

**METROPOLITAN POLICE AUTHORITY**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
STRATEGY**

## 1. **Vision:**

The goal of this Community Engagement Strategy is:

To provide effective ways for Londoners to understand and to be able to influence the policing decisions and policies that affect them, and to hold the MPS to account for the service at the local level.

The MPA therefore recognises that effective community-police engagement in London will be a collaborative effort between the police and the community that identifies not only problems of crime and disorder but also involves all elements of the community in the implementation of solutions to these problems.

Community police engagement is therefore defined in this strategy as a proactive role of harnessing the energies of local communities and partners in not merely identifying problems but in negotiating priorities for action and shaping and participating in solutions.

This strategy articulates the commitment by which the MPA will strengthen Londoners' own voice in directly shaping the nature of policing.

The key indicators of success in implementing this strategy will include:

- increasing the overall public satisfaction and confidence in the police;
- Londoners increasing level of involvement and sense of ownership over the policing of London.

A success indicator for the police will be establishing a work culture which routinely recognises understands and takes account of the needs, expectations, experience and perspectives of Londoners.

## 2. **Lead Responsibility:**

The Community Engagement Committee of the MPA shall have overall responsibility for directing and monitoring the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy.

## 3. **Governance and Oversight:**

Within its statutory duty to obtain the viewpoints of Londoners on policing, the MPA will first pursue this in the context of its governance and oversight responsibilities. These responsibilities help to clarify the 'division of labour' on community engagement between the MPA and the MPS. For example, the MPA will support and oversee the MPS and its local partners in engaging with the public on the operational and tactical issues at the borough and neighbourhood

level. The prime governance responsibility of the MPA is to hold the MPS to account to ensure that community engagement is fully integrated and mainstreamed throughout the MPS.

In line with the White Paper on Police Reform and the National Policing Plan, the MPA has a primary responsibility in the management of the police, of scrutinising performance and holding those responsible to account.

The MPA support, promote and monitor a citizen-focused police service, which responds to the needs of all Londoners. This requires: -

- A citizen focused police organisation and culture with appropriate resources, standards and structures in place to ensure Londoners can influence and shape its policing requirements
- Neighbourhood policing, accessible to the public and responsive to citizen needs and priorities
- Effective engagement with Londoners on a regular basis and their increased participation in community safety
- Effective and accessible mechanisms for accountability back to residents including better information, tailored to local needs
- Partnership working across London extended beyond statutory agencies to ensure they fully involve and are responding to and serving the needs of neighbourhoods and communities

The MPA will expect to see in the annual policing plans, in local strategic plans and in the initiatives undertaken by specialist areas within the Met, the actions being taken to improve the citizen focus of policing services.

#### 4. Standards of Community Engagement:

As part of this Strategy the MPA will secondly, develop standards and performance measures for community engagement and scrutinise delivery against these standards.

The Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) provides MPA with an initial framework for measuring, comparing and assessing the MPS's performance with reference to community engagement and the citizen focus.

In supporting the development of standards and performance measures for community engagement, the MPA will utilise these standards in assessing all reports and presentations before the Committee in terms of progress against the strategy.

The Community Engagement Committee, in receiving reports or survey results on a regular basis, will also expect to see comparative satisfaction levels by race, ethnicity, faith, disability, age and gender. In this regard, the Community Engagement Committee will work with the Home Office and the APA to strengthen the way police performance is measured and inspected so that it reflects the priorities of the public and their views about policing.

For example, some of the additional outcome measures expected of community engagement might be:

- How did it strengthen police accountability to the community or directly inform a decision, or shape policy or service delivery arrangements?
- How did it help to set local performance standards and targets?
- Did it increase the percentage of people who say the organisation listens to their views?
- Did it increase the percentage of people's awareness of community-police engagement methods in place?
- Did it increase people's involvement in policing (i.e. whether asked about police service, whether attended public meeting etc?)

## **5. Channelling the Results of Community Engagement Activities:**

The variety of forms by which Londoners can engage encompasses a variety of approaches at the strategic level (i.e. service-wide, pan London), at the operational level (i.e. borough level), and at the community level (i.e. neighbourhood and ward level).

The MPA will use the results of this activity so that they inform all of the policy making, planning and performance management functions of the Authority.

The MPA will also streamline these various activities and assess their effectiveness and utility.

## **6. Promoting Best Practice:**

Fourthly, the MPA will strengthen its role in setting the framework and focus by which the MPS integrates community engagement in its activities. It will do this by developing performance criteria, by regular scrutiny, by developing and testing exemplary community-police engagement models and by promoting best practice. The MPA will pursue an evaluation and research agenda that will focus

on evaluating, clarifying and strengthening existing methods and structures and identifying the nature of participants, intent and intended outcomes of each community engagement partnership mechanism. The MPA will look to support and disseminate innovative methods and structures for community-police engagement.

## **7. Community Engagement at the Local Level**

Fifth, in order to enhance local accountability, increase partnership work and strengthen local democratic involvement, the MPA will reposition its resources and the current arrangements by which it supports community-police engagement at the borough level.

At the borough level the MPA will continue to support the development of innovative models and structures of community police engagement to ensure a coordinated, seamless process of community participation from the local neighbourhood level to the borough level. The learning will contribute to further enhancing the criteria and standards for community police engagement performance and for promoting best practice.

The MPA will expect to receive annual reports on the methods and impact of community engagement on the activities of CDRPs. These reports will be further supplemented by the work of the MPA officers working with local CDRPs in strengthening their partnership and community engagement activities. It will also include monitoring and assessing whether:

- The impact of community engagement is responsive to the diversity of local policing needs at the borough level.
  - \* MPA/MPS community engagement activities conform with all equality and diversity obligations and commitments and are inclusive of all sectors of London's populations
  - \* Community engagement activities are compliant with existing and impending legislation and fulfil existing best value and other recommendations aimed at improvement and increased effectiveness in community engagement by the MPA/MPS.

## **8. Community Engagement at the Pan-London Level**

Historically the MPA's community engagement efforts have largely been expended at the local level. It has been weak in obtaining a pan-London perspective in gathering Londoners views on overall strategic policing issues. The MPA will wish to address this by enlarging and strengthening its pan London initiatives.

This will include:

- Ensuring that the MPAs 3,000 member Safer London Panel is effectively used and its collective viewpoint is widely disseminated and promoted
- Maintaining and strengthening partnership work with appropriate institutions such as the GLA, the Home Office, ALG, GOL, APA, etc
- Building partnerships with pan-London community based organisations to undertake community engagement with specific target groups.

### **9. Serving Diverse Communities:**

London's diversity includes characteristics not only of race, ethnicity, faith, language and immigrant refugee status. It also includes huge differences in crime and safety experiences, and thereby different policing needs based on age, gender, sexual orientation and mental and physical disability. Further layers of ever increasing diversity that impacts upon policing – and thereby methods of community engagement – include the complex and overlapping differences and divisions that exist in terms of people's values and beliefs, lifestyles, life chances and levels of disadvantage and deprivation.

The dramatically changing and mobile nature of London's population clearly creates greater urgency for more purposeful community engagement processes that are accessible and equitable for all sectors of the population.

For example, the MPA will continue to drive forward the disabled peoples policing agenda, and will strengthen its engagement with the faith communities in London, particularly with respect to policing practice that negatively impacts those of certain faiths. Similarly it will wish to strengthen its engagement with the LGBT communities, with Women's networks, and with the Black, minority and ethnic communities.

### **10. Strengthening The Community Voice:**

Apart from ensuring a police service able to involve and be influenced by the viewpoints of Londoners, successful community-police engagement also requires residents willing and able to get involved. The MPA will therefore consider effective ways are in place to increase Londoners awareness and understanding of policing issues. The MPA will also support and build the capacity, willingness and skills of individuals and communities to work collectively and effectively to shape and strengthen policing in London.

### **11. Priorities:**

In summary, the Authority sees its role in strengthening Londoners involvement at a pan London level and on overall strategic priorities, while at the borough level, the MPA will take a leadership role in supporting, facilitating and overseeing the community engagement activities of the MPS and local partners

on more tactical and operational issues. The priorities in implementing the Community Engagement Strategy will be to:

- Require the MPS to establish the necessary organisational arrangements to deliver community engagement in accordance with this strategic framework, to scrutinise the community engagement performance of the MPS and to hold the MPS to account for continued improvement, all as an extended element of its governance responsibilities
- Establish standards and quality assurance of processes at the local, borough and pan-London levels that strengthen the level of Londoners involvement and influence over policing
- Establish methodological and organisational procedures that ensure the viewpoints of Londoners inform the whole of the MPA decision – making and planning process including the annual policing plan.
- Establish a public education and awareness strategy
- Develop the capacity of communities in London to engage.