

“THE MPA AND MPS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENT 2010 – 2013”**OPENING STATEMENT - MPS ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, IAN MCPHERSON AND MPA CHAIR, KIT MALTHOUSE**

Effective community engagement is fundamental to how we police London. The MPA and MPS recognise that it is only through genuine and meaningful engagement with communities that we are able to listen to, understand and deal with the crime, safety and anti-social behaviour issues that affect Londoners. Effective community engagement will also help to improve the trust and confidence of all communities in their police service.

We are committed to getting Londoners involved in and giving them a say in how they are policed. Community Engagement is the key to successful problem solving and ensures that the police are focusing on the things that matter most to Londoners.

This “*MPA and MPS Community Engagement Commitment*” builds on the MPS Policing Pledge and plans outlined in the MPA’s three year strategy, MET Forward. It lets Londoners know what they can expect of the MPA and MPS in regards to community engagement and it lists a number of principles explaining how we will improve and develop our community engagement work.

WHY ARE WE MAKING THIS COMMITMENT TO LONDONERS?

As part of our work for a safer London, the “MPA and MPS Community Engagement Commitment” is ‘to provide accessible, multiple opportunities for Londoners to engage with the MPA and MPS in shaping policing policy and practice.’

In this document we explain how Community Engagement commitment will improve how we listen to and respond to the needs of Londoners.

Good engagement with the public is key to providing a policing service that Londoners trust and have confidence in. By effectively engaging with all the communities we serve the MPA and MPS will understand the crime, safety and anti-social behaviour issues that matter to the people that live, work and visit London.

Community engagement will assist us to:

- Strengthen community and police relations and thereby increase the public’s trust and confidence in us
- Identify local problems and effectively prioritise these problems
- Reduce fear of crime and increase feelings of safety
- Encourage greater community involvement in local problem solving
- Increase the quality and quantity of information we receive from Londoners
- Explain why decisions have been made or why particular actions have been taken by the police
- Be more accountable to Londoners
- Manage Londoner’s expectations of what can and cannot be done by the police

Good engagement requires an ongoing relationship between Londoners and the police. We know that when people think of policing in their neighbourhood they do not differentiate Safer Neighbourhood officers from those responding to 999 calls or investigating crime. Therefore the MPS needs to ensure that community engagement is a core responsibility of all MPS units, so that they understand what the communities they serve need and expect of them.

The MPA has two community engagement responsibilities. It is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the community engagement carried out by the MPS. The MPA must also ensure that communities have a say in the police priority setting processes and a say in how policing is delivered in their neighbourhoods.

Throughout this document we use the term ‘community engagement’ to encompass a wide range of interactions that include:

- Consultation processes such as meetings, focus groups or surveys to raise issues, solve problems and inform decision-making, including the setting of policing priorities
- Informing the public

- Participation in police projects that include youth involvement programmes, such as the Volunteer Police Cadets
- Community involvement in monitoring decision making and priority setting, for example, the MPA Independent Custody Visitors Scheme.

In this Commitment we use the term 'Londoner' to refer to the people that live, work and visit London.

LONDON IS CHANGING AND WE NEED TO CHANGE TOO

As London and the needs and expectations of Londoners changes, it is important that our approach to community engagement continues to develop. Over the past five years we have transformed our approach to community engagement through the introduction of Safer Neighbourhood Teams in all 630 wards in London. However we need to ensure our approaches to community engagement remain relevant. In developing and building on our community engagement work we will continue to ensure that it is occurring in locations, times and ways that are convenient and useful for Londoners.

Whilst the MPA and MPS "*Community Engagement Commitment*" is relevant to everyone who lives, works in or visits London, not everyone wants to participate in police consultation and engagement activities. This document is designed to allow all Londoners to be involved in community engagement as the level of their choosing. Some will only want to be kept informed of their local police's priorities; others may want to get involved in consultation activities, such as borough or ward surveys; and some may want to become actively engaged by joining, where possible, their local Safer Neighbourhoods Panel or their borough Community Police Engagement Group (CPEG).

Although many of our engagement activities take place at a borough or ward level, Londoners do not always think in terms of these geographical boundaries. Their policing concerns may be linked to their interest groups (for example, in relation to environmental issues), their communities or their faith groups and our community engagement work must take this into account.

We know that each and every contact between a member of the public and a police officer has an impact. Every encounter influences the public's opinion of the police service as a whole. We also know that the public's perceptions of the police are informed by this day to day contact and are not solely influenced by formal MPA and MPS community engagement activities. Therefore we will ensure that all our contact with communities and individuals is consistent, useful and relevant to their needs.

We recognise that we often engage with the same people time and time again. To address this we need to ensure we have up to date information about all the various communities that make up every London borough. We also recognise that often the people that take part in our community engagement work are not always the ones with the greatest needs. We know that some Londoners are more likely to be listened to than others and that we are not reaching all Londoners, for example young people, new and emerging communities, refugees and asylum seekers, those suffering from mental health issues and some disabled

people. Finally we recognise that some of our traditional methods of engagement such as public meetings and formal groups do not always attract a wide range of Londoners. Therefore, in planning our community engagement work we will explore new, creative and cost effective ways of involving and engaging people across the communities that make up our city.

We know that providing information to Londoners on what we are doing and why we are doing it increases public confidence in the police. Therefore communicating with Londoners, using a variety of methods and different media is key to building public confidence and is an important part of the community engagement process.

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THE MPA AND MPS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENT

The MPA and MPS Community Engagement Commitment is *'to provide accessible, multiple opportunities for Londoners to engage with the MPA and MPS in shaping policing policy and practice.'*

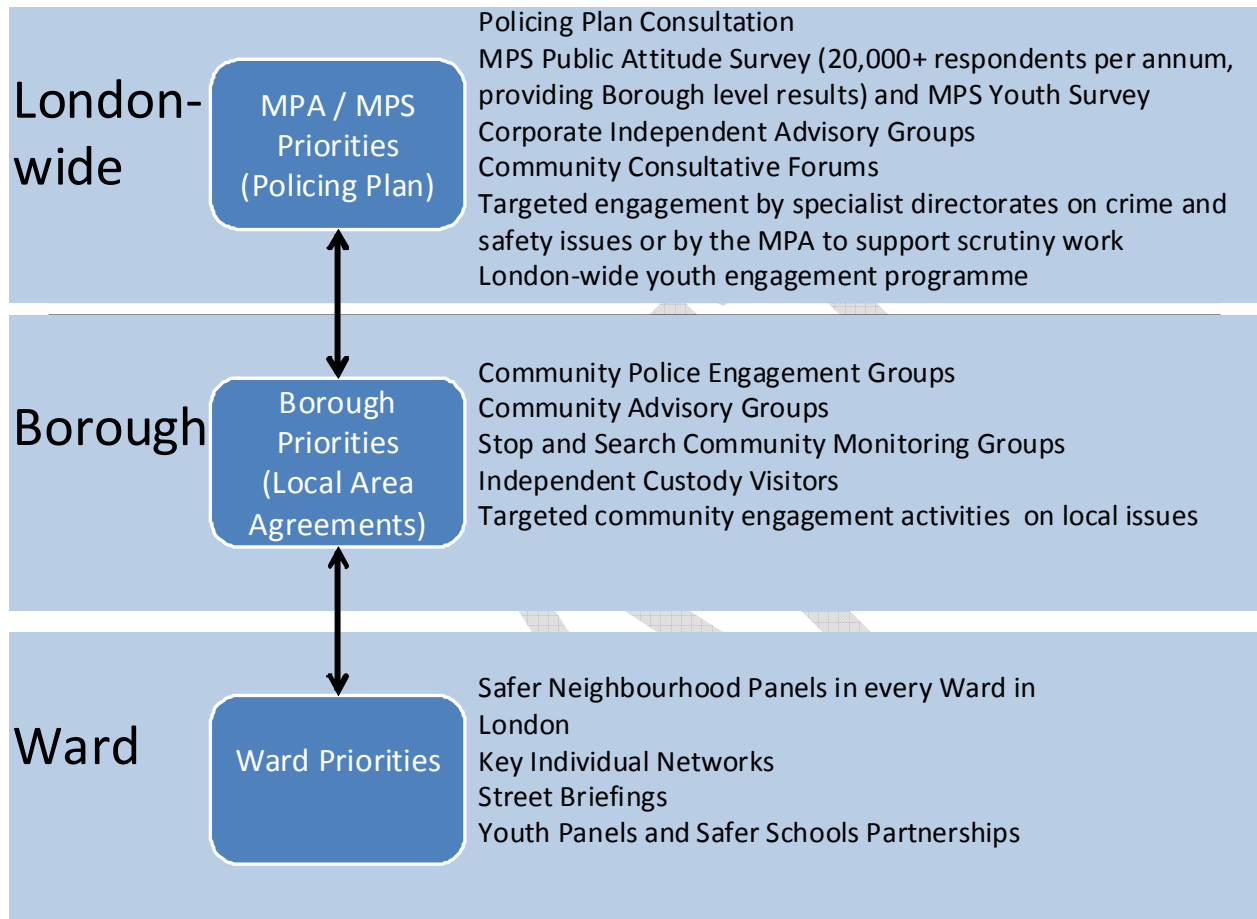
This Commitment to London's communities is based on the following key principles:

Our Principles

- 1. Information:** We will provide Londoners with clear information on how they can get involved in policing, engagement and problem solving opportunities.
- 2. Inclusion:** We will ensure that our engagement activity involves a wide range of Londoners (in terms of age, race, sexual orientation, gender (including transgender), disability and faith). We will improve participation of groups who have not traditionally taken part in MPA and MPA community engagement activities.
- 3. Preparation:** We will ensure Londoners who participate in our formal community engagement processes (for example Safer Neighbourhoods Panels or CPEGs) are supported to allow them to perform their role effectively.
- 4. Integration:** We will plan and coordinate our engagement work both internally within the MPA and MPS and, where appropriate, with Local Authority partners to prevent duplication, reduce costs and share results. We will equip our staff and ensure good practice is shared with partners and across the MPA and MPS.
- 5. Involve:** We will ensure that we have effective community engagement mechanisms in place that allow Londoners to raise the issues and concerns that affect them, their communities or their areas and contribute to the setting of policing priorities at Ward, Borough and pan-London levels. We will also engage with communities at the earliest and most appropriate stages to inform decision making.
- 6. Feedback:** We will provide timely feed back to those who have been involved in consultation and engagement activities on the decisions that have been taken. We will communicate widely the results from engagement activity and how these have informed policing activities and policies.

HOW DO WE ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITIES?

The MPA and MPS use a number of different ways to engage and involve individuals, groups and communities. These community engagement methods take place at a neighbourhood level, within boroughs, across borough boundaries and across the whole of London. These activities include:



HOW WE WILL WORK DIFFERENTLY

We consulted widely with Londoners as part of the development of this strategy and have developed our approach based on what we were told. Having listened to Londoners we must now demonstrate how we will work differently. Below we outline the work that both the MPA and MPS need to do collaboratively, specific actions for the MPA and specific actions for the MPS:

How both the MPA and MPS will work differently

The MPA and MPS will:

- Identify MPA and MPS Community Engagement champions who will ensure the actions arising from the “*Community Engagement Commitment*” are delivered by the organisations;
- Ensure that when Londoners take part in MPA and MPS consultation and engagement activities they are told why the activity is taking place;
- Use a variety of methods and media to provide feedback on what has been achieved as a result of Londoners involvement in consultation and engagement activities;
- Provide information on the MPA and MPS websites and via other communication mechanisms about the roles of the MPA and MPS community engagement groups such as the Community Police Engagement Groups and Safer Neighbourhoods Panels and how these support the work of the MPA and MPS;
- Ensure MPA and MPS community engagement groups liaise with and work together where relevant in order to avoid duplication and provide a consistent response across boroughs;
- Assess and review the work of MPA and MPS community engagement groups to ensure there is no duplication of efforts;
- Work towards ensuring all MPA and MPS community engagement groups can support where possible the work of partners, such as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. We need to make sure that their expertise is used and reflected in the development of borough based crime and disorder reduction partnership plans;
- Make a commitment to only consult and engage with Londoners when there is an opportunity for Londoners to raise issues, influence and change decisions and services;
- Work together to collate consultation and engagement examples of promising and/or good practice and ensure that this information is disseminated and used within the MPA and MPS;
- Involve a wide range of Londoners in terms of age, race, sexual orientation, gender (including transgender), disability and faith in all its consultation and engagement activities, including Safer Neighbourhood panels, MPS Youth Panels, Independent Advisory Groups and Key Individual Networks;
- Carry out a rolling reviews of our activity to make sure we build on best practice and continue to develop efficient and effective community engagement methods;
- Coordinate all MPA and MPS consultation and engagement locally as effective partnership working is crucial for community engagement;

- Encourage involvement by using consultation and engagement methods that are convenient for Londoners, including new media where possible and relevant.

How the MPA will work differently:

The MPA will:

- Ensure information on upcoming public meetings and minutes from Community Police Engagement Groups meetings are made available on the MPA website and via other communication mechanisms used by the MPA;
- Look at the support and training needs of MPA funded groups and explore how good and promising practice from effective groups can be used to improve all groups;
- Ensure that MPA Members in their link members role are proactively communicating with and consulting with Londoners about policing in their boroughs;
- Use a range of communication methods to ensure Londoners are more aware of the role of the MPA not only in terms of its monitoring role but also in regards to its consultation and engagement work.

How the MPS will work differently:

The MPS will:

- Improve its understanding of all of London's communities and use this information to improve consultation and engagement work;
- Ensure information from Safer Neighbourhoods Panel meetings is shared with the wider communities they represent;
- Ensure information on local policing priorities is shared between MPS supported groups (Safer Neighbourhoods Panels, MPS Youth Panels and corporate and borough based Independent Advisory Groups) and MPA supported groups (such as the Community Police Engagement Groups) in order that there is a borough wide understanding of local policing concerns and activities taking place to address these;
- Ensure there is clarity over the role of corporate and local Independent Advisory Group and the contribution that these groups can make;
- Ensure corporate consultation and engagement activities are coordinated centrally to avoid a duplication of consultation and engagement activities;
- Ensure that police intelligence and information held by individual Safer Neighbourhoods teams is shared with other Safer Neighbourhoods teams and local police teams in each borough and across boroughs;
- Provide relevant information to Londoners on policing powers/methods when planning consultation and engagement activities;
- Ensure that MPS communication materials have information on topical concerns, for example, policing powers in regards to public protests.

HOW WILL KNOW THAT WE HAVE MET OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENT?

This “*Community Engagement Commitment*” outlines how we want to improve our community engagement work. How this will be done is can be found in two action plans which are available at www.mpa.gov.uk

The action plans outline how each of the issues listed in the commitment will be taken forward by the MPA and MPS. A joint MPA/MPS Community Engagement Board will meet on a six monthly basis to monitor progress and the delivery of these action plans. The MPA has a responsibility to consult and engage with Londoners and scrutinise the consultation and engagement work of the MPS. Therefore action plans will be monitored by the MPA Communities Equalities and People Committee.

We will know that this commitment has made a difference, when:

- A wider range of Londoners take part in MPA and MPS community engagement activities;
- A wider range of Londoners take part in local problem solving;
- Local community engagement groups, such as Safer Neighbourhoods Panels and Community Police Engagement Groups are working together and sharing information;
- MPA and MPS community engagement groups are more representative of the communities they represent;
- The MPA and MPS where possible work with partners on local and London wide community engagement activities;
- Londoners are more likely to consider that the police are listening to, understand and are dealing with the issues affecting their communities;
- The MPA and MPS are able to consistently demonstrate how consultation and engagement has contributed to and made a difference to policing; and finally,
- Londoners say so when we ask them.

USEFUL LINKS

- For more information on **Met Cadets** please visit, http://www.met.police.uk/cadets/news_stories.html
- For more information on **Kickz** please visit, <http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk/our-schemes/kickz/>
- For more information on the **MPS Policing Pledge** please visit, www.met.police.uk.
- For more information on **MET Forward** please visit, www.mpa.gov.uk.
- To find out how you can get involved in the work of the MPA funded **community police engagement groups** please visit, <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships/cpeg/>
- To find out how you can get involved in the work of your local **Safer Neighbourhoods Panel** please visit, <http://www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods/involved.htm>
- To find out how you can become an **Independent Visitor** please visit <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships/icv/>
- To learn more about the work of the **Specialist Crime Directorates** please visit, <http://www.met.police.uk/scd/index.htm>
- To learn more about the role of **MPA Members** please visit, <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/about/people/>
- To learn more about the work of the **MPA** please visit <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/about/>
- To find out more about crime in your area please visit <http://maps.met.police.uk/>
- To find out more about the annual **MPA and MPS policing business plan** process <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/publications/policingplans/>