Members and MPA officers queried whether it is possible to say that the development of a relationship can necessarily result in empowerment. It was suggested this term is misused and overused by politicians, the media and organisations. The MPA may want communities to feel empowered from a relationship but it cannot guarantee that this will be the result.

It was suggested that the final definitions should sit alongside a handful of explanatory statements which would underpin them. These statements should encompass the following:

- an explanation on what the consultee should expect from an MPA consultation and engagement activity;
- an explanation of what is expected of each MPA unit when planning or undertaking consultation and engagement activities;
- a commitment from the MPA that it will seek to actively target all Londoners, including those that are already informed and engaged (the 'usual suspects') and particularly those that are not;
- an assurance that the MPA will adopt a wide range of methods when conducting consultation and engagement to ensure that as many Londoners as possible are able to take part.

Based on feedback received from officers and Members the definitions will be revised by the Planning and Performance Unit.

## **What we are currently doing in regards to communication, consultation and engagement**

Based on the three definitions above officers were asked to provide examples, that they were undertaking or planning to undertake, of:

- communication provision;
- consultation activities;

- engagement activities.

Varied and numerous examples were provided by officers. The following is a summary of examples shared.

### ***Current and planned communication provision***

- As part of overall governance of the MPS, MPA Units have informal and formal communication processes in place. MPA officers are in daily contact with various MPS directorates - including regular contact with the Commissioner's Office – the GLA, GOL, Local Authority partners and volunteers. As one MPA officer said, *"it's [communication] what most people here do all the time."*
- MPA officers utilise seminars, conferences and workshop opportunities to provide information to Londoners. Examples of this included the annual 'London Schools and the Black Child' event at which the MPA ran a workshop on youth crime and community safety.
- MPA officers have also established a number of formal mechanisms to provide information to the wider public. These include the monthly MPA Direct Ezine produced by the Communications team; the bi-monthly Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) newsletter produced by the ICV team; the MPA column in the MPS publication 'The Job'; the recently redesigned MPA website and numerous annual reports. However, whilst the publications are sent to a wide range of voluntary and community groups, the main audience for these publications are groups with which the MPA has already developed relationships. However, it is likely the MPA benefits from the 'snowball effect' with publications being passed on to other groups and individuals.
- Recently the MPA has made use of regional newspapers to disseminate information. To inform the development of the MPA/MPS Business Plan 2010/2011, adverts inviting Londoners to take part in a consultation exercise were placed in 'The London Lite' and the 'Evening Standard' by the Planning and Performance Unit. The ICV team regularly uses 'The Metro' for recruitment purposes and has also designed recruitment posters and leaflets which are distributed to London libraries and a wide range of other community venues throughout London.

The ICV team hold two information evenings each year advertised through 'The Metro'. These evenings are focused on recruitment but are also used to raise awareness of ICV work.

Local newspapers were used by the MPA to inform Londoners about the 2008-2009 Local Policing Summaries. The adverts highlighted each Borough Command Units (BCUs) performance against the targets set by the MPS in the previous year and directed Londoners to the MPA website for more detailed information.

Many MPA officers spoke about the need to adopt new and existing media particularly to target new and younger audiences. Some examples of how the MPA are already utilising new technology are set out below.

### **Choice FM radio advert**

**The ICV team have produced a radio advert which was aired on Choice FM in March 2009. The advert was played five times a day, every day, over a one week period. This was to ensure that the advert reached the various demographic groups that listen to Choice FM.**

### **Facebook**

**The ICV team are also hoping to develop an ICV Facebook page where Londoners can ‘become a fan’ of the ICV scheme. If given approval by SMT, the ICV team are hoping the Facebook page will be launched in June 2009.**

The findings regarding the use of media tally with Home Office (2003)<sup>6</sup> research into police authorities and public engagement. This research highlighted that police authorities must tailor consultation methods in order to access specific groups and those who are less likely to take up traditional consultation and engagement opportunities, such as public meetings. The research found that the use of new media (internet, email and texting) and traditional media (newspapers and radio) was particularly successful in targeting younger age groups (35 year olds and under.)

The Engagement and Partnership Unit (EPU) support the MPA funded CPEGs. They stated that communication with CPEGs was often unplanned and was embedded in their day to day work. This day to day communication was an opportunity to:

- provide advice and support;
- provide information;
- explore ideas/initiatives/proposals;
- share local or strategic knowledge.

The team had particular concerns about how communication is managed and organised within the MPA. On occasion EPU officers have attended CPEG meetings and learnt of initiatives that have originated from the MPA but which they were unaware of. It wasn't simply the lack of internal communication that was of concern to EPU officers but also that this left them unprepared to answer questions. At a recent CPEG meeting the Policing Pledge was an agenda item and MPA officers were expected to comment but were unsure of the MPA policy line. Ideally EPU officers would like to be informed of MPS initiatives and MPA projects that are to be placed on future CPEG agendas. Responsibility for ensuring that this happens would

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<sup>6</sup> Myhill, A., Yarrow, S., Dalgleish, D. And Docking, M. (2003) *The role of police authorities in public engagement* Home Office Online Report 37/03, London: Home Office.

fall on both CPEGs and the MPA. CPEGs would need to ensure that EPU officers are aware of upcoming agenda items and the MPA in turn would need to ensure that all consultation and engagement requests for CPEGs go via the EPU.

Finally the EPU felt a single point of contact (either individual or team) should be responsible for all external communication, to ensure that it is managed centrally and to prevent the same information being sent out repeatedly.

Some interviewees also spoke about poor internal communication. Concerns were around:

- a lack of understanding of the role and remits of particular units. For example, Committee Services are often confused with Member Services. They stated *“For the short period of time that we were on the first floor, the rest of the secretariat were asking us [Committee Services] for advice, for information and there appeared to be a heightened awareness of what we could provide to others and what they should be doing for us”*;
- a lack of understanding of how particular MPA units can support the work of other units. For example, the Communications Team explained that there is a *“cultural gap at the MPA, in terms of people not understanding how they can use us and benefit from us.”*
- a lack of internal consultation. For example, the Treasury Unit explained that all committee papers which have a financial implication should be shared with them for comment and information. However, they often only learnt about financial implications at committee meetings. They concluded that there is a *“lack of mutual respect”* at the MPA.
- EPU officers stated that there was little sustained professional contact between MPA officers on the first and third floors<sup>7</sup> of Dean Farrar Street. The current contact between officers on the first and third floor is due to individual relationships between a few officers. This situation was considered problematic as EPU officers felt that they did not have the policy context and support that they required from colleagues on the first floor.

When looking at how the MPA can improve its external communication, it is also important to consider how internal communication can be enhanced. Recent improvements that should be acknowledged include the internal ezine Pivot produced by Communications and the reformatted monthly all staff meeting, facilitated by SMT.

Pivot strikes a good balance of providing MPS/MPA strategic and operational information alongside non work news in a friendly, concise and informal manner.

Recent staff meetings have also been well received. Meetings are an opportunity for staff to hear directly from SMT on a range of internal and external strategic and

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<sup>7</sup> EPU, Professional Standards and the Hate Crime Forum are located on the third floor of Dean Farrar Street. The majority of the MPA Secretariat other than the Corporate Secretariat is based on the first floor.

operational issues. Meetings also provide MPA officers with an opportunity to put questions directly to SMT and have these discussed and debated in a public arena.

The previous full staff meeting format provided every MPA unit with the opportunity to give an overview of current and planned activity. This information slot is to be reintroduced by SMT and may help to address some of the concerns expressed regarding poor internal communication.

### ***Current and planned consultation work<sup>8</sup>***

Interviews with officers indicated that consultation is utilised by the MPA for two primary purposes:

#### **1 To inform the development of MPA/MPS service/policy provision:**

The ICV handbook was informed by consultation with ICV panel members

In devising the MPA budget, the Treasury Team undertake consultation with the MPS and the GLA. The Treasury Team also invites comments on the budget from the voluntary and community sector, including CPEGs.

The MPA is responsible for the annual Policing Priorities Consultation which is managed by the Planning and Performance Unit. A range of community and voluntary groups are invited to identify three priority areas which they consider the MPS should focus on in the coming year. It is recognised that a range of different methods need to be utilised to encourage Londoners to take part. The team are looking at how the process can be enhanced to increase take up.

Police Authorities statutory requirements to consult the public have developed considerably since the early 1980s; however, central to all the various duties has been a continual requirement for Authorities to consult with the public prior to setting local objectives/policing priorities. In considering how the current process can be enhanced, the MPA may wish to consider whether current resourcing to implement this duty is adequate.

The annual MPA scrutiny programme is informed by consultation and engagement. A consultation programme which meets the requirements of each scrutiny is designed by officers. In the past this consultation programme has included a range of methods. The current Race and Faith inquiry includes: face to face interviews; focus groups; panel interviews and written submissions.

The Internal Audit annual work programme is informed by consultation with partner agencies including the HMIC, the Audit Commission and the MPS.

The MPA Race Hate Crime Forum has recently broadened its focus to include all Hate Crimes. The re-launch of the Forum will include considerable

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<sup>8</sup> As noted earlier, the following are only examples of the consultation work being carried out by MPA officers. Detailed information on the work of each team can be provided by the Oversight and Review Unit.



consultation with relevant stakeholder groups to ensure that appropriate agencies responsible for dealing with Hate Crime are included on the Forums Board.

MPA officers regularly contribute to regional and where appropriate national consultations. Recently the MPA have contributed to the cross governmental Youth Crime Action Plan, the cross government Violence against Women strategy and the Mayoral Time for Action youth plan.

- 2 To hear from and support existing volunteers:** The chairs and vice chairs of ICV panels are bought together biannually by the MPA so that they can share experiences, receive information on custody related issues and raise issues of concern with MPA staff.

The annual MPA Community Engagement conference coordinated by the EPU is an opportunity for the MPA to highlight and consider the impact of legislative changes on community engagement, share information on upcoming MPA/MPS policy and service provision initiatives and provide feedback on current MPA programmes of work. This year's conference is being used as an opportunity to consult with community and voluntary groups on the revision of the MPA/MPS Community Engagement Strategy 2006 - 2009.

### ***Current and planned engagement work<sup>9</sup>***

Of the three activities, communication, consultation and engagement, MPA engagement activities seem to be less developed and are limited to a handful of units. However, this is unsurprising, as some MPA units are more involved in participative activities than others. Examples of some engagement activities are detailed below:

- **MPA volunteers:** CPEGs and ICV closely meet with the draft corporate definition<sup>10</sup> of engagement and the MPA community engagement objective as outlined in the MPA/MPS Community Engagement Strategy 2006 - 2009<sup>11</sup>. Both CPEGs and ICVs provide Londoners with an opportunity to be actively involved in shaping and monitoring MPS policy and service provision.

The ICV team have set up a reference group of 20 ICV who are asked for views and opinions on particular projects or initiatives that the ICV team are intending to implement. They have been asked to comment on issues such as the use of picture cards in custody suites, the theme of the London ICV conference and the MPA web site re-development.

- **Stakeholder engagement:** When asked about engagement many MPA units spoke exclusively about relationships with stakeholders or partner agencies.

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<sup>9</sup> See footnote 8.

<sup>10</sup> Engagement: "A process that establishes relationships with citizens, community groups and stakeholders promoting empowerment and involvement."

<sup>11</sup> One of the two MPA objectives for community engagement is to "ensure effective ways are in place to increase Londoners awareness and understanding of policing issues and the capacity and willingness by which individuals and communities can work collectively to shape and strengthen the civic governance of policing in London."

MPA officers considered this to be a core responsibility and vital to their scrutiny and monitoring roles. For example, the MPA is currently a key partner on the London Criminal Justice Board Youth Working Group. This group provides the MPA with an opportunity to ensure the MPA youth scrutiny recommendations relating to criminal justice are taken forward and that the MPS are supported and monitored in taking forward their youth strategy.

EPU officers also regularly engage with partners on Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, representing the MPA at strategic meetings. The development of Joint Engagement Meetings<sup>12</sup> has also resulted in the Planning and Performance Unit engaging with a wide range of local partners including council community safety leads, borough Chief Executives, probation and YOT staff.

- **Engagement as part of the scrutiny programme:** All MPA scrutinies include consultation as a key method of collating both qualitative and quantitative data. The MPA Youth Scrutiny involved input from a youth reference group of 26 young Londoners who were recruited to inform and direct the youth scrutiny.
- **Research and Scrutiny:** The Oversight and Review annual scrutiny programme and research undertaken by Planning and Performance Unit encompass communication, consultation and engagement. A Planning and Performance colleague stated, “[research] *is about relationship building, it is about informing and seeking views, it is about actively engaging people in the research process and it is about feeding back the results of the research.*”

### ***Activities that the MPA is no longer undertaking***

As part of the mapping exercise, it was useful to explore any communication, consultation and engagement activities that the MPA had previously undertaken in the past but were no longer operating. This was to determine why activities had come to an end and whether the learning from this was used when considering new activities. Bar the Safer London Panel<sup>13</sup>, MPA officers had no examples of work that had ended because it failed to meet with its original objectives. Interviewers were told that rather than discontinuing projects, MPA officers were gaining more projects (Communications and Planning Performance Units) and that certain communication and consultation activities were mandatory and therefore could not cease (Treasury Unit and Committee Services.)

In some instances there had been a shift or enhancement of a particular process to meet new requirements. For example the Race Hate Crime Forum has ceased but

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<sup>12</sup> The Joint Engagement Meetings (JEM) process allows problem solving between the MPS, Local Authorities and partner agencies on issues related to crime and public safety.

<sup>13</sup> The Safer London Panel, a citizen's panel of 3,000 Londoners, was established by the MPA in 2004 but disbanded in 2007. The reasons for this were numerous but the most significant seemed to be the lack of forward planning. After the initial ideas and initiatives on how to use the Panel, the Authority seemed unsure how to utilise the panel. The panel was also resource intensive and as the MPA were unable to identify a partner agency to co-fund the panel. Therefore it was agreed that the work would come to an end.

will be replaced by a London Hate Crime Forum which will also look at issues of homophobia and disability hate crime.

## ***Who we are doing it with***

### ***MPA stakeholders***

MPA officers were asked to identify their key stakeholders - groups of Londoners and organisations they felt the MPA needed to proactively involve in consultation and engagement.

MPA officers consult and engage with a wide range of strategic stakeholders on a regular basis. A list of stakeholders that officers are currently engaging with is included in Annex 2.

Officers were asked who they felt the MPA should be consulting and engaging with more. Suggestions included:

- disabled people;
- young people;
- vulnerable people – including those with learning needs and mental health;
- young adults aged 18 – 30 years;
- the ‘silent majority’. Londoners who rarely access statutory service provision until they have an emergency; and finally,
- local political leaders, such as council leads for community safety.

Some of the above suggestions are unsurprising. The consultation and engagement work undertaken by the Oversight and Review Unit to inform the youth scrutiny<sup>14</sup> and the MPA conference in 2004 and subsequent report into disabled Londoners’ view on policing<sup>15</sup> provided the Authority with an opportunity to develop relationships with two groups of Londoners who are traditionally considered to be hard to reach. However, in order for the MPA to build on these relationships, the organisation would need to ensure that resources are made available to continue the work begun with these groups of Londoners.

Interviewees also felt that the MPA should look at how it consults and engages with people who come from communities where there is an endemic ‘no snitching culture’<sup>16</sup>. Communities who are fearful of consulting and engaging with the police directly need a safe and secure method of airing their concerns. However, the MPA may not be the first port of call for these Londoners. In considering how to consult and engage with this group of Londoners the MPA may need to work with partner agencies that have developed trusted relationships with them.

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<sup>14</sup> Metropolitan Police Authority (2008) ‘*Seen and Heard – Young people, Policing and Crime*’ London: Metropolitan Police Authority

<sup>15</sup> Metropolitan Police Authority (2005) ‘*Disabled people and the police – a new relationship?*’ London: Metropolitan Police Authority.

This work was undertaken by the Community Engagement Unit in partnership with the Equality and Diversity Unit. The Community Engagement Unit was replaced by the Engagement and Partnerships Unit in 2007. The MPA Equality and Diversity Unit were disbanded in 2008 with roles and functions mainstreamed into other parts of the MPA Secretariat.

<sup>16</sup> No snitching is used to describe withholding or not reporting crimes to the police or other criminal justice agencies. It arises from a fear of reprisal attacks but also can be a result of disengagement from mainstream society and a belief that the police and other criminal justice agencies are unable to or unwilling to deal with the incident.

Additional comments made by officers about gaps in the MPA stakeholder database included:

- It was suggested that it is not necessary for every MPA unit to have immediate access to every socio-economic group in London. It would be more useful for officers to utilise internal expertise and existing contacts when beginning consultation and engagement activities.
- It was felt that the MPA was successful at building and maintaining relationships with professional stakeholders but was less able to maintain relationships with Londoners generally. However, there was also recognition that a lack of resources made maintaining relationships difficult.
- Many officers expressed concerns about the MPA's lack of public profile. Recently the profile of the MPA has been heightened – mainly because of negative media stories surrounding the former Police Commissioner, the death of Jean Charles de Menezes and the proposed and actual Employment Tribunals bought by BME police staff and officers – but it was felt that the MPA had to make a concerted attempt to raise its profile. Many interviewees commented they were surprised when they met local police officers who were unaware of the MPA and its role in scrutinising and supporting the MPS. One MPA officer felt that it may be beneficial for the MPA to consider bringing in an external expert who could devise a strategy to raise the public profile of the MPA.
- A number of MPA officers were concerned about the impact of the new administration on relationships between MPA officers, MPS staff and officers and GLA staff. It was felt relationships had become challenging immediately after the May 2008 elections when there had been concerns within both the GLA and MPA about redundancies, and this had resulted in staff on both sides feeling protective about their work.

Alongside this protectionism, officers felt that as the new Members were City Hall focused this had resulted in Members becoming alienated from MPA officers. Many MPA officers access Members prior to and after committee meetings and therefore moving Full Authority – the one committee meeting at which all Members are present – had had a direct impact on MPA officers.

Some MPA officers also felt that as the Mayor of London was also the Chair of the Police Authority, the press often attributed policy and service provision decisions to Boris Johnson in his role as the Mayor of London and not as the Chair of the Police Authority. It was felt that this added to the lack of MPA public profile and the confusion expressed by some partner agencies about the remit of the Mayor.

Members were also asked their opinions on who the MPA should be consulting and engaging.

Members were uncomfortable with the use of the term 'stakeholders'. One argued that the MPA should differentiate between partner agencies and Londoners, *"There is a difference between stakeholders [and Londoners] because they could be our partners with who we deliver our services and our policies and citizens. Our citizens are the people that we deliver too and that we provide for."* Whilst another argued that 'stakeholder groups' were self selecting and therefore consultation and engagement with these groups could not be called consultation and engagement with the wider public. *"Stakeholder groups... full of people who are articulate and who are single issue/have a hobby horse."* It was suggested the MPA focus its resources on those groups of Londoners who are currently not being consulted and engaged by the MPS as this would avoid duplication. However, it was recognised the MPA could not fulfil its governance of the MPS effectively if not consulting and engaging with Londoners as a whole. *"MPA also has a responsibility to talk independently with Londoners so that we in turn can engage effectively with the MPS and the MPA has to conduct conversations with Londoners ...to ensure that the MPS are conducting their conversations with Londoners."*

Members identified which organisations and Londoners the MPA needed to make more attempt to engage and consult with. In addition to the suggestions made by officers they recommended that the MPA involve victims and perpetrators.

Additional comments made by Members were also of interest, *"to a certain degree it's not naming the groups that we should be engaging with that is the issue. I think we know who we need to be engaging with it's the doing that is the more important."*

- Similar to officers, Members felt that the MPA needed to build and develop its profile, particularly with the media, *"we should consult with the media to tackle misconceptions as they can damage policing and decrease confidence; we have a responsibility to put that right."*
- The MPA should be utilising a range of information methods to raise awareness of its work and to inform Londoners of consultation and engagement activities. *"...using the free regional and local newspapers; placing flyers in the libraries and sending out newsletters to households."*
- One Member suggested that the MPA should focus its resources on consulting and engaging with Londoners who are already informed and engaged on policing and community safety issues. *".. these are the people that will have opinions on policing."* To some degree much of what the MPA regularly needs to gather information on, for example the annual GLA budget consultation and certain consultations such as the Estate Strategy, require participants to have prior knowledge and contextual information. Often the processes used and the topic itself can be bureaucratic and this can be off putting for the wider public.
- At a previous CEP meeting, Members debated whether the MPA should be conducting consultation and engagement themselves or whether it should be ensuring that these activities were being carried out by the MPS. This issue was raised by a Member during the interviews *"in my opinion it is clear that*

*the law states that we should be ensuring that it happens as opposed to doing it ourselves. We need to be clear about the law and what it means.”*

- Finally, Members spoke about identifying and developing existing good consultation and engagement practice in boroughs. Having decided on the consultation and engagement topic area, the Authority should identify the most suitable local consultation or engagement mechanisms to utilise. This method could be more effective for the MPA rather than a ‘one size fits all’ approach provided by the CPEGs and it would allow the Authority to use its limited resources more effectively.

## ***Feeding back to Londoners***

The results of consultation and engagement activities must be fed back to those who participated and to the wider public in general. MPA officers were asked to provide examples of how they fed back the results of their consultation and engagement activities to Londoners.

MPA officers generally provide feedback either through targeted mechanisms (for example, to groups or individuals that have taken part in a consultation or engagement activity) or indirect mechanisms (for example making information widely available through published reports and the MPA website). Examples of both are listed below.

### Targeted Mechanisms

- The Planning and Performance Unit ensure that all groups and individuals that take part in the annual policing priority consultation are provided with a copy of the key findings and how these will be utilised by the MPS. In 2008 the results were also shared with all Safer Neighbourhoods Teams.
- The bimonthly newsletter produced by the ICV team is used to inform ICV and professional stakeholders (for example, the Home Office and the Independent Custody Visitors Association) of issues relevant to custody visiting, including the results of consultation activities
- Workshops, conferences, events and public meetings are also used as an opportunity by the MPA to inform Londoners about their work but also to provide feedback on consultation and engagement activities. MPA officers who led on the ‘Counter Terrorism – The London Debate’ consultation and engagement programme attended some CPEG meetings to inform volunteers of the key findings and the next steps that the MPA would be undertaking
- Londoners who have taken part in previous MPA scrutinies and who request to be kept informed of progress with recommendations and next steps are sent regular updates by the Oversight and Review Unit.

### Indirect mechanisms

- The MPA website is heavily utilised by many units to share information and results of consultation and engagement with Londoners. This is a cost effective and straightforward method of sharing information and findings with a large audience. However, many MPA officers believe that the MPA does not have a strong public profile. Therefore whilst placing information on the MPA website makes findings widely available, it is not possible to determine how many Londoners utilise the MPA website as their primary source of information about the Authority.

The newly designed MPA website now includes a one stop shop for the press and media which provides information and news updates of MPA business, therefore making it easier for Londoners to locate information about the work of the Authority.

The MPA web site also has a web page for each London borough bringing together relevant local information, including details of ICVs, upcoming Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) meetings and details of the MPA Link Member.

- Committee papers are also used to share consultation and engagement findings. However, it is likely that only those who are aware of the MPA and its committee structure will seek information through this mechanism.

### ***How consultation and engagement findings are utilised by the MPA***

Consultation and engagement activities should inform MPA policy and work priorities. Officers and Members were asked to demonstrate how information from consultation and engagement activities has been utilised by the MPA. Examples are listed below:

- Many MPA officers stated that information from consultation and engagement activities was used in briefings for Members to keep them updated on emerging regional and local issues
- The annual policing priorities consultation informs the policing plan which is central to much of MPA/MPS activity. The MPA/MPS must take the public consultation into account when setting the following years policing priorities.
- The stakeholder engagement and consultation that informs each borough JEM, provides the MPA/MPS the opportunity to hold boroughs to account.
- MPA scrutinies are good examples of how information gathered through consultation and engagement is utilised by the Authority. Recommendations from scrutinies are implemented and monitored by officers through MPA committees.

LCP2 were also asked to demonstrate how information from their work at a borough level was utilised by the MPA. They felt that their borough knowledge was not being effectively used by the MPA; however, they had appreciated being asked to

contribute to The London Debate and the youth scrutiny<sup>17</sup> and requested that they were provided with similar opportunities in the future. However they requested they be given a minimum of three months notice of consultation work - CPEGs meet on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis - to ensure that the relevant borough groups and individuals were able to take part.

Members were also asked how MPA consultation and engagement activities supported their requirements. They stated that information:

- was used to inform Mayor's Question Time;
- was used to inform CDRP meetings they attended;
- informed and influenced thinking on particular policing and community safety issues;
- was disseminated to CPEGs.

One new Independent Member wondered how the MPA decided which policing issues would be subject to a scrutiny. *"Are we doing the race and faith inquiry because this issue has been in the media...what if the real issue is business crime...is it largely down to is it sexy or in their [Members] political interest?"* The Member stated that one of the most emotive subjects in the last few years had been the death of Jean Charles de Menezes because of its impact on public confidence. He speculated why the Police Authority had not consulted and engaged Londoners on the impact of this death and concluded that *"we don't care about learning peoples views if there is no overt problem."*

Another new Independent Member felt it was important that borough information provided to Members included information on existing or upcoming MPS consultation and engagement initiatives so that Members had a full borough picture. *"...you need to be able to see how it all fits together..."* This Member also wanted clear information from both the MPA and the MPS on what she needed to do with the information that she gathered at a borough level. *'How do I determine that this is an issue for ...my borough or an issue that ...needs to be dealt with pan London? If it is an issue that needs to be dealt with at a pan London level how do we as Members feed this up to the MPS and MPA?'* She suggested that there should be a clear route for Members to forward on emerging strategic concerns to the MPS.

## **CPEGs**

Home Office guidance given to Police Authorities after the enactment of the Police and Criminal Act (1984) recommended Police Authorities set up Police Community Consultative Groups in order to meet their consultation requirements. Since this recommendation, Police Community Consultative Groups have existed in London in some shape or form. The funding and monitoring of the London groups became the responsibility of the MPA when the Authority was set up under the GLA Act (2000)<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> For both pieces of work, the MPA asked CPEGs to arrange borough conversations with organisations and individuals. The majority of the CPEGs arranged a borough discussion on Counter Terrorism, whilst just over half of the CPEGs took part in the youth scrutiny.

<sup>18</sup> In London borough community engagement mechanisms are collectively known by the MPA as Community Police Engagement Groups. However, the individual groups use a wide variety of nomenclatures including Community Safety Boards, Community Police Consultative Groups and Police Community Consultative Groups



Interviewees were asked to consider:

- How CPEGs have been used by the MPA to date?
- How they can be used in the future?

Some Members and MPA officers queried the effectiveness of the CPEG process. Assessing the effectiveness of CPEGs was outside the scope of the mapping exercise; however, comments have been included. Whilst these comments are useful as part of the overall discussion on CPEGs these remarks are not representative of the organisation as whole. In order to assess effectiveness, it is normal practice to have a criterion of effectiveness and the MPA has no such criterion for CPEGs.

### **Views of MPA officers**

The feedback on CPEGs was mixed, ranging from the extreme comments, "*I think the groups should be banned*", to recognition that CPEGs were crucial as they gave the MPA an opportunity to "*hear community views.*"

CPEGs are currently being utilised in the following ways:

- CPEGs are invited to take part in relevant meetings and events. For example, in the past CPEGs were invited to Equality and Diversity committee meetings.
- The Planning and Performance Unit approach CPEGs to take part in the annual policing priorities consultation exercise.
- The ICV team have used the CPEG volunteers to advertise their regular recruitment drives, to provide feedback to communities on policy and legislative changes and to publicise upcoming events and conferences
- The Chief Executive's Office and the Oversight and Review Unit have included CPEGs in pan London engagement projects and recent scrutinies
- With the support of EPU officers, some CPEGs have facilitated CDRP consultation activities on behalf of CDRP partners.

There were a number of suggestions from MPA officers for how CPEGs could be better utilised by the MPA:

- The Communications Team suggested CPEGs should be encouraged to send their meeting agendas to the MPA so that information could be included on the CPEG page of the MPA website.
- After the success of their involvement in both the youth scrutiny and Counter Terrorism: The London Debate, the Oversight and Review Unit will continue to include CPEGs in their scrutiny programme

- The Chief Executive's Office suggested the MPA consider how emerging issues identified by CPEGs at a borough level are brought back to the MPA and acted on by relevant teams and the MPS
- A Member suggested the MPA offer training to CPEGs so they can better fulfil their roles<sup>19</sup>. *"CPEGs know people in boroughs that we don't and we can access groups and people through them... they want to be used. The good ones are linked into their communities."*
- Many MPA officers spoke about the importance of CPEGs becoming more representative of the communities they represent. However, some officers also acknowledged that the formal meeting process may not attract a wide range of Londoners. Rather than changing CPEGs, the focus should be on CPEGs developing additional consultation and engagement opportunities to target those Londoners they do not normally speak to or hear from. LCP2 agreed: *"We recognise that public meetings three or four times a year will not meet the needs of all communities. We need a variety of approaches."*
- MPA officers responsible for the London Hate Crime Forum and the Domestic and Sexual Violence Board stated that they intended to make better use of CPEGs. They plan to establish the information and support requirements of CPEGs and ensure these are met.
- The Oversight and Review Unit suggested CPEGs should be encouraged to utilise the Local Authority scrutiny process as this would provide groups with additional consultation and engagement opportunities.

EPU officers felt the MPA as a whole needed to be smarter in its use of CPEGs. They suggested that the MPA:

- ensures that annual and regular MPA activities, such as the GLA budget consultation and the policing priorities consultation, are factored into CPEG work plans. In order for this to happen, EPU officers would a) need to ensure that they had a comprehensive list of all annual and regular MPA activities and b) ensure this information is factored into CPEG work plans.
- should use CPEGs as an information mechanism to distribute corporate messages to boroughs. Each CPEG has contacts with huge numbers of people through their membership lists and could pass on information on behalf of the MPA
- should work with EPU officers to establish the best consultation and engagement methodology to use with CPEGs prior to any planned activity.

Above all, EPU officers reiterated that CPEGs are volunteers and there are limits to how much they are able to do. However with appropriate forward planning and

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<sup>19</sup> A draft version of this report was sent to all interviewees for comment. Having seen the draft findings, EPU officers stated the MPA is upskilling CPEG members through the London wide community engagement training programme being delivered by the Safer London Foundation.

support, the Authority could benefit hugely from the work of CPEGs. *“There are 32 CPEGs with executive committees of 25-30 people and with memberships of hundreds and in some cases thousands of other people, potentially... we could be cascading to a third of London.”*

LCP2 were also asked how the MPA should utilise the CPEGs in the coming years. They stated *“Because the MPA funds the groups they also feel that they can order the groups around. Yes groups may need to be chided on occasion but [groups]... worry about independence.”* However, they also added, *“We don’t feel that the MPA has used us efficiently. We have useful borough knowledge that is not utilised...There are two examples of when we have been used in the way that we would like to be used in the future – the London Debate and the youth scrutiny.”*

LCP2 went onto explain that an analysis of CPEG minutes from April – October 2008<sup>20</sup> revealed that during this period approximately 100 different policing and community safety concerns were discussed by CPEGs across the Capital. These issues varied from local ward concerns, to borough and pan London concerns such as gun and knife crime, terrorism and serious youth violence. The analysis also highlighted other concerns which are not current policing priorities but may be prioritised in the future, for example, dangerous dogs. Regular assessment of CPEG minutes would provide the MPA with useful data on Londoners concerns at a ward, borough and pan London level.

A number of officers were unenthusiastic about CPEGs and in at least two instances this was because there was a lack of understanding of their roles, *“not sure we know enough about them to be able to say.”* Officers stated that:

- They were unsure whether CPEGs were useful community engagement mechanisms;
- CPEGs were full of the ‘usual suspects’ and therefore were not representatives of communities;
- They were unsure what CPEGs delivered for the MPA;

Finally there were concerns regarding the autonomy of CPEGs. CPEGs are increasingly being encouraged to seek their own funding in addition to the core funds that they receive annually from the MPA. It was suggested that this could result in CPEGs being less prepared to adhere to MPA requests.

### **Views of MPA Members**

Members have contact with CPEGs via executive committee or public meetings. In relation to the benefits that CPEGs provide to the MPA, Members felt that:

- Relationships with CPEGs were particularly important for Independent Members as it provided them with an opportunity to engage with Londoners.

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<sup>20</sup> During this six month period each CPEG would have met at least once. Of the 29 CPEGs in London, 23 submitted their minutes to LCP2 for analysis.

- CPEGs provided Members with an immediate link to particular sections of London's diverse communities. The former Link Member for Haringey explained that Haringey CPEG had been proactive in highlighting MPA consultation and engagement opportunities to Haringey residents and neighbouring boroughs.

However, they also expressed a number of concerns. They said that:

- It was difficult to ascertain whether concerns expressed at CPEG meetings were representative of the boroughs needs and priorities as a whole. The four Members interviewed represented six boroughs. Three expressed concerns regarding CPEG agenda items:
  - *"these people come and exercise their own hobby horse...no mechanism in place to ensure that they represent the views of the wider public..."*
  - *"so far contribution I have made [to CPEG meeting] is to offer a strategic picture, broadening their perspective to ensure that they do not become parochial..."*
  - *"at the meeting I was not sure if what was being discussed was representative of the boroughs needs or priorities or whether the issues being discussed were the pet projects of each individual person."*

However, this Member went on to state that it was noticeable that the Borough Commander had been working hard to build relationships with the CPEG and it was evident that the group were able to hold their Borough Commander to account.

- All Members interviewed expressed concerns regarding the demographic makeup of CPEGs.
  - *"I don't think they are representative of the people in their borough. The meetings that I have attended all the people at the meeting were from three of the 11 wards – that's not representative!"*
  - *"At the moment both groups seem less representative of their boroughs... in Ealing all are over 50 years old and only one member is a woman."*

However, this Member stated that whilst he had found the groups unrepresentative, it did not necessarily mean they were ineffective.

- *"The meetings in Camden are very well run but the executive is not diverse."*
- *'How can we at the MPA ascertain that they are representative of the communities that they say they are?'*

It is worth highlighting that the lack of diverse representation on CPEGs is not a new complaint but has been raised in research undertaken by the Home Office (2003)<sup>21</sup>.

Members were asked to consider how the CPEGs could be enhanced so that they were better able to carry out their roles.

It was suggested that:

- CPEGs must endeavour to be diverse, not only in terms of the six diversity strands but also in terms of the socio economics demographics of the borough. They should seek to involve Safer Neighbourhoods Panel chairs and include information from sources such as Neighbourhood Watch<sup>22</sup>
- Linked to the above, a Member suggested that the MPA should identify which groups of Londoners each CPEG needs support accessing and put them in contact with other CPEGs who have been able to engage well with this group. *“So for example Camden could learn from Haringey about BME young people and Haringey could learn from Camden about LGBT issues.”*
- The MPA should ensure CPEGs have appropriate skills, either via training or capacity building

All Members interviewed felt it was important to be open and honest with both CPEGs and Londoners about what is and is not possible from consultation and engagement activities. They said it was essential to highlight limitations where they existed. *“If there is something that needs to be done [the example given related to the closure of a police station] but is not popular ... you must explain why the action is being taken [by the MPS] and what the reasons are for it.”* Members recognised that the police are not familiar with receiving instructions and suggestions from the public; and faced with this they may not feel able to explain why particular ideas and suggestions cannot be actioned. However, clear information on why certain things are not possible would be welcomed by Londoners.

Members were keen to know what changes had happened at a local level as a result of CPEG consultations with BOCUs, *“do they have the ability to influence or is it simply dialogue?”<sup>23</sup>*

It was suggested the MPA should be clearer with CPEGs and Members on what was expected of each. As one Member stated, *“we need to know what we are trying to get CPEGs to do before we can assess whether they are effective,”* and another stated that *“I do not know what I should do with the information I hear at meetings ... I didn't really follow the [CPEG meeting] process.”* The two Members that made these comments were new to the Authority, having joined in October 2008. It may be

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<sup>21</sup> Myhill, A. et al Home Office (2003)

<sup>22</sup> A draft version of this report was sent to all interviewees for comment. Having seen the draft findings, EPU officers stated that CPEGs are already required to and do involve Safer Neighbourhoods Panel chairs and representatives in CPEG meetings, however, this involvement varies borough to borough.

<sup>23</sup> EPU officers also stated that CPEG influence varied borough to borough. This summer EPU officers will receive training to enable them to support CPEGs in carrying out self assessments on CPEG ability to influence at a borough level. EPU officers will also support CPEGs in developing plans to increase their levels of influence.

useful for the MPA to revisit the information it provides to Members about CPEGs during the induction period.

Two of the Members questioned whether the CPEG process was the most effective for all London boroughs. One stated, *“boroughs are strikingly different... should be about what suits and fits each borough. We don't need uniformity.”* Another Member referred to CPEGs as the *“one cap fits all approach”* and suggested that the MPA should support effective local consultation and engagement mechanisms rather than simply relying on CPEGs. There were concerns that the CPEG process was the Authority's tokenistic response to delivering community engagement in each borough, *“is it simply about community engagement happening?”*

### ***Key findings and recommendations from the Home Office research***

The findings of the Home Office (2003) research should be taken into consideration by the MPAs when considering how the work with CPEGs can be enhanced and improved. The Home Office research found that historical criticisms of CPEGs and their *“failure to reach marginalised sections of the population”* were still valid in 2003; however, it also found that *“given the right...conditions, PCCG-style public meetings can still achieve certain engagement aims.”*

In terms of criticisms of CPEGs they found that:

- attendees were not representative of the community the group was representing;
- meetings were dominated by very localised issues or by operational policing concerns; and,
- public meetings of the groups were poorly attended. Larger turn outs were only secured if there was a current issue of genuine local interest, for example the closure of a police station.

Whilst the Home Office report is a six years old and actions are being taken by the MPA to enhance the work of CPEGs the criticisms made in the report are similar to the findings of the mapping exercise.

In terms of tangible uses they found, CPEGs:

- allow public an opportunity to directly speak to senior police officers on issues that are of importance to them and hold officers to account;
- are seen to break down barriers between the police and the public; and,
- can be used for providing the public with information about policing and also for gathering intelligence on incidents in the area.

In regards to public engagement, the Home Office recommends that Police Authorities:

- ensure that consultation and engagement projects are developed on an understanding of the needs and the composition of their communities;
- develop a range of consultation methods in addition to CPEGs, which meet the different needs of the population; and finally,
- work with and where possible and relevant ‘piggy back’ on existing consultation opportunities provided by partner agencies.

### ***Implications of Met forward and the Mayoral manifesto***

In his Mayoral manifesto, Boris Johnson made a number of pledges. In regards to increasing police accountability, he pledged that he would “*direct the Commissioner to ensure that borough commanders hold open public meetings each month.*” To date there is no further information on how this pledge will be delivered by the Mayor, but it is feasible that CPEGs could be a vehicle for the Mayor to deliver on this pledge. However, taking forward this manifesto commitment will have resource and funding implications for CPEGs, the vast majority of who do not meet on a monthly basis.

The MPA will also need to take into consideration the aims outlined in Met Forward<sup>24</sup>. METlife states that as part of the review and refresh of the joint MPA/MPS community engagement strategy, the MPA will review the effectiveness of CPEGs. It states that, “*We currently have a number of ways to consult, engage and communicate with individuals, groups and communities...We need to understand what method works best and then standardise where appropriate our structures...*”

It is clear that the mapping exercise was a timely venture and provides Members an opportunity to consider next steps alongside the commitments outlined in Met Forward and the Mayoral manifesto.

### ***Advice for Members***

Findings indicate that the MPA should ensure that information is available internally and externally:

- on the role of CPEGs;
- on the support they can provide to pan London consultation projects and scrutinies.

Members may also wish to consider whether the MPA should assess:

- what value CPEGs bring to the MPA
- whether it may be useful to link well performing CPEGs with those that require developmental support in a mentoring type scheme;
- CPEG impact at a borough level; and finally,

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<sup>24</sup> Met Forward is the strategic work programme of the MPA. It is currently in draft form but its main principles were signed off by Members at the April 2009 Members away day. It has eight work programmes, including one that focuses particularly on community engagement – METlife.

- The effectiveness of CPEGs.

***Advice for MPA SMT***

Revise and endorse the draft community engagement definitions

Consider concerns expressed by officers regarding poor internal communication and how this can be addressed

Consider how new and traditional media can be used by the MPA to increase the organisations profile and to enhance the communication, consultation and engagement work undertaken by the Authority

***Advice for Members and SMT***

Consider how information gathered by Members and CPEGs at a borough level can be used corporately by the MPA

The MPA can only take into account public views if Londoners are aware of its existence. Members and SMT should consider how the MPA can increase its public profile and how this will be achieved

Ensure information on why certain subjects are prioritised for scrutinies and how MPA corporate work priorities are identified is publicised and disseminated widely



## **Section 2: Where we want to be: gaps, challenges and suggested ways forward**

As part of the review MPA officers and Members were asked to identify gaps in current communication, consultation and engagement work and possible ways forward. Some MPA officers also highlighted challenges facing the Authority.

### ***Gaps/challenges***

- The Authority should have procedures in place which allow it to organise consultation and engagement activities promptly in order to respond to emerging issues.
- The Authority should be able to provide information on emerging and topical policing concerns to Londoners promptly.
- The Authority should have a clear policy line, which can be shared internally and externally, on what it wants to achieve from its consultation and engagement activities.
- The majority of interviewees expressed concern about the Authority's low profile. *"By not having a profile we are in jeopardy of being usurped by other organisations for example the GLA and GOL. We need to promote our value."*
- It was suggested the Authority should continuously look at how it consults and engages with young people. This was considered essential as young people are disproportionately impacted on by some policing practice and policy and because children and young people experience greater levels of violent crime victimisation.
- At a borough level, the MPA needs to ensure that there is better communication between CPEGs, Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs), Key Individual Networks (KINs) and other local non MPS community engagement mechanisms (see footnote 22)
- EPU officers and Members suggested that the MPA consider training and capacity building for MPA volunteers (see footnote 19)
- The MPA needs to be clearer about what it means by effective community consultation and engagement, so that the Authority can consider what it should build on and what it should cease.

### ***Solutions***

- The Authority should explore emerging new technologies and how these can be utilised to provide quick time solutions

- The Authority should draw up a timetable of regular and annual consultations and make this widely available to Londoners. This should also include information on how they can take part.
- The Authority should regularly feedback the results of consultation and engagement exercise to Londoners.
- Met Forward will provide a vehicle for corporate messages and explanatory information on why certain work is being prioritised by the MPA.
- All committee papers should include a section which outlines the communication/consultation and engagement implications of a policy or service area

## **Suggested ways forward**

### ***The MPA/MPS Community Engagement Strategy 2006 – 2009***

In 2006 the MPA in partnership with the MPS launched a joint community engagement strategy. The strategy was to provide a framework for the two organisations, clearly outlining the responsibilities of each.

The strategy is due to be renewed in 2009 by the MPA Engagement and Partnerships Unit and the Oversight and Review Unit in partnership with the MPS. The mapping project was used as an opportunity to hear from MPA officers and Members about the impact of the current strategy. However, the majority of the interviewees were unable to comment. There were two primary reasons for this:

- A lack of awareness that the MPA and the MPS had a joint community engagement strategy, as one officer stated *“I have never seen it, never heard of it.”*
- A lack of understanding of what was included in the strategy.

As there was little awareness of the current strategy, it is essential that the new strategy is owned by and known to officers and Members. To ensure that this happens, MPA officers and Members were asked what should be considered during the revision process. They suggested:

- When developing a strategic document, the MPA should consider its purpose to ensure that the strategy covers what the Authority requires. Internal and external consultation should be undertaken so that the document is informed by partners and Londoners
- the strategy should be clear about what the Authority considers good and poor community engagement

- the revised strategy should be championed and promoted by SMT to ensure that MPA officers have ownership of it, *“strategies that are not pushed at an SMT level often slip out of people’s thoughts.”*
- the revised strategy is in plain English. One of the common complaints about the current strategy is that it, *‘reads like a thesis.’*
- the revised strategy has a clear action plan, which outlines individual responsibilities, unit responsibilities and corporate responsibilities.

### ***Community engagement undertaken by other Metropolitan Police Authorities***

In considering next steps, it was useful to gather information from other Metropolitan Authorities. Short telephone interviews were conducted with consultation officers or their equivalents from West Yorkshire Police Authority; West Midlands Police Authority; Greater Manchester Police Authority and Merseyside Police Authority. The telephone conversations highlighted that:

- There has been a move away from using CPEGs or their equivalents in the four Authority areas. The main reasons given for this shift tally with the MPA and Home Office findings. Merseyside Police Authority and West Midlands still undertake a few CPEGs meetings in areas where the CPEG process worked well but these meetings occur annually or biannually.
- All four carry out consultation and engagement activities in partnership with strategic partners such as CDRPs and the voluntary and community sector. To a certain degree this is inevitable. The MPA has the resources and capacity to carry out its own consultation and engagement work whereas most other police authorities do not. However, by working in partnership, they are able to avoid duplication; identify gaps and target these accordingly, but more importantly have wide a range of opportunities provided by partners to choose from.
- Merseyside, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire Police Authorities also undertake annual consultation activities with those members of the public that are considered ‘hard to reach’. For example: Merseyside holds three targeted events annually, each targeted at a particular population group and Greater Manchester holds two annual youth consultation events.

The short telephone conversations highlighted that the four police authorities had given a great deal of consideration not only to how consultation and engagement is undertaken in their force areas but also who with and how often. The consultation officers or their equivalents told the MPA that they made concerted efforts to arrange activities in public areas; such as supermarkets, rather than expecting people to come to them. As one officer stated, *“we consider...the demographic makeup of the area and what partner agencies are already doing in the area...having considered both...we decide what the consultation or engagement programme for the area will be.”*

## ***Advice for Members***

Committee papers should include a section which asks MPA and MPS officers and staff to consider the communication, consultation and engagement implications of an initiative or policy area.

Revision of the MPA/MPS community engagement strategy should outline what the MPA considers good community engagement practice.

## ***Conclusion***

The MPA has a wide-ranging communication, consultation and engagement programme. However, findings from this mapping exercise suggest that this could be improved. There was recognition amongst interviewees that when planning a programme of work that includes consultation and engagement, MPA officers must adopt the most effective consultation and engagement method. The request by interviewees for the MPA to embrace new technologies arises from the awareness that traditional consultation mechanisms (for examples questionnaires) have not elicited responses from a wide range of Londoners to date. To ensure that the MPA hears from those Londoners who are most vulnerable to crime and those who are disproportionately impacted on by policing practice and policy the Authority will need to be more creative in its consultation and engagement work.

There was also recognition that the MPA should be utilising existing mechanisms, such as free commuter newspapers, Safer Neighbourhood newsletters and Local Authority publications, to seek the views of Londoners and inform them of policy decisions, upcoming initiatives and consultation and engagement opportunities.

In considering the revision of the joint MPA/MPS community engagement strategy, the MPA should consider what it wants to achieve from its communication, consultation and engagement programme. Is it the MPA's intention to simply gather information to inform its work and the policing plan? Or is the MPA interested in building long term collaborative relationships with groups of Londoners? If this is a key goal, will resources be made available to ensure that relationships with groups of Londoners are maintained and developed?

The MPA also needs to be able to demonstrate how the information it gathers through various consultation and engagement activities, including the work of CPEGs, is utilised. The MPA should be able to demonstrate the impact of consultation and engagement findings on its work; otherwise it could be argued that the activity has been a wasted exercise and a missed opportunity.

A collective ownership of the MPA corporate community engagement objective (see footnote 11) would encourage officers to give greater consideration to conducting and assessing the impact of consultation and engagement activities. One way of addressing this would be to ensure that all MPA committee papers has a section which requires officers to consider the information, consultation and engagement implications of any given proposal, project or policy area.

The MPA spends considerable resources on CPEGs, but it was clear that many interviewees had little or no understanding of what added value they bought to the MPA consultation and engagement programme. There were also concerns around whether resourcing CPEGs is the most effective use of limited consultation resources. In light of the findings of the mapping report, the proposals outlined in Met Forward and finally the pledges in the Mayoral manifesto regarding police accountability, the MPA may wish to conduct additional research into the role and use of CPEGs.

## Annex 1

**Q1** Please consider the following three definitions.

**Engagement** A process that establishes relationships with citizens, community groups and stakeholders promoting empowerment and involvement.

**Consultation** A process to seek comments, feedback and ideas on specific issues through standard research methodologies such as surveys or focus groups.

**Communication** A process to inform individuals, groups, the media, press or the public of the organisation's policies, actions or position. Examples include press releases, responses to enquiries and production and distribution of publications

Do you agree with these definitions, if not, why not?

**Q 2** Considering the definitions discussed in question 1, what activities are your unit currently undertaking or planning to undertake?

**Q 2a** What activities have your unit undertaken in the past which it is no longer undertaking and why have these activities ended?

**Q 3** Do you have examples of how the work you have described earlier has been used by your unit or the MPA?

**Q 4** Do you have examples of how you have fed back the results of the work that you've described earlier to Londoners?

**Q 5** Which stakeholders does your unit regularly engage with?

**Q 5a** Are there any other stakeholders you feel should be engaged by your unit or by the MPA?

**Q 6** Have you made use of the MPA Community Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs) in the past?

**Q 6a** If yes, how?

**Q 6b** Do you intend to use them in the future?

**Q 6c** If yes, how?

**Q 6d** If not, why not?

**Q 7** How can the MPA make best use of funded community engagement mechanisms, such as CPEGs and Stop and Search Community Monitoring Network (SSCMN)?

**Q 8** Please explain how the communication/information provision and engagement activities undertaken by the MPA supports Members in meeting their requirements?

**Q9** Do you think any gaps exist in the current MPA communication work or consultation/engagement activities?

**Q 10** What impact has the joint MPA/MPS community engagement strategy had on MPA/MPS community engagement practice?

## Annex 2

### **National/regional bodies**

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)	Independent Custody Visitors Association	Local Partnerships	Strategic
Greater London Authority (GLA)	Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)		
Government Office for London (GOL)	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)	<b>Voluntary and community sector</b>	
Race on the Agenda (ROTA)	Audit Commission	Safer Neighbourhoods Panels	
Stonewall	Local Government Association (LGA)	Community Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs)	
GALOP	London Community Safety Partnership (LCSP)	Independent Custody Visitors Panels (ICV Panels)	
Muslim Council of Britain	Media/press	Resident Associations	
NACRO	<b>Borough specific</b>	Neighbourhood Watch	
Transport for London (TfL)	Race Equality Councils	Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs)	
Association of Police Authorities (APA)	Borough Commanders	London Communities Police Partnership (LCP2)	
Home Office	Borough police officers with a partnership focus	London Voluntary Services Council	
London Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)	Council Community Safety leads	Borough community and voluntary services voluntary groups	
London Councils	Community Safety Units		
British Transport Police (BTP)	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships		
British Transport Police Authority (BTPA)	Youth Offending Teams		