

DRAFT Annual Report 2003/04

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Foreword

The Metropolitan Police Service has undergone many changes in the past 175 years and during this year it reached another milestone. In January, the number of police officers employed by the Met reached 30,000 – the most officers ever in its long and distinguished history.

This was not only a landmark for the Met, but a significant achievement on behalf of Londoners, many of whom made it very clear to me personally as I visited each borough that they wanted to see a major increase in visible policing on our streets.

Since the MPA's inauguration in July 2000, we have worked tirelessly, together with the Mayor and the Commissioner, to make the case for additional police officers to help reduce crime and the fear of crime, and make our streets safer.

Coupled with our drive to recruit more officers was the continued extension of the policing family and the enrolment of Police Community Support Officers, whose numbers exceeded 1000 by the end of March. We are particularly pleased that people from visible ethnic minorities have become PCSOs in large numbers, making their ranks much more representative of the communities they serve. We hope to learn valuable lessons that will help the Met become a much more diverse organisation as a whole. But there is much that needs to be done if we are to come even close to meeting the target of 25% of police officers coming from visible ethnic minorities by 2009, to reflect the makeup of the wider population of London.

And this task has been made doubly difficult since some high profile disciplinary cases involving black and Asian Met officers caused resentment both inside and outside the service. We expressed our concerns about the perceptions held of racial discrimination and unfairness in the way some of the Met's internal investigations were conducted. We also had questions about the scale of investigations against police in general, believing them sometimes to be out of proportion with the gravity of the matters complained of.

These misgivings led us to set up the independent and far-reaching inquiry into the handling of internal investigations and grievances within the Metropolitan Police Service under the chairmanship of the highly respected retired union leader Sir Bill Morris.

The Authority strongly supports the Commissioner's philosophy that integrity is non-negotiable in the police service, and his determination to tackle corruption and impropriety by police officers wherever and whenever it occurs. But it was also essential to address these present concerns through a credible and transparent process to prevent irrevocable damage to the Metropolitan Police Service's reputation, especially among London's minority ethnic communities. The Morris Inquiry is due to publish its report in the second half of 2004.

The reputation of our police service in general was damaged following an undercover investigation by the BBC into a police recruit training school in xxxx??. *The Secret Policeman* uncovered a culture of racism at the centre among new recruits that begged belief and brought swift condemnation and a number of resignations. The vast majority of our police officers do an outstanding and highly commendable job day-in-and-day out, but these revelations concerning a small and twisted segment of officers needs to be addressed and racism rooted out of the police service. The MPA will continue to work hard to ensure that our police service in London is truly representative, open and equitable and that discrimination in all its forms is stamped out whenever and wherever it occurs.

One way to encourage greater community support of police work in all areas is to strengthen our capacity to consult with Londoners. The MPA now has a statutory role in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships with an MPA link member, supported by a new partnerships team, actively involved in each borough.

By attending CDRP meetings, the MPA is in a position to be more alert and responsive to local policing issues and to promote a wider ownership of crime reduction objectives. Among the benefits is the greater pooling of resources from all partners towards the MPA and the Met's objective of making London safer.

Undoubtedly there has been steady progress in this direction since the increase in police and PCSO numbers. But the increase in numbers in isolation is not enough. How those extra officers make a difference for Londoners is more important. A key priority for the MPA has been how police relate to the people they serve, the reason why we introduced police name badges on uniforms. Police growth needs to be linked with appropriate policing style and effective deployment. A well-trained police service must have credibility with all the communities it serves. That is why we set deliberately tough and testing targets for the Met to achieve, particularly in driving down crime.

As a direct result of these targets, together with the increase in police numbers, effective partnerships, and the unstinting effort put in by police officers across London, there was a big improvement to London's crime figures.

By the end of the year there were reductions in street and commercial robberies, Trident-related murders, gun-related violent crime and auto crime, and the number of burglaries fell to a 29-year low. This was great news for all those people who live, work and visit London.

The Met is one of the largest and most complex organisations in the country. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, in its report on the Met in 2003, warned that demands facing the police are likely to continue to rise and outstrip any additional resource provision. Demand therefore has to be effectively managed and competing priorities balanced.

The MPA is committed to continue working with the Met, all of our partners and all of our diverse and hard to hear communities to ensure that we not only make London safer but also deliver an efficient, effective and fair police service fit for the 21st century. London changes and develops continually and our police service must be able to react flexibly and responsively to Londoners' needs.

Finally, it is important that all of us work together with a sense of urgency and determination to ensure the reforms and changes in policing and the wider criminal justice system are delivered as promised as quickly as possible. Only in this way will we improve public satisfaction, decrease fear of crime and maintain and increase the credibility and respect for our police service.

Toby Harris
Chair, Metropolitan Police Authority

Performance Monitoring

The Metropolitan Police Authority has a duty to consider and monitor Metropolitan Police Service performance against the Policing Plan targets and any performance indicators set locally or by external organisations.

In doing so, the MPA considers performance at both a corporate and borough level in order to identify best practice. It also advises on the setting of relevant performance indicators and targets in annual plans and corporate strategies, looks at areas of performance in need of improvement and identifies any other information needed to monitor performance.

The Authority set eight priorities for the MPS this year, each supported by a number of specific objectives, measures and targets. These priorities included objectives designed to reduce crime and improve safety for Londoners, as well as a number aimed at internal excellence.

The Authority continued to encourage boroughs to set their own targets based on issues of concern to local people. This approach will contribute to reducing crime across London and, at the same time, strengthen local crime and disorder reduction partnerships.

Increased visibility and accountability for police services is a thread which ran through many of the priorities and objectives this year and the Authority was keen to develop the Commissioner's vision for a more community focused approach.

PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

PRIORITIES FOR LONDONERS

IN PARTNERSHIP, TO PROMOTE SAFER COMMUNITIES FOR LONDONERS

Objectives

- To increase visible police presence
- To reduce the incidence of street crime
- To reduce the incidence of burglary
- To reduce the incidence of autocrime
- To improve the investigation and prevention of murder offences
- To disrupt the trafficking of humans, class A drugs and firearms
- To disrupt the criminal use of firearms
- To reduce the number of road casualties

SECURING THE CAPITAL AGAINST TERRORISM

Objectives

- To prevent and disrupt terrorist activity

- To maintain an effective response to suspected and actual terrorist incidents

TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF SERVICE TO VULNERABLE VICTIM GROUPS

Objectives

- To improve victim care and investigation in cases of rape
- To improve victim care and investigation in cases of domestic violence
- To improve victim care and investigation in cases of hate crime
- To improve the protection and safety of children, including victim care, investigation and partnership working

IN PARTNERSHIP, TO REVITALISE THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Objectives

- To bring more offences to justice
- To improve the service to victims and witnesses

PRIORITIES FOR EXCELLENCE

TO EXPAND OUR APPROACH TO INCLUDE ALL ASPECTS OF DIVERSITY

Objectives

- To achieve an increased representation of the diverse groups of London within the extended police family of the MPS
- To enhance community reassurance programmes to vulnerable communities

TO MANAGE THE DEMANDS ON THE MPS MORE EFFECTIVELY

Objectives

- To improve accessibility through enabling the public to obtain the service they need
- To improve the quality of response to public requests for assistance

TO MAKE BEST USE OF OUR STAFF AND RESOURCES

Objectives

- To develop a professional and effective workforce with the appropriate numbers and skills to deliver the priorities of the MPS
- To establish a strategy to manage all issues relating to the increased numbers of police staff
- To extend the programme of devolution of resources thereby enabling local managers to improve service delivery
- To maximise MPS resources and their most effective use
- To protect and enhance the integrity of the MPS
- To communicate more effectively with our staff

TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC ANALYTICAL CAPABILITY IN THE MPS

Objective

- To implement the National Intelligence Model in accordance with the National Policing Plan

Performance against policing plan targets

Twenty-five targets in the 2003/4 Policing and Performance Plan were met. Thirteen targets were not met.

All crime

The MPS recorded 1.06 million offences in 2003/4, which is 1.8% lower than last year. This represents 20k fewer offences, although no policing plan reduction target was set for total crime in 2003/4.

Burglary

The 4% reduction target was comfortably exceeded by 3.1%, meaning that overall, burglary offences were down by 7.1%, or 8k fewer offences compared with last year. Reductions were seen in both residential (-5.9%) and non-residential burglary (-9.3%). The overall burglary total now stands at its lowest level since 1976.

Autocrime

Autocrime offences were reduced by 7.1%, just exceeding the target of 7%. There were 17.2 thousand fewer offences year on year.

Street crime

It is disappointing to note that the 10% street crime reduction target was not met, despite sustained effort over the performance year. There was a 4.2% reduction (2.5 thousand fewer offences). The MPS fell 3.4 thousand offences short of the target.

Homicide

The homicide clear-up rate for the year stands at 97%, exceeding the target (83%) and last year's performance (81%). This is based on 205 homicides being cleared up against a total of 211 homicides.

Recruitment & diversity issues

15.3% of all recruits in 2003/4 were from visible ethnic minorities (VEM), against a target of 15%. The 2002/3 figure was 10.7%.

6.5% of police strength now comprise VEM officers. This is just below the target (6.6%), but a one percentage point improvement on last year.

The VEM PCSO recruitment target was significantly exceeded – 34.6% against a target of 25%. The overall percentage of VEM PCSOs has increased to 34.8% of PCSO strength. The target was also 25%.

In an attempt to raise the number of VEM police staff a 21% target was set. The MPS has achieved 19.7% this year, half a percentage point increase on last year.

29.3% of new appointments to the police strength were female, a nine percentage point increase on last year and four percentage points above this year's target. 18.2% of the police strength is now made up of female officers, improving on last year's performance and exceeding the target for this year.

The MPS exceeded both the recruitment target and strength target for female PCSOs.

Sickness levels

Targets for the number of working days lost to sickness have been met for police officers and traffic wardens, but not met for police staff and PCSOs.

Recruitment

The target for police officer recruitment was exceeded by 122 officers. 3,362 officers have been recruited this year and the current strength stands at 30,265 officers, 409 more than the target. This year has also seen a reduction in the officers voluntarily leaving within five years and a reduction in police staff turnover.

Planning Performance and Review

The MPA's Planning, Performance and Review Committee (PPRC) responsibilities include: monitoring performance against targets; overseeing the development of annual and corporate plans, including the setting of targets; advising the Authority on targets to be set in annual and corporate plans; scrutinising areas of performance; discharging the Authority's responsibilities as a best value authority (including the overseeing of best value or service improvement projects) and monitoring MPS performance in the context of the criminal justice system as a whole.

In-depth performance reports

During the year PPRC received a number of in-depth reports on performance detailing areas such as differences in borough performance, reporting on success of initiatives, new

initiatives planned and factors influencing performance. Subjects considered in performance reports included:

Organised Immigration Crime – A report on the programme to counter organised immigration crime within the capital (Op MAXIM) was presented to PPRC in February 2004. The initial stage of the operation began in March 2003. Within a year the successes included 46 proactive operations resulting in 148 arrests.

Domestic Violence Murders – A review was completed into over 400 cases to identify common aspects of domestic violence murders. Six risk factors were identified: - separation (child contact), pregnancy, escalation, cultural issues and sensitivity, stalking, sexual assault. Findings were distributed to all Chief Officers in England & Wales following the government recognising the MPS approach to murder prevention as good practice.

Child Protection – The implementation of the Laming report has radically changed the approach the MPS takes towards child protection following the death of Victoria Climbié.

PPRC was involved in the consultation process prior to the green paper "Every Child Matters" being produced. The MPA met with the green paper team at the Cabinet Office giving the MPA an opportunity to put its views prior to the paper being drafted. The government has published the Children's Bill 2004 that has strategic, financial and operational implications for the MPS. The bill promotes awareness of the views and interests of children in the UK, and also the sharing of information between agencies using databases containing information about children and young people.

The MPA has continued to promote child protection as a priority for the MPS and to monitor the performance in this area. This includes updates on work highlighted through the Laming report and government papers. With support from the MPA the MPS are, for example, involved in the development of information sharing and assessment (ISA) across London and continue to address the wider issues outlined in the bill. Work is progressing on the implementation of procedures to improve the way cases involving child protection are dealt with.

Group Rape – The MPS has and continue to improve victim care for rape victims and the investigation of rape through Project Sapphire. Analysis in this report shows the overall trend of group rape is downwards, contrasting to the rising level of rape (single offender) offences recorded.

Police in Schools - The Safer Schools Partnership currently has 80 officers placed in schools as School Beat Officers (SBO). The four main roles of the SBO are: - Law, Education, Advisor and Role Model, elements required to ensure a safer school community. The report detailed the work being carried out.

Response Times – The PPRC requested a report on response times. This report identified a decline in the percentage of responses within target and a drop in satisfaction with the response to 999 calls. The MPS is now developing a new grading and deployment policy to improve the accuracy of call grading and make more appropriate deployments.

These in-depth reports supported the PPRC in its task to understand the issues of performance in greater depth and to concentrate MPS management focus on areas of concern and interest to the authority and helps the authority make judgements about future years' targets.

Review and scrutiny

In 2003/04 PPRC initiated and approved a service improvement review of *Operational Support Policing*. This review followed on from the *Managing Demand* review completed in 2002/03 and explored the central units that support boroughs in the delivery of policing services to the public. The review made recommendations around the roles, responsibilities and resources of central units, including the establishment of a central 'gateway' for boroughs to use when accessing services. Other recommendations concerned intelligence sharing and raising awareness of local people about the activities of central units in their areas.

In October 2003 PPRC deferred the completion of the *Staff Deployment* review pending HMIC's thematic inspection of civilianisation and replaced it with a review of *Custody Capacity*. PPRC subsequently approved the Project Initiation Document for this new review, which will be focusing on the future requirement for cells, as well as making recommendations on how existing facilities can be used to best effect.

During the year members monitored the progress of the *Records Management*, *Crime Management* and *Managing Demand* best value reviews through implementation reports as well as receiving the regular 'Criminal Justice Update' covering issues raised in the review of *Bringing Offenders to Justice*.

Members also selected two service improvement reviews to be carried out in 2004/05 – security guarding of premises and security clearance procedures.

PPRC has also monitored the implementation of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership scrutiny and has received reports detailing MPS and MPA progress towards delivering the recommendations. Members have continued to highlight the issue of rape – commissioning a report on group rape and supporting the work of Project Sapphire. A scrutiny of gun crime has also been completed but falls under the remit of Co-ordination and Policing Committee.

Criminal justice

PPRC received an update report on Criminal Justice issues at every meeting. The main performance issues reported on were discontinued cases, discharge committals, cracked and ineffective trials and persistent young offenders (PYOs). Other issues include: -

Justice for London (JfL) model was set up to increase the number of offences brought to justice and to enhance the quality of service given to victims and witnesses. The JfL model comprises of four key elements: -

- Gatekeeper quality assurance supervisor
- Case progression unit

- Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) lawyer at the point of charge, and
- Victim and witness support desk

The work carried out over the year has enabled the MPS to develop significant changes to the current system including rolling out victim & witness support desks, CPS lawyers at point of charge available to all 32-boroughs and in addition, CPS lawyers available during out of normal office hours by telephone for advice to officers. One of the key approaches to criminal justice in London has been to focus on improving case files during an investigation. The Glidewell project, piloted at Holborn, aims to deliver co-located administration units of both MPS and the CPS in order to develop a more efficient case preparation system. The implementation of case progression units and lawyers at point of charge has assisted in achieving a higher standard of case files.

Other areas of progress include the MPS and CPS London setting up a joint performance meeting, which focus on the key accountabilities for both parties on performance and any issues surrounding the MPS and CPS interfacing with each other at an operational level. A shared performance improvement plan is developed as a result of these meetings. All parties taking part deem this meeting a success. The second round of these meetings will be completed by March 2004.

From 20 January 2004 an amendment to PACE empowers officers to release suspects on bail to attend a police station at another time. This helps with the increasing demand on custody suites allowing a more efficient/demand lead system to be run. PPRC will continue to monitor the impact of this initiative.

Challenges for the coming year

The committee will oversee two areas for service improvement reviews that were identified for 2004/2005:

- Security clearance processes have been selected for review as the time taken for security clearances to be completed has been raised as a concern. The review will be used to identify what improvements to these processes could be made without compromising security arrangements.
- Providing security guarding for MPS premises will be reviewed as it represents a significant cost to the MPS. There are also concerns over the service being provided and the scope of the guarding function and alternative ways of delivering this service will be explored.

Snippet:

Toby Harris on the BBC undercover investigation *The Secret Policeman*

"Like the vast majority of hardworking and honest police officers and staff across the country, I was dismayed and sickened by the extreme racist comments and behaviour by a minority of police trainees and probationers as highlighted in the BBC programme. Their behaviour is inexcusable and the MPA condemns it unequivocally.

"The urgent task of the entire policing community now is to address the issues raised and to root out anyone with inherent racist views or any other prejudices. We must work to identify such individuals before they are recruited and before they can damage the hard work of so many to celebrate and embrace diversity as a strength - not a weakness."

Commenting specifically on the Metropolitan Police, Toby Harris continued:

"During the programme one of the officers made a serious allegation that all Metropolitan Police officers are racist. I want to state categorically that this is untrue. The Metropolitan Police Authority has worked assiduously with the Met to ensure that its culture is one that welcomes and promotes diversity. Of course, we haven't reached perfection and we never will.

"But we must not let that stop us from continuing to build an environment where officers and staff from all backgrounds and cultures work in harmony and in support of one another. Any form of prejudice is not and will not be tolerated, whether it is a flippant remark or a deep-seated racist viewpoint."

Consultation

The MPA's Consultation Committee has a number of responsibilities. These include:

- advising the Authority of ways of raising the profile of the MPA and making the community and partner organisations aware of its role and work;
- considering all matters relating to MPA and MPS consultation strategies and to ensuring that such processes engage with and reflect the views of London's diverse communities;
- reviewing the results of consultation undertaken to inform the policing plan; and
- considering all matters relating to Community and Police Consultative Groups and Independent Custody Visiting Panels, including approval of their annual funding.

Some of the major issues considered and reviewed by the committee over the year

included:

Police Reform – Building Safer Communities Together

Strengthening communities' engagement and giving them greater influence over policing is at the heart of the Green Paper 'Policing: Building Safer Communities Together' published by the Home Office in late 2003. The Consultation Committee was particularly reassured that at the national level there is recognition that effective community engagement is central to good practice and good governance of policing.

Before submitting its response to the Green Paper, the MPA mailed a survey questionnaire to over 1000 community groups across London, and, in replacing one of its regular meetings, the Chair of the Consultation Committee took the lead in holding a special Members' workshop, as well as holding two separate Committee discussions on the importance and the implications of the Green Paper to the MPA.

While the national vision for police reform reflect the existing commitments and direction of the MPA, with respect to community engagement two particular aspects were highlighted by the Committee:

- First, the police service must interact with the community in much greater and in wholly new ways, with changes in organisational culture, training and skills, and with police officers rooted in local community bases, not necessarily in traditional police estate;
- Secondly, real and sustained community development and capacity building, especially in Black and minority ethnic and other disadvantaged communities, must be undertaken by the local partners. Policing in cooperation can only become real if the community policed has both the confidence and the capacity to cooperate.

Annual Police Priority Setting

An important component of informing its decision making process is the MPA's statutory duty to 'obtain the views of the public about policing'. This is particularly critical in the annual police priority and planning process.

In complementing the community intelligence gathered by the MPS, particular attention over the last year was paid to obtaining the viewpoints of Londoners from as many different sources as possible. This included drawing on the results of consultation undertaken by other agencies and institutions such as the GLA, ALG, local authorities as well as Community Police Consultative Groups. It also included drawing on the findings of other relevant recent studies and reports. It also included consultation with representatives of the faith communities in partnership with the Haringey Peace Alliance, and in partnership with the London Civic Forum consultation with representatives from Asian Communities, refugee and asylum seekers, disabled communities, women's networks, small businesses, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. A further youth workshop was organised by the Peabody Trust.

An overarching theme emerging from these consultations that the Consultation Committee considered particularly important is the demand for greater local community-police interaction and accountability. Rather than participate in a process of merely identifying discrete areas of criminal activity and putting them in some kind of priority, there was a much more strongly articulated desire for ongoing, direct, active involvement with the police. There should be less prescriptive and fewer corporate 'high level' priorities and much greater emphasis on a more accountable, 'diversified' and 'localised' planning process.

MPA funding to boost community involvement in London policing

The Metropolitan Police Authority decided on new funding for London's community and police consultative groups to help them strengthen their involvement in policing in London.

The MPA approved payments from a 2004/5 total budget for the groups of more than £1 million towards the cost of staff, meetings and special events, such as Richmond's acclaimed annual youth crime conference.

Richard Barnes, MPA Deputy Chair and lead member for community and police consultative groups, said:

"Next year we are determined to raise the standards of all groups to those of the best to reinforce excellence where it exists and spread good practice where performance could be better.

"We have made the bidding and awarding process as fair and open as possible so that everyone understands how we have arrived at the payments."

The MPA has, following wide consultation, come up with new guidelines to ensure minimum standards are met, including the need for the groups to work more closely with local residents so that they can influence police plans and priorities and strengthen community and police relations. The groups also have to demonstrate they are representative of, and accountable to the community they serve.

Richard Barnes added:

"We want these groups to be a powerful local voice and catalyst for community engagement in borough-based policing. We cannot reduce crime and the fear of crime without the active encouragement of and support from the communities we serve. The new funding regime we are looking to implement will go a long way to making the consultative groups key players within the policing family."

CDRPs

The Police Reform Act 2002 made police authorities statutory partners within Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) from April 2003. CDRPs assess and audit local crime and disorder problems and then prepare and manage three-year strategies for addressing these through a multi-agency approach. Each London borough has a CDRP. The new duty therefore gives the MPA a direct role to play in local crime and disorder

reduction in every London borough together with the local authority, police and fire service borough command units and primary care trusts.

The Home Office provides much of the funding for CDRPs. For 2003/04, the MPA provided borough commanders with an additional £50k each to use towards partnership specific work. The funding has been particularly welcomed, especially because of the degree of flexibility with which it was granted. It has enabled locally determined priorities and needs to be supported. For example, many boroughs have been able to take forward projects for raising the awareness of schoolchildren of the crime risks they commonly face and how to deal with these. Other popular uses include the development of facilities, reporting channels and support networks for victims and vulnerable community groups.

The MPA's arrangement of link members has enabled the MPA to be actively involved in each borough. The MPA's representation on CDRPs now extends uniformly through an agreement reached with the Association of London Government by which the MPA will be represented by the link member in every CDRP. By attending the regular CDRP meeting, the MPA is in a position to be more alert and responsive to local policing issues and to promote a wider ownership of crime reduction objectives. Amongst the benefits is the greater pooling of resources from all partners towards the MPA/MPS objective of making London safer. Such CDRP involvement along with the third cycle of meetings held between the Chair of the Authority and individual CDRPs has improved the visibility and understanding of the MPA at local levels.

To help the MPA demonstrably fulfil its responsibility, a Partnerships Team has been set up. This team has supported members with their CDRP role. It is also working towards providing the support required by CDRPs that the MPA's scrutiny in 2002/03 identified, namely to promote an exchange of ideas, practice and dialogue between boroughs across London. The team is ideally placed to work with pan-London agencies, including the enhanced MPS Community Safety and Partnerships Unit, on London-wide CDRP issues. Regular liaison between the various agencies at member and officer level has been established. The team has been closely involved with the self-assessment process that each CDRP was required to complete this year and will support CDRPs with their improvement plans in the coming year.

The forthcoming year will be a significant one. The new MPA administration will be able to structure itself and the member role around the Authority's required input into CDRPs from the start. CDRPs will be carrying out their crime and disorder audits and devising their 3-year strategies. All stakeholders will also have to give further consideration to the local accountability and community engagement aspirations set out in the recent Government consultation on further police reform. CDRPs are likely to feature strongly in the way London policing is held to account and so the MPA's engagement with these is sure to become an integral feature of MPA work.

Independent Custody Visiting Panels

Each year the Consultation Committee allocates a budget to Independent Custody Visiting Panels (ICVPs) to enable community volunteers to visit those in custody in local police stations. The purpose of the ICVPs is to strengthen public confidence in procedures at

police stations.

The total amount allocated by the Consultation Committee for ICVPs for 2004/05 is £288,000. In recognising the MPA's new statutory responsibilities for organising and overseeing the delivery of Independent Custody Visiting as delineated in Section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002, the Committee also found it timely to undertake a review of the current support provided to ICVPs that will include the level of training required, the collection and monitoring of statistics, the relationship of the work of the Panels to the MPA's responsibility for overall policing priorities, as well as an examination of the relationship between the number of custody suites and the number of Independent Custody Visitors. This review, which will be submitted to the Consultation Committee before December 2004, will enable the MPA's support to ICVs to be based on a much more effective and sounder footing.

Governance and Infrastructure Resourcing

In July 2002 the Consultation Diversity and Outreach Committee was split into the Consultation Committee and the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Board. This restructuring of the Committee process has enabled the Authority to provide greater focus to its community engagement responsibilities. In following through on this commitment, over the last year the Consultation Committee has also encouraged, and is pleased to have supported the establishment of a dedicated community engagement infrastructure within the secretariat of the MPA to support this work. The appointment of the Head of Community Engagement and permanent policy development officers will strengthen the MPA's commitment to developing and sustaining a coherent community engagement structure.

Other Community Engagement Initiatives

The Committee has also dealt with a number of other significant community engagement matters in addition to the above including:

- reviewing community engagement activity that MPS units are currently undertaking
- results of Public Attitude Survey and reassurance policing
- Step Change Programme consultation process
- MPS hosted major conferences
- results of the Capital Crime Conference
- strengthened youth consultation
- consultation with the Islamic community
- establishment of the MPA Citizens Panel
- the consultation role of MPS Independent Advisory Groups
- consultation on e-policing
- evaluation of the work of Community Consultation Co-ordinators

Challenges for the coming year

The Consultation Committee faces a number of challenges in the coming year. First, the 'division of labour' between the MPA and the MPS regarding who owns the process of

community engagement will require greater clarification. The discussions arising from the Home Office Green Paper lean in the direction of the MPA leading on the gathering of Londoners' views on overall strategic priorities while the MPS leads on local, more tactical and operational issues with the public it serves. As part of this division of responsibilities the role of the MPA would be to set standards and scrutinise against these standards – leaving the MPS to carry out local consultation activity. This has implications for the appropriate placement of CPCGs and the potential role of the London CPG Chairs Forum in reporting back to the MPA on key issues emerging.

The MPS response to the Green Paper suggests that the strategic strengths of police authority oversight should be retained at the force level while local consultation and accountability should be undertaken through BCUs. Equally, the Authority might need to take full ownership and implementation of strategic, pan-London consultative processes on cross-cutting, force-wide issues.

With different community engagement and accountability mechanisms needing to be applied to different policing objectives at different organisational levels, an appropriate role for the Consultation Committee will be to support, collect and widely disseminate 'best practice.' This will also strengthen the Committee's role in performing an effective governance and scrutiny role.

Finally, the Committee will need to consider the recommendations of the review of ICVPs and the appropriate way in which the MPA can more effectively manage and administer its statutory responsibilities for Independent Custody Visiting.

People

The MPA is committed to seeing London as the safest capital city in the world by having a better paid, better trained, more diverse and flexible workforce, capable of providing the sort of career opportunities and challenges that will attract the best staff. Members want to see the MPS become the employer of choice, and Londoners to see benefit from an open, honest and professional police service.

Police strength, wastage and recruitment

At the end of March 2004, the police workforce strength had increased significantly to 30,265. In parallel with overall police strength, there has been substantial increase in the strengths of under-represented groups. The visible ethnic minority (VEM) officer strength reached 1,981 (being 1,590 VEM male and 391 VEM female) and female officers 5,493 (being 5,102 white female and 391 VEM female). Compared to March 2003, the VEM officer strength has increased by 26% and females by 16%. Currently, VEM officers represent 6.6% and female officers 18.4% of the BWT. The VEM and female officer strengths have exceeded the respective year-end budgeted workforce targets (i.e. 1,981 VEM against a target of 1,968, and 5,493 females against a target of 5,367).

Police wastage continues to fall with 1,560 (228 female and 118 VEM) officers having left between April 2003 and March 2004, an average of 130 officers each month, compared to an average of 144 each month at the same point last year. This reduction in wastage provided an indication of the effectiveness of the retention measures implemented.

During the reporting period the recruitment of police officers has progressed in line with expectations, with 3,362 officers joining. Of those recruited, 2,975 have attended basic training at Hendon and the remaining 387 have been posted directly by way of transfers and re-joiners to various operational command units.

The Directorate has recruited 516 (i.e. 406 males and 110 females) officers from visible ethnic minority groups. This represents 15.3% of all recruited within the year, and has exceeded the target of 15%.

There has been similar success with the recruitment of female officers, with 984 (i.e. 874 white and 110 VEM) officers joining, amounting to 29.3% of those recruited. The female recruitment target of 25% has also been exceeded. See Appendix 2 for further details.

Metropolitan Police Special Constabulary (MPSC) strength, wastage and recruitment

The MPSC strength at the end of March 2004 stood at 742 officers, comprising 441 (59%) white male, 168 (23%) white female, 109 (15%) VEM male and 24 (3%) VEM female. Since April 2003, approximately 48 officers have left the MPSC, with 8 having joined the regular police. During the same period, approximately 128 (including 41 VEM and 35 female) officers have joined i.e. been attested and commenced training. The recent national campaign has resulted in approximately 190 expressions of interests and 21 (including 9 VEM and 8 female) application forms being received.

Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) strength, wastage and recruitment

PCSO strength has reached 1,431 against a BWT of 1,457, of which there are 498 (i.e. 378 VEM male and 119 VEM female) from VEM groups and 427 (i.e. 308 white and 119 VEM) females. As a proportion of strength, VEM PCSOs represent 34.8% and females 29.8%.

70 PCSOs have left the MPS during the financial year, and a further 42 (i.e. 9 VEM male, 1 VEM female, 11 white female and 21 white male) PCSOs have become Police Officers.

The PCSO recruitment campaign was very successful, with 1,076 PCSOs having joined during the year against an adjusted combined target of 1,061. The Transport PCSO recruitment target of 361 has been exceeded by 26 PCSOs with 387 having been recruited. 689 Community/Security PCSOs have started training against a target of 700. The reason for the marginal shortfall in Community/Security PCSO trainees was due to a relocation of the training facilities, which resulted in limited training capacity during February and March 2004.

The recruitment of VEM PCSOs has been particularly noteworthy with 373 (i.e. 284 VEM male and 89 VEM female) recruited, amounting to 34.6% against a recruitment target of 25%. Equally, the recruitment of female PCSOs has been successful with 333 (i.e. 244 white and 89 VEM) recruited, representing 30.9% against a recruiting target of 29%. In addition, there are currently 42 PCSOs who are funded through special service agreements with various local authorities and regeneration partnerships. These PCSOs

form part of the service and are subject to MPS management arrangements. These PCSOs appear on the local strengths but are additional to BWT.

Police staff strength, wastage and recruitment

Police staff workforce strength currently stands at 12,093 compared to 10,959 at the end of March 2003. Within the police staff, there are 2,387 members of staff from VEM groups (being 715 VEM male and 1,672 VEM female) and 7,129 females (being 5,457 white female and 1,672 VEM female). As proportions of police staff strength, VEM staff represents 19.7% and female 59.0%. The current VEM police staff strength is 1.3% below the overall target of 21%.

812 members of police staff have left their posts during this financial year (501 female and 114 VEM). Of these, 70 (i.e. 4 VEM male, 5 VEM female, 41 white female and 20 white male) have become police officers. The level of police staff wastage has remained relatively constant when compared with the level of wastage at the same point last year, with an average of 68 members of police staff leaving each month. The overall level of wastage is low.

During the year, 2,159 members of police staff have been recruited. Of these, 379 were recruited from VEM groups (17.6%) and 1,246 are female (57.7%). Police staff recruitment has been particularly buoyant during the year with 77% increase on the number recruited during the same period last year.

Career management and retention

The Career Management and Retention Unit (CMRU) is leading on various projects, which are key to the retention of police officers and police staff. The Property Zone pilot continues to be particularly popular with police recruits seeking information about accommodation in London and there has been an increasing volume of enquiries at Peel Centre. The proposed rollout across the MPS, after evaluation, is planned for May 2004. The Corporate Multi-Media Induction programme is nearing completion and will be launched in May.

The Benefits of Belonging booklets for police officers and police staff have been published and distributed by local HR Units. Feedback from staff has been very positive. The booklets have also been posted on the CMRU Intranet site, where they will be updated when necessary. Copies have been supplied to the MPA for information purposes.

The new Intervention Guidelines to support the Retention Strategy have been completed and disseminated to (B)OCU Commanders, following consultation. These guidelines clarify the key role of local managers in retaining staff and the central support provided by the CMRU. This includes the facility to mediate and help to resolve matters of concern that may cause members of staff to leave prematurely.

An external service provider has been selected and the contract is about to be signed to develop the outsourced Exit Survey pilot. The selected company has a great deal of experience in the diversity field, which is particularly relevant because the loss of women and visible ethnic minorities is the main area of concern at present. The new scheme will cover 50% of the MPS, while the remainder will continue using the current exit survey to provide a control group for the evaluation, which will be conducted by the Internal Consultancy Group. The pilot will involve a cross section of (B)OCUs, including the Recruit Training School. The contract will be for nine months, which will allow time for design, implementation for a six-month trial and evaluation.

Good progress is being made with the development of the Multi-Media Induction Programme, with the help of NCALT. The programme is attractive and user friendly, providing a wide range of information, e.g. a video introduction from the Commissioner, organisational structure, Mission, Vision and Values, policing objectives, diversity, health and safety, and support facilities. It is on schedule to be launched in June.

Achievements expected in the next period

The first police officer training school intake of the new financial year will take place in May 2004, with places for 193 recruits. To date 193 recruits are due to join, of whom 122 are male (of which 23 are VEM) and 71 are female (of which 14 are VEM). The intake will be divided between Hendon and the new facilities at Sunbury and Orpington, with 160 going to Hendon and the remaining 32 going to Sunbury and Orpington.

Actual or potential problems and risk update

The police officer recruiting target for the Financial Year 2004/05 will be in the region of 2,060 and lower than originally forecast. Due to the large number of candidates who have successfully completed the selection process, there are sufficient recruits to meet the police recruitment target for the year. Although there is an expectation that a large proportion of the recruits will be VEM, the overall growth in VEM police officer strength will be very gradual. VEM recruitment will need to become substantial over the next few years if the 25.9% representation target is to be achieved by March 2009.

Reducing the need to use lethal force

The Metropolitan Police Authority gave its backing to the introduction of the Taser electronic stun gun as a less lethal option for Metropolitan Police firearms officers following a live demonstration of its use and assurances over its safety.

The development of less lethal options has always been a priority for the Met and the MPA in order to reduce the number of incidents when police are obliged to use lethal force.

Shooting someone should always be a last resort, once all other options have been explored. The result of giving officers an effective alternative that can disarm and disorientate a suspect is to have fewer armed incidents that end tragically in someone's death.

Of course, a balance must be struck between ensuring the safety of innocent bystanders and police officers at an incident, while at the same time maintaining the rights of an armed or potentially dangerous individual.

Using less lethal means to restrain a suspect is also in line with the legal and moral obligations on police to restrain violent or armed individuals using only that force which is reasonable, necessary and proportionate.

Vulnerable witnesses

The MPA agreed the finance to ensure each of London's 32 boroughs was provided with a Vulnerable and Intimidated Witness Interview Room. These new facilities enable improved provision to record interviews with vulnerable people, including, in the light of cases, which highlighted a lack of specific facilities in this area, children. To underline this it was decided to locate the rooms away from custody sites wherever possible. Each room is furnished with video and tape recording equipment enabling officers to gather the best possible quality of evidence in an appropriate manner. Each room is estimated to cost an average of £44,000 resulting in an overall project cost of £1,442,000.

Managing Demand Best Value Review

The Metropolitan Police Authority endorsed the final report of the 'Managing Demand' Best Value Review, which set out an improvement plan for the quality of services provided to the people of London.

The review examined the Metropolitan Police Service's response to demand from a customer perspective and the 17 recommendations to transform the way it delivers services to the public.

Richard Sumray, MPA chair of the planning, performance and review committee, said:

“The scope of the recommendations endorsed by the MPA today will mark far reaching changes for Londoners. Highlighting just a few of the major features, such as achieving greater accessibility for the public in the location of police stations, including the possible opening of police ‘shops’ and mobile stations, and improving the availability of resources by increasing the number of single officer patrols, indicates just how important the changes will be and how they will fundamentally improve the quality of service offered to Londoners. Implementation of the recommendations will mark a real difference in the service the people of London receive from their police.”

Other recommendations sought to improve existing front counter services and telephone access, improve access to, and services available through, the Met website, improvements to response times to attend incidents and increasing the numbers in the Metropolitan Special Constabulary to 1000 officers.

The overarching aims of the recommendations were to:

- ❑ Improve public reassurance by increasing the ease with which the public can access police services;
- ❑ Provide greater opportunities for the public to access police services;
- ❑ Reduce inappropriate demand for police services through better public understanding of the core role of the police;
- ❑ Increase the availability of patrol officers to tackle priority crimes and undertake reassurance patrols through the implementation of a corporate demand strategy; and
- ❑ Improve the quality of service by ensuring the appropriate deployment of officers, match of officer skills, robust supervision and clear operating procedures so that incidents are dealt with right first time.

Race Hate Crimes Forum

The MPA supported and independent London-wide Race Hate Crimes Forum was launched in May 2003 at the House of Commons.

The aim of the forum was to achieve substantial improvements in the services provided to victims of race hate crimes and a reduction in racially motivated crimes in the capital.

The MPA brought together statutory, voluntary and criminal justice organisations that have a key role in this field and representatives from over thirty organisations were involved in developing the forum’s terms of operation. MPA member Peter Herbert is chair of the Forum and Henry Velleman, Victim Support London, is deputy chair.

Peter Herbert said:

“The establishment of the Race Hate Crime Forum was a landmark event in the capital and the first of its kind in Europe. Eleven years after the murder of Stephen Lawrence, the forum is helping to establish a uniform approach across the criminal justice system, statutory agencies and voluntary agencies when dealing with race hate crimes.

“Race hate crime is one of the most evil and insidious forms of discrimination, which needs to be combated with all the resources available to Londoners.”

Victim Support London's Chief Executive, Anne Coughlan said:

“The forum reflects a commitment from both statutory and voluntary agencies to work together to provide a coherent service where black and minority ethnic victims of crime are placed at the heart of the system. It is vital that statutory and voluntary agencies offer this joined up approach to make further steps toward the recommendations of the Macpherson Report.”

The Macpherson Report recommended that the Home Office, police services, local government and other agencies create a comprehensive system for reporting and recording all racial incidents and crimes. In July 2001 the London Race Hate Crimes Working Group was set up under the chairmanship of Peter Herbert of the MPA. The working group drew its membership from a wide range of agencies with responsibilities for progressing policies and influencing practices on race and other hate crimes in London.

The forum has evolved from the significant work already developed by the working group and is co-ordinating the key agencies as they work together to achieve practical and positive outcomes.

Independent Custody Visitors

The Metropolitan Police Authority thanked retiring Independent Custody Visitors from across London for the dedication they had shown in providing an indispensable service to the community over the years.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are members of the public who volunteer to ensure that the welfare of those detained in police custody is maintained. They play an important role in maintaining public confidence in police custody arrangements, offering effective scrutiny by independent and impartial members of the wider community.

Presenting certificates, Nicholas Long, lead MPA member for ICVs, said:

“I am extremely pleased to officially recognise the commitment of the Independent Custody Visitors, all of whom have served the maximum six year period, on behalf of the MPA.

“The dedicated service they have given over their period as ICVs not only ensures that the rights of those being held in detention are maintained but also provide valuable independent

evidence of police conduct which can be of importance when assessing the treatment of a difficult or violent prisoner. They provide an indispensable service which is an integral part of the police custody process and their services are greatly valued by police officers and detainees alike.”

ICVs are entitled to call at police station custody suites unannounced and at any time to ensure that prisoners are treated with respect and integrity, have received appropriate services and that the conditions of cells is satisfactory. They are also available to talk to detainees to see if that person has any issues concerning their detention they wish to raise. Written reports are discussed with the custody officer and divisional superintendent, the original remaining with the ICV Panel. Key issues are brought to the attention of the Police Authority.

The MPA finances the work of 33 ICV Panels across London which administer some 400 Independent Custody Visitors. All the visitors' work is done on a voluntary basis and the maximum tenure of post is six years.

Pensions deficit

The Metropolitan Police Authority is facing a huge pensions deficit that will stretch London's policing budget to the limit and affect overall provision of police services in the capital.

This was the conclusion drawn from an independent report submitted to the Authority's finance committee. It identified continuing growth in costs of future police pensions, with accelerated increases from around 2005/06 and again from 2009/10, reflecting recruitment peaks thirty years previously. The financial impact will also be aggravated by the one-off cost of commuted lump sums payable to higher numbers of retiring officers. The cash increase over the period up to 2012/13 is £266 million (110%), an average annual increase of 7%.

Graham Tope, chair of the finance committee, said:

“Because the police pension scheme is unfunded, pension costs have a critical effect on the Authority's finances which will rise dramatically in the very near future. The report we have debated today envisages the need for annual budget increases of 6-7% over the next decade.

“We have no guarantee that government grants will be increased adequately to pay for these costs. This means that there could be a substantial hike in the council tax. This, we believe, would be unfair on the citizens of London.

“A pension reserve could help to smooth the annual impact and the Finance Committee has today agreed to begin to set aside sums for this purpose.

“It is clear the Authority has to act now as there are only three years to secure such a reserve before the first peak year of 2005/06.”

Senior police appointments

The Metropolitan Police Authority appointed seven new deputy assistant commissioners, five to occupy senior posts within the Metropolitan Police and two on secondment.

They were Alan Brown, Richard Bryan, Stephen Roberts, Alan Given, Brian Paddick, David Wood and John Yates.

The MPA also promoted seven officers to the rank of commander. They were: Julian Bennett, Ian Carter, Simon Foy, Janet Williams, Robert Milton, Brian Moore and James Smith.

Toby Harris, who led the promotion panels, said:

“Each of these officers made an excellent impression and displayed the strategic knowledge and skills necessary to fulfil their new positions.

“Playing a major role policing the capital is a challenge that exacts the highest degree of professionalism and expertise from all serving officers and I know that the candidates we have promoted will lead by example and promote confidence within our communities.”

Community policing

Londoners expressed their views very clearly to the Metropolitan Police Authority about what they wanted from their police service.

The results of the MPA’s round of public consultations, with key community and voluntary groups and organisations, showed that Londoners wanted a more visible policing presence at neighbourhood level. They also wanted a more accountable, ‘diversified’ and ‘localised’ police planning process.

In a report that went to the MPA’s consultation committee in November, which draws on public input from a variety of sources, Londoners wanted the police to re-engage with local people. They also wanted police priorities to be based on the diversity of local policing needs at the borough level.

Chair of the consultation committee, Cindy Butts said:

“It has been clearly impressed upon us that Londoners regard safety and crime issues as the top priority to improve London as a place to live. I am also impressed with Londoners level of knowledge as to how policing can be improved. It is now our job to make sure that the annual police priorities reflect the wishes of the local people.

“The conclusions of the report appear to reinforce the directions from the Home Office that there should be fewer and less prescriptive national policing priorities and more emphasis placed on citizen focus at the local level.”

Community and Race Relations

The MPA's review of Community and Race Relations training in the MPS, the first extensive evaluation of the attitudes of a police service ever to be carried out by a police authority, will be given final clearance on 4 December 2003 at the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Board.

Cindy Butts, Chair of the Review Panel, said:

"Following the fall-out from the TV documentary 'The Secret Policeman', the review provides a timely in-depth assessment of the impact CRR training has on the views and behaviour of officers and civil staff at all levels in the MPS. The review found that although training was supported by senior officers and staff, there are still concerns about junior officers in terms of their readiness to embrace the ethos of training and also its ability to impact on operational policing.

"I look forward to the recommendations from the review having an impact on CRR training in the future."

The review also looked at the extent to which CRR training has contributed to 'increasing the trust and confidence in policing amongst minority ethnic communities' and whether the diversity principles integral to the training have been assimilated into management systems and processes.

Cecile Wright, Chair of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Board, said:

"I welcome the final report and look forward to seeing the implementation of the recommendations by the MPS."

The Institute for Employment Studies at the University of Sussex was commissioned to carry out the review which makes a total of 35 recommendations in the following categories:

- understanding why CRR training has to take place;
- embedding the training in need;
- ensuring impact;
- understanding if it works; and

- specific recommendations for the MPA which include putting in place a clear set of objectives, agreeing a list of performance indicators and regular scrutiny.

Recommendation 61

Six months after Recommendation 61 was implemented in Hackney the Metropolitan Police Authority, together with Hackney Borough Council, held a public meeting to establish how communities reacted to all police stops being recorded in their borough.

Recommendation 61, from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, brought in the requirement for all police stops to be recorded by officers and a record of the stop given to the individual. Prior to the implementation of Recommendation 61 only stops and searches were recorded.

Cecile Wright, Chair of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Board, said:

"Police stops are one of the most contentious policing issues for London's black and ethnic minority communities and we need to ensure that police use of this very important tool is fair and transparent. Recommendation 61 addresses important issues raised by the use of this emotive police power - such as accurate recording and monitoring, ethnic classification of suspects, and intelligence-led versus random use of the powers.

"The MPA welcomed the implementation of Recommendation 61 in Hackney, although we did urge the Home Office to introduce a pilot for the whole of London. The MPA and MPS have also implemented Recommendation 61 in Tower Hamlets, using a technology based recording system and we will be monitoring the progress in that borough too. It is in everyone's interest - police and public alike - to be clear about what happens when a police officer stops a person in the street."

Hackney Councillor Julius Nkafu said:

"We are very pleased that Recommendation 61 was implemented in Hackney. It encourages clarity and transparency, and hopefully will help build trust between the police and the community.

"To make the initiative more successful, the Hackney Monitoring Group must be able to interpret clearly the data and statistics that are being supplied to the group by the officers in Hackney. It is only by doing this that we will be able to gauge the effectiveness of this police tool."

Embracing disability

Kirsten Hearn, independent member of the Metropolitan Police Authority, stressed the importance of the Metropolitan Police in recognising and embracing the rights of people with disabilities when she addressed the 'Disability Capital 2003' conference.

The conference brought together people with disabilities, deaf Londoners and key policy makers to discuss issues of specific concern that can often exclude those with disabilities from participating fully and without fear in the capital's life.

Speaking specifically about 'crime and the experience of disabled people', Kirsten said:

"If the Metropolitan Police Service is to police all London's communities fairly it must recognise that professional competency includes actively embracing the celebration of diversity, and unrelentingly challenging discrimination, both personally and institutionally.

"This will happen when disabled people as victims and perpetrators of crime are treated fairly and disabled Police officers and staff are enabled to play their part as equal and respected workers within the organisation.

"The MPS does now flag hate crimes committed against disabled people - but no one has told disabled people!

"I see my role on the MPA as supporting positive actions within the MPS to address the needs of people who have previously been ignored, and then to encourage the organisation to inform the community that the service is available and they are there for them when it counts."

Kirsten's specific areas of interest in policing are diversity issues and policing for the disabled community.

MPA scrutiny makes key recommendations to improve Met response to gun crime in the capital

The Metropolitan Police Authority's Gun Crime Scrutiny published its final report identifying areas for improvement in the way the Metropolitan Police Service responds to gun crime in London.

The report made seventeen recommendations.

A significant amount of firearm offences in London are committed with replica and converted weapons, a trend that is reflected nationally. Legislation currently proposed by the government will not impose a blanket ban on replicas.

The scrutiny called for a complete ban on all replica weapons capable of being mistaken for real weapons as a matter of urgency.

Consultation showed that Operation Trident is the most widely recognised anti-gun crime initiative in London but that although gun crime still disproportionately affects the black community, the number of firearms offences in other communities is rising.

The panel therefore recommended that consideration be given to widening the remit of Operation Trident to include gun crimes in all minority ethnic communities.

Initial research gathering revealed that the responsibility for tackling gun crime was split between boroughs and a number of different pan-London units within the MPS. Consultation suggested that this might complicate the MPS's response to gun crime.

The scrutiny proposed that the MPS clarify which unit is responsible for what as a matter of urgency and that a single policy to tackle all types of gun crime be developed.

The scrutiny looked at the link between guns and drugs and concluded that very little work has been undertaken so far to quantify the exact nature of the relationship between the two.

The panel recommends that the MPS response to drugs and gun crime, which are at present kept separate, should be more closely co-ordinated.

Diversion activities for young people were identified as crucial to reducing gun crime in the long-term. However, the lack of long-term financial support for community projects was highlighted as a major concern.

The scrutiny decided to build on a proposal originally made by the Not Another Drop team in Brent and work with the Disarm Trust to create a charity capable of co-ordinating and supporting the response to gun crime in London and across the country.

Cindy Butts, Chair of the scrutiny panel, said:

“Our scrutiny concentrated on the MPS response to tackling the disturbing escalation in gun crime across London in recent years. The overall aim has been to add value to the Met's existing activities and suggest constructive ways to move policy forward, and we believe our findings are of real significance.

“Of fundamental importance is our recommendation to broaden the remit of Operation Trident to ensure all minority ethnic communities receive the level of focus they deserve. The success of Trident in tackling gun crime within the black community is well recognised and, significantly, has won the support of the community. We envisage this success being replicated on a wider scale.

“Similarly, our recommendation that the MPS response to drugs and gun crime, which are at present kept separate, should be more closely co-ordinated, which will enable a more coherent and informed response.

“The scrutiny panel add their voice to all those who are already lobbying the government to impose a complete ban on replica weapons which are capable of being mistaken for, or even converted into, real weapons. The government should recognise the urgency with which the problem needs to be addressed and act in the interest of all our communities.

“The fact that we are recommending areas for improvement does not imply we believe the MPS’s response to gun crime is inherently weak. On the contrary we congratulate the Met on its work in this area. We could not have arrived at our final report without the support and assistance of the Met and we look forward to working together to implement our recommendations.”

Toby Harris, MPA chair, said:

“The MPA scrutiny found that there are a number of factors that might encourage young people to get involved in gun crime. High levels of poverty, deprivation and low educational achievement promote a sense of economic hopelessness from which drug dealing, and gun use, provides an escape route.

“Guns carried as glamorous accessories and used to enforce ‘respect’ also exacerbate an already dangerous situation among young people.

“To stop the misuse of guns effectively and permanently there is a need to break the cycle of fear and violence that grips many communities. We need to empower local communities, and give them the resources and knowledge to be able to work with the police to effect meaningful and lasting changes.

“The philosophy of this approach is that while law enforcement activities are necessary to rid communities of gun violence, sustainable and meaningful change can only be achieved if a stable, supported community infrastructure is built up at the same time.”

The MPS will be asked to complete an action plan to record how implementation of the recommendations, along with other gun crime initiatives, are being achieved. Progress will be reported to the MPA every six months.

The objectives of the scrutiny were to:

- clarify absolute and comparative levels and trends of gun crime in London as well as performance in subsequent criminal justice processes;
- describe the management structures used in, and resources available to, the MPS in relation to gun crime;
- assess the extent to which Special Notice 5-02 was implemented and, where implemented, the extent to which output/outcomes were cost effective;
- assess the extent to which recommendations from local inspection of Operations Trident and the Flying Squad have been implemented and have been cost effective;
- consult with key partners, communities and individuals in London to inform the approach that should be taken by the MPA and/or MPS.

The scrutiny focused on the MPS’ strategic response to gun crime rather than the immediate operational response to an armed incident. The procedures covering the role and deployment of armed officers did not form a major part of the review. Witness protection was not specifically included within the scope of the scrutiny and did not form a major part of the

review. The scrutiny also covered the link between guns and drugs to a limited extent. The scrutiny did not address the question of whether or not the police should be armed.

The MPA has conducted two previous scrutinies covering rape investigation and victim care by the MPS and the Authority's involvement in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). A further scrutiny of stop and search practice in the MPS is nearing its conclusion. Scrutinies are directed and controlled by a panel of members, working under the overall direction of the relevant MPA committee.

Closer partnership working needed to fight organised immigration crime

Richard Sumray, chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority's planning, performance and review committee, called for closer partnership working to fight organised immigration crime.

He said:

"The current multi-agency strategy to counter organised immigration crime, Operation Maxim, is highly effective. The next step is to build on the working practices and successes of Maxim by forging closer working protocols with Immigration Services and partner agencies.

"The MPS Serious Crime Group, Territorial Policing Group and all related agencies, including the recently announced national Serious and Organised Crime Agency, need to form a pool of integrated intelligence and detection to fight organised immigration crime effectively.

"The MPS has already established a partnership model with the Criminal Justice System, where joint working was developed to make the judicial process more effective. Closer working relationships between the MPS and the CPS has led to improvements in the judicial process and closer inter-agency co-operation, even bringing about a cultural change.

"The MPS and partner agencies need to work towards the same appropriate objectives, not separate agendas. With director level co-operation in place to resolve issues and barriers, strategic co-ordination can be put in place. This will prevent missed opportunities arising, where linked offences are not followed up.

"The MPS Territorial Policing Group's 'on the ground' knowledge of community issues is an equally vital link in this co-ordinated approach. London's communities most linked to these issues will be encouraged to work together with police against organised immigration crime.

"The MPA fully endorses this multi-agency approach to tackle these highly sensitive and volatile issues. Successful policing of these crimes can only be attained by working with partner agencies towards one goal and with the co-operation of London's vulnerable communities."

The Morris Inquiry – call for commitment to fairness being translated into sustained change throughout the Metropolitan Police Service

Toby Harris, Chair of Metropolitan Police Authority, told the independent Morris Inquiry that the Metropolitan Police Service is policy rich, but implementation poor.

His comments were part of the MPA's submission to the inquiry it established to review the handling of internal investigations, complaints and grievances involving MPS staff.

He emphasised the Authority's hope that the inquiry would make recommendations to ensure that top-level commitment within the Metropolitan Police Authority and Metropolitan Police Service is translated into effective, sustained change through the organisation.

He said:

"It is the Authority's belief that recommendations from the inquiry will assist the MPS to manage a programme of cultural change skilfully and with lasting effect that will benefit Londoners. The inquiry can, through its report and recommendations, enable and equip the MPS to move forward to a system that embodies and reflects the principles of equality, impartiality and consistency of treatment.

"Following the Macpherson Report into the death of Stephen Lawrence, the MPS has put in place strategies to ensure that diversity is integral to policing practices. It has developed effective models for managing critical incidents, improved family liaison and established strong victim support practices. Much of this work does not get the public recognition that it deserves. However, there appears to be a lack of organisational learning in the sense that experience gained in managing diversity in the community has not been applied to employment issues or investigations into allegations against officers.

"The Authority believes that there is a need to draw the distinction between institutional racism or discrimination, and institutional competence. The MPS needs to move away from a blame culture, and to shift from a bureaucratic, legalistic approach towards one which is more 'customer' focused.

"The emphasis of the system should be on problem solving and performance enhancement rather than in confrontation and inflexibility, with more use made of restorative justice and mediation principles. Outcomes in complaints and grievance cases should be reached impartially, after a timely and fair process."

Toby Harris also told the inquiry that MPA members were aware of, and shared, the views of many communities in London that the MPS had fallen short of the ideal despite a very strong commitment at the top of the organisation. This affected trust and confidence in the MPS both internally and externally. The way in which the MPS handles complaints, grievances and allegations against individuals and conflicts in the workplace all have an important bearing on public confidence and trust in policing.

MPA promotes new approach to policing the royal parks

The merger of the Royal Parks Constabulary which patrols 6000 acres of London's parks into the Metropolitan Police Service moved a step closer towards the end of the year when the proposal was given the go-ahead by the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Agreement was reached in 2003 for the Royal Parks Constabulary to be merged into the MPS, and for the MPS to take on the policing of London's Royal Parks, funded by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

Primary legislation is needed to enable a merger to take place but in the meantime the Met will, at the request of the Secretary of State for Culture, assist in the policing of the 17 royal parks, gardens and open spaces in and around London from 1 April 2004.

Toby Harris said:

"The MPA authorised the formation of the Royal Parks Operational Command Unit and the necessary set up costs, to be reimbursed in full by the department of Culture, Media and Sport.

"This move has come at the request of the Secretary of State for Culture, Tessa Jowell, who has responsibility for policing the royal parks and gardens, and the Met and the Royal Parks Constabulary will work side-by-side until the full merger can take place.

"This development is good news for all those millions of visitors who use these open spaces, many of them attracted by some of London's top attractions such as Buckingham Palace and London Zoo."

New charity to support community safety projects across the capital

The Metropolitan Police Authority approved the foundation of a new independent charity – 'The Safer London Foundation' - to support community projects for crime reduction, youth diversionary activities and community safety projects across London.

The charity's name was chosen to reflect its independence from both the Met and the Authority while clearly associating it with the shared vision to make London the safest major city in the world.

It will have the dual purpose of raising funds from available sources and then distributing these to the causes identified. Being independent it will enable the MPA and MPS to support various community safety projects without compromising its enforcement and investigative integrity.

The creation of a charitable company will enable the MPA to support a wide range of charitable activities for vulnerable groups and individuals across London, using funding streams and resources it is unable to use as a statutory body.

It is anticipated that the charity's annual income will exceed £1 million once fully established.

New Met police staff in custody roles will bring benefits for policing in London

The Metropolitan Police Authority endorsed the introduction of a new breed of police staff acting in a custody role - Designated Detention Officers (DDOs) - whose primary function will be to administer compulsory drugs testing on charge.

The new positions will be introduced in the 12 London boroughs identified as having the highest levels of acquisitive crime. They will be members of police staff with powers to take drug samples from detained persons in certain circumstances and will be authorised to exercise limited police powers to deal with detained persons in custody areas. Their recruitment will be funded through the Home Office Criminal Justice Interventions Programme for a period of two years.

"It is only right that we introduce 21st century police support roles that will benefit our communities by freeing police officers to return to their primary role of policing our streets." – Toby Harris

MPA - local partnership to tackle crime and disorder brings real benefits to Londoners

Toby Harris, chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority, restated the importance of working in partnership at the local level to tackle crime and disorder issues, when he spoke in Islington, the last venue of his third tour of London's 32 boroughs.

He said:

"My intention with these borough visits was to bring together local agencies to discuss the issues, share experiences and suggest solutions.

"We are all agreed that crime affects our communities as a whole and increases individuals' fear of crime disproportionately. The MPA is seeking to improve the delivery of effective policies to tackle this.

"Encouraging problem solving, and spreading good practice, has been high on the agenda – after all, if one borough has succeeded in cutting crime by implementing a specific policy this can help inform another borough of a way forward when faced by similar problems.

“The MPA has itself been a statutory member of London’s Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships since April last year, taking this as an opportunity to co-ordinate and spread best-practice and effective policy.

“Local stakeholders have been more than ready to discuss the issues and I am pleased that closer working relations are regarded by everyone as vital. We are convinced that by working together we can make a real difference to the quality of people’s lives across London.”

Snippet:

Speaking after the publication of the annual crime figures, Toby Harris said:

"Part of the reason for the success must be the deliberately tough and testing targets which we as a police authority have set for the Met. We know that we've set demands that will stretch the Met, but we believe that they are fully achievable with the more focused and tightly defined use of intelligence-led policing together with more effective resource management.

"And of course, to make this possible we've worked with the Home Secretary and the Mayor, and of course the Commissioner, to ensure that the Met has the resources it needs to deliver an effective, efficient and fair police service for the people of London.

"But above all, these results are a tribute to the efforts and energies of police officers and police staff around London, for without them and their commitment none of this would have happened."

In conclusion

"Community policing is absolutely central to making London the safest city in the world and the Met needs Londoners who are representative of the vibrant mix of communities they will be policing.

"Londoners will have a head start in understanding our complex and exciting city. We don't just need 35,000 officers - we need 35,000 officers from a range of backgrounds, cultures and experiences. And we will find that if we concentrate on recruiting Londoners.

"Londoners have told us loud and clear that seeing more officers on their streets makes them feel safer and drives down the fear of crime. The truth is that although the MPS are making more arrests and disrupting more criminals, people in our communities simply don't feel safe. Public perception of police performance and crime is different to that of police professionals and politicians. A 'success gap' has been created. Our commitment to the new community based policing teams is intended to bridge that gap. We aim to deliver a level of local policing in London that will make a tangible difference to people's lives - neighbourhood teams that are visible, familiar and accessible. Londoners will see and feel the difference.

"Since the MPA came into being, nearly four years ago, uniformed officer numbers have grown to more than 30,000. However, at the same time the MPS workload has also increased. In order to respond successfully to issues such as increased anti terrorism patrols post 9/11 and the rise in street crime, officers have had to be diverted from other core activities. Recent events bear witness to this - street crime went up by 20% when police were moved into central London for President Bush's State visit - clear evidence that when officers are taken from high crime areas, criminals feel more confident and communities suffer.

"The Step Change programme will see a style of policing which will ensure that that the Met engages with the people of London and provides an agreed level of permanently allocated staff to each neighbourhood - a local team that will always be there. The programme will be phased in from April 2004 with three neighbourhood teams in each borough. Vitally these officers will be ring fenced enabling them to make an effective and consistent commitment to their specific community.

"Consultation is key to this programme and a comprehensive London wide strategy is being developed so that communities and partners are fully engaged in the implementation and roll out of community based policing. It is also crucial that the impact of extra officers can be clearly linked to performance improvement. Local communities and partners must therefore be involved in defining the measures of success appropriate to their local needs.

"Clearly this programme cannot be achieved without considerable additional investment in the MPS. But the return on that investment will be a new level of service dedicated to making each and every community safer. Londoners have told

us what they want - a police service that responds effectively to emergencies but also has strong links to its communities on a day to day basis, through accessible and visible local uniformed officers, ring fenced for that role. We think 35,000 is the right number to deliver that service across London."

Toby Harris

Chair MPA