

Assessment report

November 2004

# Initial Performance Assessment

**Metropolitan Police Authority**

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## Introduction

- 1 The Audit Commission has recently undertaken an Initial Performance Assessment (IPA) of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the functional bodies which form the GLA group. The purpose of this assessment is to examine the current performance by the GLA and the functional bodies in the delivery of their services and their ability to improve.
- 2 IPA is based on the same principles and methodology as the Commission's programme of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of councils throughout England. CPA is part of the wider improvement agenda set out in the local government white paper *Strong Local Leadership – Quality Public Services*. The white paper encourages greater focus on improved services for local people by freeing good authorities from central government controls and restrictions, and providing poorer authorities with more, better focused support for improvement. CPA is the first step in this process, that of making an overall judgement of where each authority stands.
- 3 The Metropolitan Police Authority (the MPA) is one of the functional bodies in the GLA group. The others are: the London Development Agency, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, and Transport for London. This report presents an analysis of the MPA's overall performance.
- 4 The official version of this report is also available on the Audit Commission's web site at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk). The Audit Commission cannot verify the accuracy of and is not responsible for material contained in this report that may have been reproduced by another organisation or individual.

## Summary of Initial Performance Assessment judgements

- 5 The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) was created under the Greater London Authority Act 1999. The formation of a London police authority represented a major change in the policing of the capital. It offered new and more robust opportunities to hold the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to account. The authority has risen to this challenge. It has significantly increased the public accountability of the MPS through scrutiny and challenge of its performance, making its activities more transparent and giving Londoners more local influence on policing policy. It has developed effective working relationships with the MPS based on trust and co-operation and it has a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Londoners. However, the MPA has spent little time building itself as a strong and resilient organisation. Internal weaknesses jeopardise its future credibility and its capacity to achieve its ambition of securing an effective, efficient and fair police service for London.
- 6 The MPA's shared vision with the MPS is to make London the safest city in the world. This is underpinned by annual policing plans and *Towards the Safest City*<sup>1</sup>. Ambitions for policing take into account the priorities of the Mayor, the Home Office and local people. They are realistic given the short lifetime of the MPA, the problems it inherited, and the unique context within which it operates.
- 7 Externally the MPA offers a degree of leadership in communities but struggles to assert itself in the face of the higher profile of the Commissioner and the Mayor. Internally there is a lack of corporate leadership which impacts on planning and people management. In its early days the authority rightly prioritised a number of inherited pressing problems, most notably poor financial management within the MPS, but it has been slow to develop and publish priorities for itself as an organisation. This makes it difficult for staff, partners and the public to have a clear, consistent picture of what it is trying to achieve and to understand how it makes choices about where to channel efforts and resources.
- 8 The MPA has built a rigorous scrutiny process to drive up standards which is driving changes in policing and better services for victims. In order to carry out its statutory functions it has built systems and structures to focus on MPS management, staffing and operational activities and it has gained the support and co-operation of senior MPS officers in making these work effectively. However, the internal capacity of the authority is weakened by inconsistent corporate approaches to performance management and human resources management. Personnel issues dominate and morale is low in some areas.
- 9 The MPA sustains a firm focus on improving the performance of the MPS, maintaining a significant and productive level of influence over its activities. Performance management of the Metropolitan Police Service is increasingly effective. Financial management has improved and efficiency savings have been made. Risk assessment and risk management is developing well. The MPA has made a good start in building its partnership working, participating at the right level to achieve impact in joint working arrangements across London.

<sup>1</sup> 'Towards the Safest City – Delivering Policy for Londoners 2003-2005'

However, its role in crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) is not well developed and relationships with Community Police Consultative Groups (CPCGs) are not well managed.

- 10 The authority has high calibre members who are knowledgeable, skilled and enthusiastic. They have a strong commitment to challenging and developing MPS systems and approaches. They are good ambassadors for the MPA, influencing and negotiating with the MPS, the GLA and the Home Office, building trust and inspiring confidence. They set high standards for the authority's statutory duties and strategic functions.
- 11 Given the complex structure within which it operates and the scale of the challenges which it faces, the MPA has achieved much in its short lifetime. It has introduced an effective framework for holding the MPS to account, the first body to do so in its 175 year history. It is making policing in London more transparent and better aligned to the diverse needs of communities. It has overseen a substantial increase in police numbers in line with its own targets and those of the Mayor and it has increased diversity in the MPS workforce. Transparency of policing is increasing and procedures for the investigation of complaints are more effective. The MPA's internal audit function has been successful in tackling fraud and corruption. Reserves are improving and the financial position is healthier. Crime levels and detection rates are improving in major categories, except for violent crime. There are important areas where the MPA and the MPS are not meeting their targets, such as public satisfaction with police patrols and response times although overall achievement of targets is improving and public confidence is growing.
- 12 The MPA is strengthening systems for holding the MPS to account, building greater participation of local people. Its leadership is beginning to take remedial action to address internal weaknesses although this is at an early stage. It is open to external challenge but it is only beginning to seek out best practice to inform its actions and has little history of learning systematically informing change. Relations across the GLA group are building but joint work with other functional bodies to achieve common goals is under-developed.
- 13 The aspirations and intention of the MPA are not all underpinned with firm plans and programmes for delivery and it is not engaged in joint planning across the GLA group. However, joint planning for the future with the MPS is in line with national, regional and local requirements and the MPA is ensuring that the MPS has the capacity to deliver its future agenda. It is committed to involving the public and key stakeholders in future planning and some key medium term strategies are in place. The new authority elected in June 2004 is beginning to address organisational weaknesses and has recently finalised and published a corporate plan which defines the organisational vision and aims for 2004/07. It is too early to say whether these will deliver real outcomes, and the MPA's track record on corporate planning is not strong. However, this represents a step forward for the authority, offering the potential for it to develop a sounder approach to delivering its statutory functions within a stronger, more resilient organisational structure.

## Summary of assessment scores

Top level question	Theme	Grade	Weighted score
What is the MPA trying to achieve?	Ambition	3	6
	Prioritisation	2	4
	Focus	3	3
How has the MPA set about delivering its priorities?	Capacity	2	2
	Performance management	3	3
What has the MPA achieved/not achieved to date?	Achievement in quality of service	3	9
	Achievement of improvement	3	3
	Investment	2	6
In light of what the MPA has learned to date, what does it plan to do next?	Learning	2	2
	Future plans	3	3
<b>Weighted score</b>			<b>41</b>
<b>Initial performance assessment category</b>			<b>Fair</b>

## Next steps – improvement planning

- 14 The Audit Commission has undertaken IPA to assist in developing an audit and inspection programme which offers strategic regulation.
- 15 Strategic regulation means:
  - ◆ targeting inspection and audit to ensure greatest impact where it is needed most;
  - ◆ reducing the amount of regulation, particularly for excellent and good organisations;
  - ◆ delivering co-ordinated and proportionate audit and inspection that focus on the experiences of people who need and use public services;
  - ◆ carrying out audit and inspection that support the audited and inspected organisations' improvement work and take account of their views; and
  - ◆ minimising duplication, bureaucracy and the burdens of regulation.
- 16 Following the IPA, the organisation will consider the findings and clarify its priorities for improvement. Auditors and inspectors will liaise with the organisation to ensure its work and resources are also targeted to support the delivery of improvement in these areas as well as comply with its statutory duties.
- 17 The Audit Commission will also work with appointed auditors, other inspectorates and regulators, the Government Office for London and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to discuss the findings of the IPA and co-ordinate future audit and inspection effectively.
- 18 A summary of the audit and inspection plan agreed with the organisation will be published on the Audit Commission's website when improvement planning discussions are completed.

## Context

### The locality

- 19 London is a large and diverse capital. Over seven million people live in the city, with an increase of 800,000 expected by 2016. Forty-six per cent of the workforce is under the age of 35, compared to 39 per cent nationally, and 5.2 million people are eligible to vote. Twenty-nine per cent of residents are from minority ethnic communities and over 300 languages are spoken by children in the city's schools.
- 20 Twenty-five per cent of the world's largest companies have their European headquarters in London and the city generates more wealth than any other region of the country. Thirty million tourists visit London each year contributing around £15 billion to the economy. Of the 3.8 million people who work in London, 723,000 commute from outside.
- 21 London also has high levels of deprivation and need. Thirty-five per cent of London's children live in poverty – the highest proportion of any English region. In inner London this increases to 48 per cent. The employment rate for women with dependent children is more than 10 per cent lower than the national average. Affordable childcare places within the capital are limited.
- 22 London has the highest rate of recorded crime per head of population in England and Wales; although in line with national trends, the number of crimes has fallen over the past three years.
- 23 The Greater London Authority (GLA) is a new and unique form of strategic city-wide government for London. Created by the Greater London Authority Act 1999, the GLA became operational in July 2000. The organisation comprises a directly elected mayor (the Mayor of London) and an elected assembly (the London Assembly), composed of 25 members grouped in 14 constituencies. Following elections in June 2004, the Conservative party hold nine seats, the Labour party hold seven, the Liberal Democrats have five and the Green Party and UK Independence Party both hold two. The current Mayor is Labour.
- 24 The Mayor plays an executive role, making decisions on behalf of the GLA and preparing strategies that address London-wide issues. The assembly has a scrutiny role and is able to investigate issues of importance to Londoners.
- 25 There are also four 'functional bodies' (FBs): the London Development Agency (LDA); Transport for London (TfL); the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) which in turn has responsibility for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS); and the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA).
- 26 These organisations together with the GLA itself, are collectively referred to as the 'GLA group'. The forecast outturn for the GLA group in 2003/04 was £7.9 billion. The budget for 2004/05 is £8.8 billion (£5.7 billion net). The GLA's own budget requirement is £56.3 million, which is £0.4 million higher than for 2003/04.



## The Metropolitan Police Authority

- 27 The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) was created under the Greater London Authority Act 1999 and set up in 2000. It took over the duties and responsibilities formerly exercised by the Home Secretary and the receiver for the police service. The formation of a London police authority represented a major change in the policing of the capital. The creation of the MPA aimed to make the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) more publicly accountable through increased scrutiny and challenge of its performance; to make its activities more transparent and to give Londoners more opportunities to influence policing.
- 28 The MPA operates in a challenging environment of competing priorities. Like all police authorities it is required to secure the maintenance of an adequate, efficient and effective police force<sup>2</sup> but the authority sits within a uniquely complex structure. Nationally police authorities are part of tripartite arrangements with the local constabulary and the Home Secretary. They appoint local chief constables. However, in London, the role of chief constable is taken by a commissioner who is appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Home Secretary. Arrangements are further complicated by the additional roles of the Mayor and the GLA. The MPA is classed as a functional body of the GLA. Its proposed budget for the MPS is submitted to the Mayor and the London Assembly for approval. Currently 18 per cent of the policing budget is raised by the Mayor through precept, with the rest coming from central government grant. The GLA holds the MPA to account for delivery against the element of the budget which comes from the precept.
- 29 The authority has 23 members – 12 from the London Assembly appointed by the Mayor, 4 magistrate members selected by the Greater London Magistrates Courts Authority and 7 independent members, one of whom is directly appointed by the Home Secretary. Members elect the chair of the authority annually. Each of the members has a 'link' role in one or more London boroughs. Operational management is provided through the clerk and deputy clerk and the MPA directly employs around 80 staff. Half of the staff are located within the internal audit function. The full authority takes decisions on policy and resources delegating other responsibilities to nine committees. In 2003 police authorities were given a statutory role in local crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs). There are 32 in London, and fulfilling its role in these is a major challenge for the MPA.
- 30 The MPA carries out its duties through ensuring the delivery of policing plans; formal scrutiny of police activities; and consultation and engagement with local communities about policing styles and priorities. It appoints senior officers and has oversight of the MPS workforce of 30,000 police officers, 1,100 police community support officers (PCSOs) and around 11,000 support staff. It influences recruitment and retention, investigates complaints and ensures professional standards. The authority has ultimate responsibility for financial management of the MPS annual budget of £2.5 billion, and financial reserves of £102.3 million capital and £93.4 million revenue. The authority inherited weak financial and performance management systems, a lack of transparency for the public about local policing decisions, some significant fraud issues and a demoralised and declining workforce.

<sup>2</sup> Section 4 Police Act 1964, Section 6 Police Act 1996, Chapter 29 Greater London Act 1999

- 31 The MPA carried out a self-assessment against each of the initial performance assessment themes. The self-assessment was informed by a peer review commissioned by the MPA and undertaken by Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) in January 2004. The MPA has published its self-assessment on its website at [www.mpa.gov.uk](http://www.mpa.gov.uk).

## What is the MPA trying to achieve?

### Ambition

- 32 Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area.
- 33 The MPA has a well-developed ambition to secure an effective, efficient and fair police service for London. Its vision, shared with the MPS, is to make London the safest city in the world. This is expressed in the joint strategy *Towards the Safest City 2003/05*, the main aims of which are to: develop safer communities; secure the capital against terrorism; revitalise the criminal justice system; develop a professional and effective police force; and reform delivery of policing services in line with the police reform programme and the National Policing Plan.
- 34 The authority has a direct role in delivering the aims for a professional and effective police force and reform of policing services in line with national priorities. It has clear ambitions to: ensure that the MPS is effective through performance management, scrutiny and review and effective handling of complaints and grievances; ensure that the MPS is efficient through critical review of resources allocation, working with the Mayor and the Commissioner to increase police numbers and delivering rigorous financial control and audit of police activities; ensure that the MPS is fair through driving a greater emphasis on equalities and diversity with the MPS and achieving greater community engagement through more effective consultation and dialogue in the London boroughs.
- 35 These ambitions are realistic given the authority's short lifetime, the legacy systems which it inherited, and the unique context within which it operates. Its ambitions in relation to financial control and accountability are particularly sound given the weak systems in place previously. Ambitions are well balanced taking into account national and international pressures, such as the threat of terrorism, as well as the priorities of the Mayor, the Home Office and the public. For example, aims to implement community-based policing accord with the Mayor's ambitions and the wishes of local people for increased police presence in neighbourhoods.
- 36 The authority also has an indirect role in driving the MPS to deliver operational goals in line with their shared vision. Annual policing and performance plans link to the joint strategy and clearly set the MPA's priorities for the MPS in the context of their overall ambitions for policing in London. The MPA holds the MPS rigorously to account for delivery. It has a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing local communities across London. It is strengthening the influence of local people on policing plan priorities and ensures that plans target the right things. It engages with a range of groups and representatives to learn about the diverse needs within boroughs and identify the views of Londoners so that these can be taken into account in its joint planning with the MPS. For example, it ensured that for the first time priorities that came directly from citizens influenced the 2004/05 policing and performance plan.
- 37 Partnership working is integral to the achievement of the authority's aims and the delivery of its statutory functions. The MPA has made a good start in identifying partnership opportunities, making sure that it participates at the right level to achieve impact in existing joint working arrangements and structures across London.

It is getting to grips with its new role in the CDRPs. However, partnership working is currently at an early stage and centred on information exchange rather than targeted outcomes.

- 38 Externally the MPA is developing a national role through its influence on and involvement in the Association of Police Authorities. It is trying to develop a community leadership role in London although it struggles to assert itself in the face of the higher profiles of the commissioner of the MPS and the Mayor. It is increasing its visibility in communities, helping Londoners to understand its function and, importantly, how it can act on their behalf to improve local policing. Members act as champions for the authority, engaging with community groups on topical issues, especially those which are subject to the authority's scrutiny process. The chair and the clerk have productive working relationships with major stakeholders such as the Home Office and senior police officers.
- 39 Internally the authority shows a lack of corporate leadership, particularly around people management, and staff are not fully engaged in developing the authority's ambitions. There are also weaknesses in planning. During the first four-year term of the authority its corporate plan was in draft form and not used to define or drive its contributions to delivery of its shared ambitions with the MPS. This made it difficult for staff and partners to be clear about how they contribute to achieving the ambitions and difficult for the public to understand how the activities of the authority and the police force are co-ordinated to deliver the goals for a safer city.

## Prioritisation

- 40 Weaknesses outweigh strengths in this area.
- 41 The internal weaknesses in corporate planning within the authority mean that there is not only a lack of clarity about its long term organisational goals but it is also difficult to understand how it prioritises its activities.
- 42 In its early days the authority needed to swiftly establish itself as a credible organisation with the MPS, the Home Office, the GLA group and the public. It was mindful of its new role and rightly prioritised a number of inherited pressing problems, most notably poor financial management within the MPS and recruitment and retention problems. Early efforts also centred on developing a joint planning regime with the MPS and building a rigorous scrutiny process within its organisation to improve accountability and drive up standards.
- 43 The MPA has been slow to define and publish clear, longer term objectives and priorities for itself as an organisation. It has not analysed where efforts and resources should be focussed over time in order to gain the most impact. Activities and initiatives tend to emerge as priorities as a result of external pressures, response to MPS prioritisation, or the particular knowledge and interests of MPA members and committee chairs. For example, areas that are chosen for scrutiny are determined by the interests or priorities of individual members. When this is in line with public priorities the commitment that this brings is a strength. However, there is a risk that without a longer term focus that aligns scrutiny activity with strategic, corporate aims for the authority, important areas could be missed.

- 44 Service planning occurs in isolation and is not well integrated with financial planning. It is difficult for staff, the MPS management board, partners, stakeholders and the public to have a clear and consistent picture of what MPA is trying to achieve, the ranking of its activities and how it makes decisions about targeting its efforts and resources.
- 45 The authority is prepared to move resources from areas where it analyses that there is insufficient value for money; for example, withdrawing its contribution to the GLA monthly newsletter, 'The Londoner'. These decisions can be difficult and challenging, but because they are not linked to explicitly stated corporate priorities within an overall plan, the basis for them is not always clear to those affected, resulting in a lack of support.
- 46 Externally, the MPA is clearer about prioritisation. It uses its website and its links in local communities to publicise policing priorities and the rationale behind them. There is some way to go before the authority can fully demonstrate that resource allocation to priority areas impacts positively on performance. However, this is developing in relation to the 'Step Change' programme and Safer Neighbourhoods initiative and, although individual activities within the policing plan are not costed, the authority exercises a degree of control by only accepting growth bids from the MPS in priority areas. The MPA finance committee is influencing the development of the resource allocation formula within the MPS and the internal audit function prioritises areas where it can achieve significant improvements.
- 47 Consultation on policing priorities for London is offering partners, stakeholders and communities opportunities to influence policy and planning. Some participants have seen real outcomes from their involvement with the authority especially in relation to issues that are subject to the MPA's scrutiny process.
- 48 The MPA also takes into account the priorities of the Home Office, the Mayor, and other key stakeholders such as Association of London Government. It plays an important role in balancing these sometimes competing priorities setting them within the context of what is deliverable and achievable. For example, targets for recruitment reflect the Mayor's priority to increase police strength but are balanced with the need to ensure that recruitment processes and training for new staff can keep pace and that budgets are not compromised.

## Focus

- 49 There are more strengths than weaknesses in this area.
- 50 The creation of the MPA offered new and more robust opportunities to hold the MPS to account for policing in London. The authority has risen to this challenge. It is successfully sustaining a firm focus on improving the performance of the MPS, maintaining a significant and productive level of influence over its activities and supporting improvement plans through to delivery. In order to carry out its statutory functions the authority has created systems and structures which allow it to focus on the relevant aspects of MPS management, staffing structures and operational activities and it has gained the support and co-operation of senior MPS officers in making these work effectively. In this way it is setting high standards for police authorities nationally.

- 51 For example, the authority's approach to delivering its scrutiny role demonstrates that it can maintain focus in challenging operational areas, seeing things through to conclusion to drive changes in policing, and increase transparency and secure positive outcomes for citizens, such as tackling street crime and improving responses to victims of rape. Its internal audit function is building a significant track record of tackling fraud and corruption by maintaining a firm focus on targeting and completing investigations. Its planning, performance and review committee ensures that the MPS stays focussed on the priorities of the policing and performance plan through regular performance reporting against plan targets and national indicators, and challenges to under-performance. The structure and terms of reference of the Professional Standards and Complaints Committee enable it to maintain a firm focus on the management of complaints, rigorously tracking them forward to conclusion.
- 52 The authority's firm focus on strengthening financial management is paying off, with improved levels of reserves and increased stability. It has achieved efficiency savings alongside growth in police numbers. It has maintained this focus on increased recruitment and retention in the face of external financial and operational pressure on resources such as the demands of addressing the increased threat of terrorism. It has also ensured that MPS processes such as induction, training and accommodation keep pace with increasing numbers.
- 53 A key achievement of the MPA is the extent to which it drives the MPS to focus in areas that need improvement. For example the authority is driving a strengthened focus on diversity and equalities issues in the policies and practices of the MPS. The equal opportunities and diversity board and the human resources committee are consistently improving the diversity of the MPS workforce and driving good practice in relation to recruitment, retention, training and support. The authority is also sustaining a focus on the delivery of the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, for example the launch of recommendation 61 of the inquiry that all 'stops' be recorded.
- 54 Whilst the MPA has shown strengths in driving and maintaining the focus of the MPS there are weaknesses in its own internal arrangements because it has struggled to maintain a focus on building itself as a resilient organisation. In the face of pressure to deliver on external issues it is frequently distracted from organisational development and attempts to address internal problems are often side-tracked. This means that work force and management issues are not promptly recognised and tackled so that they escalate and serve as a distraction for staff. This jeopardises its ability to continue to perform at its current level.

## How has the MPA set about delivering its priorities?

### Capacity

- 55 There are more weaknesses than strengths in capacity.
- 56 The authority is weakened by a lack of corporate approach in key areas including the management of human resources, internal communication, managing staff performance and training and development of staff and members. It has been slow to build its management capacity. The appointment of the deputy clerk in 2003 strengthened internal leadership but, despite the relatively small size of the organisation, there is a lack of cohesion and shared purpose. For example, the internal audit section which makes up half of the organisation is not well integrated, managing its activities separately. It has good practices that would benefit the rest of the authority but these are not transferred.
- 57 Internal communication has recently improved through regular staff meetings and greater transparency about the work of the senior management team, but it is still weak overall. Staff and members are not clear about how and why decisions are made and amended and this is reducing confidence.
- 58 A lack of direction and control of workloads means that members and staff are stretched. Meeting an ever widening agenda is proving difficult and staff and members' skills are not evaluated in order to identify training and development needs and better target efforts. High workloads also mean that members' attendance at some committees is variable and decision-making can be slow with reports going through several iterations before sign off. This is frustrating for partners and reduces their confidence in the authority.
- 59 Systems for human resource management do not serve the authority well. There is no formal human resources strategy; an inconsistent approach to the delivery of staff appraisals and personal development plans; little active management of absence; and a perceived lack of transparency around recruitment, salary and grading issues. At the time of this internal performance assessment personnel issues had come to dominate internal affairs, reducing staff morale and preventing the authority from moving forward.
- 60 The MPA is using voluntary and community groups to build local intelligence and participation in relation to emerging policing issues, but in some areas it is not managing relationships well. It inherited responsibility for long established borough-level community police consultative groups. These groups and their networks cost around £1.4 million and the authority cannot demonstrate that its use of them represents value for money. It is seeking to modernise their activities to improve accountability and effectiveness. However, it has given conflicting messages and is failing to gain commitment for change. Groups feel marginalised and misunderstood and do not appreciate what the authority is trying to achieve.
- 61 The MPA is committed to working in partnership particularly at borough level. It is making an active contribution to projects such as the development of a joint operational command unit between the MPS and Transport for London. It is an active member of the Association of Police Authorities influencing strategy and policy nationwide.



- 62 The authority is involved in inter-agency work to address community safety in London for example, it is a member of the Crime and Disorder Plus steering group which identifies multi-agency actions to tackle community safety issues. The clerk meets regularly with the heads of the other GLA functional bodies and there is agreement and pooling of efforts in relation to shared priorities such as London resilience. Operationally some opportunities for joint working with other functional bodies are missed; for example, in relation to consultation with minority groups and engagement with broader local community safety issues.
- 63 Authority members and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and generally supportive of each other. Staff are talented and motivated tackling complex and challenging policy areas with skill and enthusiasm. The authority has high calibre members who are knowledgeable, skilled and enthusiastic. They have clear views about how they want to make a difference to policing in London and a strong commitment to challenging and developing MPS systems and approaches. They are good ambassadors for the MPA, influencing and negotiating with the MPS, the GLA and the Home Office, building trust and inspiring confidence. Their level of enthusiasm to tackle big issues and to respond to new challenges is commendable.
- 64 The MPA has a thorough and robust approach to tackling equality and diversity issues. Its Race Equality Scheme 2002/05 sets out clear aims to mainstream equalities and diversity identifying the responsibilities and accountabilities of staff and members in achieving this. All staff and members receive diversity training. The authority has agreed an ambitious shared target with the GLA group to achieve level five of the Equalities Standard for Local Government by 2005, the first police authority to commit to this standard, although it is not currently on target for achievement. It continuously reviews its practice in this area, and re-structured to create the equal opportunities and diversity board to strengthen its focus. Its approach to community engagement and consultation shows a high awareness of equality and diversity issues, launching, for example, the London Race Hate Crime Forum.
- 65 Financial capacity issues within the MPS are being tackled and levels of reserves are much improved. The treasurer and deputy treasurer have established good relationships with the MPS finance team enabling better exchange of information. The MPA is working with the MPS to ensure that it is planning for foreseeable changes, for example supporting systems and structures for new police community support officers and the move to neighbourhood policing.

## Performance management

- 66 Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area.
- 67 In its major statutory role of managing the performance of the MPS, the authority is increasingly effective. It closely monitors and manages performance against policing plan targets and national indicators, in specialist crime areas such as gun crime and in operational areas such as response and detection rates. Authority members challenge MPS reports, focussing on areas of under-performance. This is having a real impact on outcomes.



- 68 The authority is successfully challenging attitudes and behaviours in the MPS. The Professional Standards and Complaints Committee manages complaints systems through regular monitoring which is driving improvements in the time taken to conclude investigations and the length of officer suspensions. The authority monitors and manages its own and the MPS's performance against equalities and diversity targets. For example, in relation to the MPA and MPS race equality schemes, progress is reported and published annually. It has also set indicators to measure its success in directing and influencing race equality in the MPS.
- 69 Financial performance is regularly monitored and the MPA has achieved efficiency savings in line with the government's targets. Arrangements relating to financial aspects of corporate governance have improved and the appointed auditor has assessed them as generally adequate. Weaknesses still exist in a number of financial controls and systems and the quality of some information used to support the accounts. The authority has made the MPS more openly accountable, for example through active monitoring of overtime expenditure, although the MPS overtime budget remains considerably overspent and there is much to do to resolve this in the long term.
- 70 The improvement in the financial position is backed up by an increased focus on risk management. The authority promotes a systematic, consistent approach to risk management across the MPS and supported the appointment of a lead officer for risk management. It is developing its own formal risk profile and beginning to assess the risks inherent in its own activities.
- 71 The MPA scrutiny process is resulting in recommendations that are delivering improvements in policing and better services for victims. The current scrutiny of stop and search activity is ground-breaking work which directly addresses areas of major concern in London communities. The authority monitors closely the implementation of its scrutiny action plans. For example, the report on tackling gun crime contains comprehensive recommendations and the authority is holding the MPS to account for delivery of the associated action plan. The authority directs the carrying out of best value reviews by the MPS. Reviews are of a high standard but their impact is reduced because recommendations are not always implemented and progress not chased by the authority.
- 72 The authority's management of MPS performance is hampered by the variable quality and reliability of police data in relation to crime recording, and some performance indicators. This latter led to the Audit Commission qualifying its opinion of the best value performance plan 2003/04. The MPA is addressing this by challenging the quality of data that the MPS presents, rejecting suspect data and focussing on areas of variable performance such as auto crime. It also uses its best value and scrutiny review programmes to investigate operational areas in more detail to gain a better picture of overall performance.
- 73 Internally, the lack of robust corporate planning impacts on the performance management of MPA staff. Some sections such as internal audit and finance have team plans which offer a means of holding their staff to account and bringing some clarity to their efforts but there is no over-arching corporate approach. This means that performance information is not consistently collected and used to analyse and drive up performance, inform decision-making or target staff resources.

## What has the MPA achieved/not achieved to date?

### Achievement in quality of service

- 74 There are more strengths than weaknesses in this area.
- 75 Given the complex structure within which it operates and the scale of the challenges which it faced when it was formed, the MPA has achieved much in its short lifetime. It has introduced an effective framework for holding the MPS to account, the first body to do so in its 175 year history. It is making policing in London more transparent and better aligned to the diverse needs of communities. Stakeholders are positive in their views of the extent to which the MPA has improved the accountability of the MPS. They point to improvements in management of the MPS, reduction in crime, a stronger focus on race issues and increased transparency in relation to resource allocation formula decisions.
- 76 The MPA has developed effective working relationships with the MPS based on trust and co-operation. It has contributed to the development of a more open culture within the senior ranks who are more willing share information and performance data. This combined with its effective oversight of staffing and management functions and its financial control is ensuring that it is delivering its ambitions for an effective, efficient and fair police force for London.
- 77 The MPA sets high standards in carrying out its statutory duties and strategic functions. The authority also sets high standards for policing, driving more challenging targets for the MPS and taking a strong policy lead in key areas such as diversity, finances and local policing. It takes direct action to address controversial issues; for example, setting up the independent Morris Inquiry to review the handling of internal investigations, complaints and grievances involving police officers and police staff, following a number of high-profile cases.
- 78 The MPA ensures that the MPS is effective through performance management, scrutiny and challenge and effective handing of complaints and grievances. It takes an innovative and rigorous approach to scrutiny targeting operational areas that are important to local people and producing significant changes in policing. For example, its scrutiny of approaches to rape investigations delivered significant outcomes for victims such as the introduction of dedicated teams of sexual offence investigation officers providing 24 hour coverage across the capital, and new rape havens based on best practice which are jointly funded with the health service.
- 79 In line with it aims to secure fair policing in London the MPA is driving a strong emphasis on diversity and equalities within the planning process. The equalities budget plan and objectives for 2004/07 demonstrate that it regards equalities and diversity issues as integral to the delivery of policing plans. The authority has raised the profile of equalities and diversity issues through a range of approaches, including improvements in diversity training, setting up the Race Hate Crime Forum and participation in the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Cracking Crime Project. It has also driven increased diversity in the MPS workforce.

- 80 The MPA has had a major impact in increasing transparency of policing in London using its comprehensive website, leaflets and public meetings to publicise issues and explain the rationale behind decisions. It is improving the quality of consultation, extending the range of methods used and building wider community contacts. This is beginning to yield results in terms of forging links with excluded groups such as young black males.
- 81 Surveys consistently show that increased visible policing in their local neighbourhood is a major theme for Londoners. When the authority was formed there were acute recruitment and retention problems within the MPS. At a time when politicians and the public were calling for greater police presence in their neighbourhoods, police numbers were falling. Addressing this is became a priority for the Mayor, the Commissioner and the Home Office. Since its creation, the MPA has overseen a consistent rise in officer numbers, the introduction and growth of police community service officers and the beginning of a re-structuring to neighbourhood policing teams. The authority is driving reforms to give borough commanders greater control over local policing including devolution of budgets which is now in place in pilot areas.
- 82 The MPA inherited a legacy of poor financial control and financial capacity within the MPS. It is driving greater efficiency through critical review of resource allocation and rigorous financial control and audit of police activities. Its strengthening of control systems has resulted in savings and recovery of resources. Investigations by its internal audit function are successfully tackling fraud and corruption and promoting good financial management practices in the MPS, as confirmed by the increase in average assurance scores awarded by internal audits. Financial management and control systems have delivered savings alongside a programme of investment and growth. As a result of the long history of weak financial management, accounts were 'qualified' for the first two years of the authority's life. It has worked hard to address this with the result that the 2002/03 accounts received an 'unqualified' opinion. It has built reserves and the financial position is now much healthier.
- 83 There is much yet to do in terms of continued financial monitoring and budgetary control, particularly at borough level, and the authority is working with its auditors to achieve better quality in its systems. Areas where it has not had major impact include oversight of outsourced contracts and use of information technology. Spending in some areas such as overtime payments is still comparatively excessive and the authority does not yet have a full breakdown of the cost of policing activities.
- 84 The authority started from a low base in terms of community engagement, historically the responsibility of the MPS, with a lack of co-ordination and strategic direction and an over-reliance on community police consultative groups. Resourcing and accountability arrangements for the groups were inconsistent. The authority is tackling this but so far has had limited success.
- 85 Some partners are unclear about the authority's aims and the extent of its influence and powers. This makes them reluctant to engage in joint work and the authority is missing opportunities to use partnerships to improve its understanding of local issues and increase its profile in communities. The authority has yet to achieve or influence productive outcomes from its role in CDRPs.

## Achievement of improvement

- 86 Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area.
- 87 The MPA has significantly improved police accountability and increased the ability of local people to influence policing priorities. The MPS considers itself to be held more to account than at any time in its history. The MPA has responded to external events such as the increased threat of terrorism and other areas of raised concern for Londoners, such as increases in gun crime, using its influence over the MPS and its relations with the Home Office to drive and support improvements. The improvements that the authority, working with the MPS, has achieved are realistic in terms of its lifetime as an organisation, the issues that it inherited and the competing priorities that it needs to balance.
- 88 The authority exceeded its recruitment target for 2003/04 so that by January 2004 officer numbers reached 30,000, the highest ever in the history of the MPS. The aim is to reach 32,000 by March 2005 which compares with 25,000 when the MPA was formed in 2000. In 2003/04 three wards in every borough had neighbourhood policing teams which are free to concentrate on local community policing in their borough, with central specialist units delivering responses to more serious crimes such as child abuse and homicide. This is the first stage of roll out to all wards in London. Over the period from March 2001 to September 2003 the percentage of police officers from minority ethnic groups grew from 4.1 per cent to 5.9 per cent and in 2003/04 this increased to 6.5 per cent. In 2002/03 the number of female police officers rose from 16 to 16.7 per cent and in 2003/04 increased to 18.1 per cent.
- 89 The British Crime Survey and Home Office figures show that over the past three years there have been decreases in all major crime categories except for violent crime. By driving more challenging targets for the MPS, the MPA can have an influential role in improving crime rates. For example, according to Home Office figures street crime fell by 15.8 per cent in 2002/03 and by a further 2 per cent in 2003/04<sup>3</sup> reflecting the impact of Operation Safer Streets introduced in February 2002. Overall, more targets were achieved by the MPS in 2002/03 (22 out of 44) compared to 2001/02 (16 out of 44). However, the MPA does not analyse its activities in sufficient detail for it to fully demonstrate where and how it is having a major individual impact on MPS delivery.
- 90 The authority has improved procedures for dealing with public complaints and reduced the time taken to investigate and resolve them. For example, it has reduced the number of investigations of public complaints against the MPS that are over 120 days old from 40 per cent in 2002 to 29 per cent in April 2003. It takes the lead in investigating complaints and allegations against senior officers and adopting a robust approach to discipline issues.

<sup>3</sup> Home Office recorded crime statistics 2003/04. Arrangements to secure data quality and ensure compliance with the National Crime Reporting Standard by all police authorities are currently subject to a national study by the Audit Commission.

- 91 The MPA fulfils its statutory duties in relation to tackling human resources issues in the MPS. For example, the number of working days lost due to sickness per officer has decreased from 10.5 days in 2001/02 to 8.5 in 2003/04. It is improving retention of police support staff through better pay and conditions and fairer allowances.
- 92 Tackling crime is a high priority for Londoners. The YouGov 2004 survey found that the thing that would most improve the lives of Londoners is less crime, followed by more police officers. Public confidence in the MPS was low when the MPA was created but has improved in recent years. The Public Attitude Survey 2002/03<sup>4</sup> showed that trust in the police is high amongst Londoners overall, but lowest amongst black and minority ethnic residents. The Annual London Survey 2004 carried out by MORI for the GLA showed that Londoners' fear of crime has fallen. Thirty eight per cent said that crime is the worst thing about living in London, compared to 52 per cent in 2001. Sixty per cent said that they feel safe walking in their neighbourhood in the evening, as compared to 50 per cent in 2001.
- 93 The authority's role is not well understood by the public. The degree to which citizens express direct satisfaction with its achievements is limited, although its scrutiny activities have attracted largely positive responses. Overall, the influence of the MPA on policing in London is measured through satisfaction with policing in general and there are areas where the MPA and the MPS are not meeting their targets. Public satisfaction with the number of police on the beat was only 15 per cent, below the MPA target of 20 per cent, and satisfaction with mobile patrols was 32 per cent, also below the MPA target of 35 per cent. In 2002/03 only one out of the four targets set - for public satisfaction with police response - was achieved and satisfaction with police response overall dropped in comparison with 2001/02.

<sup>4</sup> Carried out on behalf of the MPS by MMV

## Investment

- 94 Weaknesses outweigh strengths in this area.
- 95 The MPA recognises that, if it is to build on its successes so far, it cannot continue to neglect the development of itself as a resilient organisation. It is identifying and beginning to put in place building blocks to better support the delivery of its aims and address internal weaknesses. Following elections in June 2004 the new authority chair and members have reviewed its strategic direction and begun to make changes; for example, finalising and publishing a corporate plan and proposing changes to human resources practices. However, this work is at an early stage, is not embedded into day to day management and is not yet impacting on outcomes.
- 96 Joint working across the GLA group is underdeveloped and the MPA is not investing in working with other functional bodies and the GLA. Relationships are building at a strategic level, but it is not clear how the authority intends to work with the other functional bodies. It has yet to fully consider how it can contribute to the cross-cutting priorities of the Mayor's office to deliver mutual goals for crime prevention and reduction in London.
- 97 The history of under-resourcing of consultation and community participation is being addressed through a more co-ordinated approach which includes a strengthened MPA team; a London-wide citizen's panel and a new consultation strategy. The strategy is underpinned by an implementation plan clearly linking targeted consultation to key joint MPA/MPS planning dates. Its impact will not be realised until the next planning cycle.
- 98 Recognising the demands of its role in borough CDRPs, the MPA has created a dedicated staff team and is formulating a CDRP strategy. However, it has not yet established itself as a strong or influential partner at a local level.
- 99 The MPA is not making effective use of the strong internal challenge around policy and strategy provided by its staff in order to drive required changes. However, responses to inspection, audit, consultancy and peer review show that the authority is open to external challenge. It implemented the findings of an external review of management structures specifically splitting the consultation and equalities function to better balance workloads and skills. It participated in joint best value reviews carried out across the GLA group and made changes as a result.
- 100 The MPA is building management capacity through appointments to new posts such as heads of planning and performance, community engagement and scrutiny and review. It has difficulties in recruiting staff because its role and activities are not well known, and is raising its profile through internal and external newsletters, leaflets and its website. Internal communication is improving in the light of staff feedback from newly instigated staff meetings.
- 101 The authority continues to invest in its approach to working with MPS and this is paying off in key areas. For example highlighting and addressing gaps in professional standards and providing support for 'whistle blowers' and providing pay enhancements to attract and retain MPS staff.



## In the light of what the MPA has learned to date, what does it plan to do next?

### Learning

- 102 Weaknesses outweigh strengths in this area.
- 103 The authority shows a degree of self awareness but has some way to go before it can demonstrate that learning informs change. It recognises many of the areas that it needs to tackle and the gaps that it needs to fill in order to go forward as a resilient organisation that can take on and lead a wide-ranging policing and community safety agenda for London. However, this understanding has not yet translated into substantial change that staff, members and partners would recognise.
- 104 The MPA is aware from feedback, and from the internal challenges that it currently faces, that it needs to define organisational ambitions and priorities to be clearer about what it is trying to achieve. It knows that it needs to move forward with a corporate plan underpinned by clear corporate systems for delivery, but progress on this was slow during the first four years. This was due in part to members viewing their role as having a greater emphasis and focus on MPS activities rather than the internal working of the authority. The MPA corporate plan is now in place but there is some way to go in ensuring that there are underpinning structures to translate its contents into actions and outcomes.
- 105 The authority reviews its activities when it is not achieving the outcomes that it seeks. It learnt from early difficulties in its approach to consultation, making changes as a result. It revised its committee structures to improve focus and efficiency. The authority is open to external feedback and analysis and uses external consultants to evaluate its activities. However, it is not always clear about the outcomes that it seeks and its subsequent action-planning and implementation of recommendations are not strong. Within the authority there are few formal mechanisms for staff to share learning and good practice.
- 106 The authority seeks out best practice in other police authorities both directly and through its role in the Association of Police Authorities. For example, it has looked at the ways in which other authorities engage with their CDRPs. It liaises with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary with regards to good practice elsewhere. There is little evidence that learning from others in this way has had a significant impact so far.
- 107 The internal audit function of the authority has a track record of learning from others. It worked with the private sector to develop its own performance indicators and enters into national benchmarking comparisons as far as possible given the constraints and context within which the authority operates and the unique nature of the political structures in London. In its scrutiny function, the authority involves a wide range of stakeholders and seeks to learn from best practice. For example, while undertaking the scrutiny of gun crime it examined initiatives in Brent and Manchester. It also uses pilot projects to learn about what works best. The authority takes part in groups and forums designed to share experience and learning across the GLA functional bodies at operational level. However, learning from across the group is at a very early stage.

## Future plans

- 108 Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area.
- 109 In its future planning the MPA is addressing areas where it has not achieved what it wanted to and where its organisational problems are presenting barriers. The new authority elected in June 2004 has reviewed the strategic direction of the MPA and finalised and published a corporate plan which clearly defines the organisational vision and aims for 2004/07. It is beginning to develop work plans to support delivery of these aims. It is too early to say whether these will deliver real outcomes, and the MPA's track record on corporate planning is not strong. However, its finalisation represents a step forward for the authority, offering the potential for it to develop a sounder approach to delivering its statutory functions within a stronger, more resilient organisational structure.
- 110 The MPA delivers well in terms of its statutory function to agree and publish robust future plans with the MPS. *Towards the Safest City 2003/05* sets out their shared ambitions. The MPA achieves a degree of influence over policing plan priorities and ensures that the MPS has the capacity to deliver its future agenda and that its plans are realistic and deliverable.
- 111 The authority has medium term financial and audit strategies, an estates strategy, and a diversity strategy to take forward its improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the MPS. The 2003/08 estates strategy is clearly linked to the *Towards the Safest City* strategy and represents a major step forward in planning for the future provision of accommodation for policing in London. It acknowledges close links with the relevant statutory strategies of the Mayor, such as the London Plan.
- 112 The 'Step Change' programme aims to deliver the joint MPS, MPA and Mayor's vision for growth in police and community support officers and is on track for delivery by 2005/06. During the subsequent four years the MPA aims to shift the focus from police numbers to more strategic deployment of officers to gain maximum impact. This will be reliant upon successful implementation of the 'C3i' (command, communications, control and information) and 'Airwave' call-handling project which is based on the creation of three new, highly specialised call centres. This is a high-cost project and is currently on track to deliver by 2006.
- 113 In the first four years the MPA did not involve staff sufficiently in future planning, leading to confusion about the authority's direction. This is beginning to change and staff have been consulted about the recently finalised corporate plan. Externally there is real commitment to involving the public and stakeholders and the new consultation and implementation strategy clearly sets out the MPA's commitment to involving stakeholders and the wider community in planning for the future and working towards better public participation. However, the lack of clarity about the MPA's role and what it seeks to achieve in the long term reduces confidence and support. Building productive relationships with minority groups remains a significant challenge for the future.
- 114 The MPA has good intentions to go forward as an organisation that can drive change. For example, it aspires to deliver some ambitious and challenging scrutiny projects such as a review of mental health issues and policing, involving health service providers, which is planned for 2005.



Authority members have ambitions to tackle other cross-cutting issues such as anti-social behaviour, racially-motivated crime and access to police services. However, these are not fully developed into clear plans with defined outcomes and are not integrated into an overall strategic programme. The authority is intending to address this and formulate a programme for 2005/06 which aligns scrutiny and review activities to the aims of the key strategic MPA and MPS plans but this is not yet in place.

- 115 The authority also intends to carry out a critical review of the resource allocation formula and to continue progress on devolution of budgets. It aims to work more closely with other criminal justice agencies. These intentions are not yet underpinned by actions plans or programmes, although the MPA expresses the determination to go forward using the opportunities presented by the new authority to firm up its plans and strategies.
- 116 The MPA is not engaged in joint planning across the GLA group and does not link its corporate planning with that of other stakeholders such as the Mayor's office and the other functional bodies; for example in relation to consultation, human resources and communication.

## Summary of theme scores and strengths / weaknesses

Theme	Grade	Strengths	Weaknesses
Ambition	3	<p>Shared vision with MPS translated into policing plans</p> <p>Good understanding of London challenges and opportunities</p> <p>Enabling citizens to influence policing plans</p> <p>Identifying strategic partnership opportunities</p>	<p>Internal leadership lacking in some areas</p> <p>Corporate planning is weak</p> <p>Partnerships not yet delivering outcomes</p>
Prioritisation	2	<p>Beginning to influence MPS priorities</p> <p>Starting to balance priorities of Home Office, Mayor and communities</p> <p>Consultation is starting to influence policing priorities</p> <p>Prepared to divert resources</p>	<p>Slow to define and publish priorities for MPA</p> <p>Internal priorities inappropriately driven by individual interests or knowledge</p> <p>Public and partners not clear what MPA is trying to achieve</p> <p>Basis for targeting and diverting resources not clear</p>
Focus	3	<p>Sustained focus on management and influence of MPS</p> <p>Strong focus on diversity and equalities</p> <p>Scrutiny focuses on challenging operational areas</p> <p>Driving focus of MPS on improved performance</p>	<p>Frequently distracted from organisational development</p>

Theme	Grade	Strengths	Weaknesses
Capacity	2	<p>High calibre members; talented and motivated staff</p> <p>Clear, robust policies for equalities and diversity</p> <p>Strengthening financial capacity of MPS</p>	<p>Slow to build management capacity</p> <p>Lack of corporate approach in key areas</p> <p>Internal communication is weak</p> <p>Members and staff stretched</p> <p>HR management weak and problematic, with low morale</p> <p>Decision making slow in some areas</p> <p>Relations with community police consultative groups not well managed</p>
Performance management	3	<p>Performance management of MPS is increasingly effective</p> <p>Scrutiny has delivered real impact on the ground</p> <p>Good monitoring of Race Equality Scheme targets</p> <p>Financial management strengthened</p> <p>Risk assessment and management developing</p>	<p>Internal performance management is inconsistent</p> <p>Quality of MPS performance data is variable</p>

Theme	Grade	Strengths	Weaknesses
Achievement in quality of service	3	<p>High quality in delivery of statutory duties and strategic functions</p> <p>Setting high standards and driving more challenging targets for the MPS</p> <p>Achieving ambitions for effective, efficient and fair police force</p> <p>Promoting diversity and equality</p> <p>Outcomes from scrutiny – better services for victims</p> <p>Support for neighbourhood policing</p> <p>Increased transparency</p>	<p>Some partners are unclear about MPA aims and the extent of its influence and powers</p> <p>Relations with CDRPs not yet productive</p> <p>More work to be done re financial monitoring and budgetary control, particularly at borough level</p> <p>No full breakdown of the cost of policing activities.</p>
Achievement of improvement	3	<p>Improving accountability</p> <p>Local people beginning to influence targets</p> <p>Crime and fear of crime decreasing</p> <p>Improving complaint handling</p> <p>Recruitment and retention of officers and support staff</p> <p>Increased diversity of MPS workforce</p>	<p>Confidence and trust remains low in minority ethnic communities</p> <p>Public satisfaction still low in some areas</p>
Investment	2	<p>Addressing gaps in consultation and community participation</p> <p>External challenge drives change</p> <p>Building management capacity</p>	<p>Beginning to address internal weaknesses but efforts are at an early stage and not yet impacting on outcomes</p> <p>Progress on corporate planning has been slow – corporate plan recently finalised but untested</p> <p>Relations across the GLA group underdeveloped</p> <p>Internal challenge is not driving change</p>

Theme	Grade	Strengths	Weaknesses
Learning	2	<p>Self aware, open to feedback</p> <p>Beginning to seek out best practice</p> <p>Learning from inspection, audit and review, and making use of pilot projects</p>	<p>Learning is not systematically driving change</p> <p>Learning not transferred – few systems for sharing internally</p> <p>Learning across GLA group at a very early stage</p>
Future plans	3	<p>Future plans build on the 'Step Change' programme</p> <p>Ensures that statutory policing plans are robust and realistic</p> <p>Committed to involving stakeholders in planning</p> <p>Medium term plans and strategies in place to improve efficiency of MPS</p>	<p>Not all MPA aspirations are underpinned with firm plans or integrated into programmes for delivery</p>

**Scoring key:**

- 1 - Weak
- 2 - Weaknesses outweigh strengths
- 3 - Strengths outweigh weaknesses
- 4 – Strong

## Appendix - Framework for Initial Performance Assessment

- 117 This initial performance assessment was carried out under the Local Government Act 1999. Bodies that are best value authorities for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999 have a general duty under Section 3 of that Act to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. Section 10 gives the Audit Commission the power to inspect authorities' performance of the general duty of improvement.
- 118 The assessment of the MPA was undertaken by a team from the Audit Commission and took place over the period 10-21 May 2004.
- 119 This report has been discussed with the MPA, which has been given the opportunity to examine the Audit Commission's assessment. This report will be used as the basis for improvement planning by the authority.