



Metropolitan Police Authority

**DRUGS SCRUTINY
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

(2nd draft)

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INTRODUCTION

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) was established six years ago as an independent body to manage and monitor the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). It is a statutory body made up of twenty-three members, twelve of whom are drawn from the London Assembly, part of the Greater London Authority (GLA). Of the remainder, seven are independently appointed and four are magistrate members. The MPA is responsible for ensuring an effective and efficient police service for the people of London. Since it has been established the MPA has undertaken a number of scrutinies into areas of concern or poor performance, including rape, mental health and stop and search.

The MPA agreed to undertake an in-depth scrutiny of the MPS approach to policing drugs at its meeting on 30th March 2006.

BACKGROUND

Reducing drug crime has been an MPA target for a number of years, but it is an area that has had little scrutiny by the MPA. The MPS has in the past, developed a drug prevention strategy, but it is not clear to what extent this has been implemented. We know that there are initiatives aimed at reducing drug-related crime being delivered across the organisation, but many of these appear to happen in isolation. The report presented to Planning Performance and Review Committee (PPRC) in December 2005 and the subsequent discussion, indicated that there was a lack of internal co-ordination in the approach to addressing drug-related crime and that the strategic approach taken by the organisation is not as well developed as it could be.

The MPS has identified combating organised criminal networks (OCNs) as a corporate priority for 2006/07, and a number of OCNs are involved in drugs. There are challenges in relation to setting targets in relation to drugs, particularly given the pressure to achieve reductions in volume crime. However, drug crime is significant at all crime levels (1-3) and has a significant impact on users, families, victims and communities.

In the report submitted to the MPA Planning Performance and Review Committee (PPRC) in December 2005 the MPS indicated that, “ **Many addicts and other problem drug users (PDUs) rely heavily on money generated by property crime to finance their addiction and use, theft, burglary, selling stolen goods, benefit and other forms of fraud, and ‘low-level’ drug trafficking, form the mainstay of their criminal activities**”.

A further indication of the extent of the drug problem was highlighted in an MPS report submitted to Planning Performance and Review Committee (PPRC) in May 2006. The

report indicated that, "Fourteen people had been sentenced to over 178 years' imprisonment after police smashed a major international crack cocaine and money laundering operation." The report went on to say these gangs were believed to have imported some £48m of cocaine into Britain. They were able to do this through the use of women couriers, often single mothers and drug addicts to act as mules. This highlights the international nature of the drugs problem but also the links that drugs have to other criminal activity.

The police are increasingly having to respond to emerging trends such as the chemical manufacture of drugs including. The MPS estimate that there are between 700 and 800 drugs factories in London. The emergence of Methyl amphetamine is of particular concern as highlighted by a recent report commissioned by the Association of Chief Police Officers, (ACPO), "A Police Study into Managing the Emergence of Methyl amphetamine within England and Wales" which highlights the significance nationally. The report stressed the need to reclassify this drug to a Class A drug (as did happen in June 2006) it also discusses what should be done in order to tackle the problem.

In a recent BBC survey published May 22nd 2006 "**Three-quarters of people in the UK say drugs are a problem in their area**", more than half of the 1,190 people surveyed also said they thought the police were not doing enough to combat the drugs problem. The BBC's survey suggested there were big regional variations in drug use, with 26% in the South East saying they had taken an illegal drug compared with just 6% in Northern Ireland. This data was further validated by the findings of the Drugscope survey 2005.

There are limited specific performance targets or indicators for the MPS in relation to drugs. The MPS policing plan's "Critical 13 performance indicators don't directly refer to drugs. The Police Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) includes one statutory performance (SPI) on public perception of local drug use. There is one Public Service Agreement (PSA) target regarding to drugs.

The links between poverty, deprivation and drug use are well established. Specialist Crime Directorate (SCD) strategic analysts are able to indicate that inner London boroughs contain greater numbers of users than outer London. Outer London boroughs have higher concentrations of drug users in their most deprived wards.

The need for effective prevention and treatment is also a key issue the Home Office whose DIP website indicates that "for every £1 spent on treatment, £9 is saved in the criminal justice system and other social costs."

The drug intervention programme (DIP) and the Drug Action Teams (DATs) are Home Office lead methods for tackling drug addiction and misuse. Drug action teams are partnerships combining representatives from local authorities (education, social services, housing) health, probation, the prison service and the voluntary sector. DATs take strategic decisions on expenditure and service delivery within four aims of the National Drugs Strategy; treatment, young people, communities and supply.

MPS

action

Within the MPS the following units are responsible for addressing drug crime:

- Drugs Directorate (SCD)

- Middle market Drugs Project (SCD)
- Central Task Force (SCD)
- Controlled Delivery Unit (scd)
- Territorial Policing via Borough Operational Command Units

The middle market drugs project is jointly staffed by officers from MPS and SOCA and has had some success around tackling Class A drugs. The Drugs Directorate within SCD was established in 1998 to focus on tackling drug misuse and drug-related crime. The MPS used to have a Drugs Focus Desk in SCD10 (4), which concentrated on studying drugs as a commodity. Their role included identifying trends and threats but this was disbanded when SCD amended its strategy to identify criminal networks, rather than the commodities they work in. The MPS are currently drafting a drugs strategic assessment, due in October 2006.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SCRUTINY

The objectives of the scrutiny are to:

- Ensure the MPS has a consistent and coherent strategic approach to combating drugs by undertaking an assessment of the current MPS position with regard to developing and implementing a drugs strategy, including the extent to which it brings together the different levels of drug-related crime This will include:
 - Clarifying the scale of the problem by looking at drug crime from level 1 including drug taking in communities and crack houses, level 2, including the middle market in relation to supply and distribution and level 3 including how MPS links to other organisations to tackle organised criminal networks.
 - Identifying the various approaches such as tackling the culprit rather than the commodity to assess the most effective approach in dealing with drug related criminal activity.
 - Identifying any gaps in the current approach to policing drugs that need to be addressed
 - Understanding the impact drugs have on Londoners and how the MPS can tackle this through policing
 - Understanding the role and function of the MPA, MPA link members and the MPS in delivering an effective MPS strategy to tackling drugs and drug related crime
- Ensuring that the response of the directorates within the MPS to emerging intelligence and performance trends is appropriate. We will do this by:
 - Considering the types of performance targets and measures that would assist and drive the MPS to tackle drug related crime particularly in relation to use and supply.
 - Identifying examples of good practice and practical examples of how the approach taken by police can be improved, including understanding the

- impact that intervention has on people's lives (users, victims, communities)
 - Identifying the intelligence requirements and capabilities within the MPS (and other agencies), and understanding how these are used in the fight against drugs
 - Reviewing the use of forensics in reducing drug crime and understanding key challenges facing the MPS.
- Ensuring that the MPS relationship with other agencies (e.g. SOCA) that are active in this area are robust and that there is clarity in the roles and responsibilities of those agencies. We will do this by
 - Identifying the partnership arrangements in place between the MPA, MPS and statutory partners to reduce demand and prevent drug related crime.
 - Establishing the role and function of CDRPs in tackling drug related crime in the local community
 - Clarifying the link between MPS and education services to undertake preventative work in relation to drugs
 - Identifying the role and impact of the criminal justice system and probation in tackling drug related crime including treatment and support programmes that are available such as, drug intervention programmes, drug treatment and testing orders.

Equality and diversity implications will be assessed as an integral part of the review and key areas of disproportionality such as fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for cannabis possession will be investigated.

Key exclusions

Any review of drugs is potentially extremely wide ranging. There is a considerable body of work undertaken by statutory and voluntary organisations in relation to drugs and related addiction issues, which will provide background and context for this review. We propose to exclude the following areas:

- There is evidence to suggest a link between drug use amongst some women and prostitution however this issue has been covered by the recent London Assembly report 'Street Prostitution in London 2005'.
- There are links between drug and alcohol misuse. However there has been substantial work undertaken by the Greater London Alcohol and Drug Alliance (GLADA) in relation to alcohol. The work by GLADA does provide opportunities for more effective partnership and preventative work.
- Drug addiction and the impact it has on families, including babies born with addictions to drugs, is an issue, but it does not come within the remit of the MPS. There is substantial work in this area undertaken by FRANK the Home Office website geared towards drug treatment.
- Whilst many prescribed drugs can have addictive qualities, unless these drugs are involved in illegal sale or trafficking they do not come within the remit of MPS and therefore this review.

- Access to and the use of illegal drugs within prisons. This issue comes within the remit of HM Prison Service.

Although the review may provide the MPA with an opportunity to support and lobby for changes to improve or amend legislation in relation to drugs all the recommendations and any action plan will need to have a identified lead as well as an agreed timeframe for completion within the cost implications identified in the final report of this review.

Key

interfaces

The review will need to understand work currently underway in tackling drugs including ongoing work in central government and agencies such as Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Home Office, London Probation, the Crown Prosecution Service, HM Court Services and voluntary organisations such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation,.

APPROACH

The approach will follow elements of best practice as developed in previous MPA scrutinies in relation to consultation and gathering statements from witnesses. The scrutiny will include elements of the select committee process with the option of inviting witnesses from external organisations to set out their perspective. It is anticipated that the resources to carry out the review will be provided primarily by the MPA, with assistance from the MPS. Richard Sumray will chair the review; Rachel Whittaker, Richard Barnes, Joanne McCartney Elizabeth Howlett, John Roberts and Aneeta Prem will sit on the panel.

The review will use a mix of research, written consultation and statement gathering from witnesses. Other methods, including commissioning academic research may be used if considered appropriate by the panel, although there will be a cost attached to this. . We will engage with people with direct experience e.g. users, families, communities affected by drug activity.

The handling of media relations will be carried out by the MPA communications unit, but we will ensure links are maintained with the MPS directorate of public affairs. A communications strategy has been prepared to support this terms of reference and will be used to link into the project plan for this review.

Panel meetings and statement gathering

Statements will be gathered from witnesses following research and written consultation and will be used to explore key issues in depth. This exercise will be carried out within ODPM guidelines. Witnesses attending statement gathering sessions will be provided with information about the format of the meeting in advance, and a summary of their evidence following the meeting.

PLAN

An outline project plan for the review is attached at Appendix 1.

Deliverables

The review will deliver a written report setting out:

- What was reviewed and why;
- How the review was undertaken (including witness list);
- Findings;
- Conclusions;
- Options (where applicable);
- Recommendations for the MPS, and/or others with rationale;
- Next steps.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

Costs

The cost of the review, in terms of MPA officer support, approximates to around one half of a full-time equivalent for one year (£17,000). In line with practice developed in scrutinies it is proposed to offer reasonable travel expenses to witnesses. Other funding requests will be presented to the chairs of the panel for approval prior to formally requesting funding from the relevant bodies. There will be publishing costs associated with the scrutiny, these are likely to be less than £2000.

Benefits

It is envisaged that the review will directly influence MPS and other stakeholder policies and procedures in dealing with people involved in drugs. The review will map the overlaps between the different agencies involved for the first time and will put an action plan in place to improve processes and develop and revise protocols. The review should also highlight other areas where change, although beyond the direct control of the organisations involved in the review, should be made to secure improvement.

APPENDIX 1: Scrutiny plan

Ref	Activity / product	Deadline
1	a. Principle of review agreed by Full Authority	March 2006
2	a. Basic fact-finding via research and initial meetings	July – Sept 2006
	b. Prepare draft terms of reference (ToR) and plan	17 July
	c. First full scrutiny panel meeting approves ToR	17 July
	d. Continued desktop research	July to end Oct
3	a. COP Committee endorses ToR and plan on behalf of MPA	September
	b. Publicise formal start of scrutiny	September
	c. Preparation and completion of written consultation and collation of responses	End October
4	a. Prepare questions for witnesses	September
	b. Prepare briefing material for witnesses	September
	c. Arrange statement sessions and/or other scrutiny methods	September
	d. Invite witnesses; provide briefing and questions	September
	e. Advertise hearings and agree public / press observation	September
5	a. Hold statement sessions and/or other scrutiny activity.	October-
	b. Summarise evidence and report back.	November
6	a. Prepare draft report and recommendations.	November
	b. Panel approves draft report and recommendations.	December
	c. Draft report / recommendations circulated for feedback	December
7	a. Feedback from MPS and key partners.	January 2007
8	a. Propose amendments to draft based on feedback.	End January 2007
	b. Panel approves final report and recommendations	
9	a. COP Committee endorses report / requests action plan.	February 2007
	b. Final report / recommendations published formally.	