



Metropolitan Police Authority

Consultation Committee – 13 November 2003

OUTCOMES OF THE MPA CONSULTATION ON POLICING PRIORITIES

Report by the Clerk

Summary

This report presents some of the recent findings arising from the public consultations on policing priorities undertaken directly by the MPA, as well as from other survey sources, on what Londoners feel about crime and safety issues and what they think the police should do about it. The conclusions reinforce the deliberations of the Commissioner's Conference as well as the directions from the Home Office that there should be less prescriptive and fewer corporate 'high level' priorities and emphasis placed on a more accountable, 'diversified' and 'localised' planning process.

A. RECOMMENDATION - That

members note the report.

B. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. In complementing the community intelligence gathered by the MPS for the Commissioner's Conference held on 24 September (see the report of the results of the e-consultation at **Appendix 2**), this report presents some of the recent findings arising from public consultations undertaken directly by the MPA. It also draws on the results of consultation undertaken, employing a variety of methodologies, by other agencies and institutions such as the GLA, ALG, local authorities and Community Police Consultative Groups (CPCGs). In addition, it also draws on the findings of other relevant recent studies and reports.
2. In determining the policing priorities for 2004/05, the MPA needs to be informed by as many different sources as possible. An important component of informing its decision-making process is its statutory duty to 'obtain the views of the public about policing'.
3. In terms of their impact on policing priorities, this report draws to the attention of members recent findings on changes in who Londoners are, what Londoners feel about crime and safety issues and what they think the police should do about it.

Results of MPA consultation

4. To complement the work undertaken by CPCGs in local police priority

setting and their input, along with many other community stakeholder groups to the Pan London On-Line Consultation process, the MPA, through its Consultation and Diversity Unit, undertook a range of consultations over the summer with a number of communities regarding policing priorities for 2004/05.

5. This has included a breakfast consultation with representatives of the faith communities in partnership with the Haringey Peace Alliance that involved over 200 participants. In addition, in partnership with the London Civic Forum, six focus groups were held with representatives from Asian communities, refugee and asylum seekers, disability communities, women networks, small business, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. A further youth workshop was also organised by the Peabody Trust.
6. It would be impossible to attempt to summarise, in order of priority, the crime priorities from these very different discussions. In some cases there were inevitably competing and conflicting crime priorities of different groups. Participants were however generally disinclined to participate in a process of merely identifying discrete areas of criminal activity and attempting to put them into some kind of priority list.
7. More importantly, the overarching theme arising from the MPS's consultations was the public desire for ongoing, direct, active involvement and engagement with the police in the identification and tackling of crime and disorder issues.
8. Rather than distinguishing between the relative importance of different forms of criminal activity, these discussions were more concerned with the process and manner by which the police interact with Londoners in addressing crime and maintaining the peace. This appeared to be the more urgent underlying priority. The priority suggested to developing safer communities was for the police to focus on the processes and methods of re-establishing and strengthening their interactions with Londoners. This was seen as essential to ensure and secure Londoners trust and confidence in the police.
9. The recurrent theme that emerged from the consultations was the demand for greater local police-community interaction and accountability. The police's reassurance and peacekeeping role was given primacy. A constant refrain in the consultation was the desire for the police to re-engage with local people and to do this in a variety of ways – rather than meeting them only in the context of incidents of crime and disorder or in police-initiated consultation.
10. This view was reinforced by some emerging issues that arose from the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Cracking Crime conference held in April 2002, that identified considerable under-utilised community resources that could be brought to bear in addressing local crime and disorder. Faith communities, for example are particularly well situated

to offer support to victims and the vulnerable whilst providing role models and community leadership.

11. The participants of the community consultations recognised that the MPS has undergone huge administration and organisational changes over the last few years. The emphasis of some of these changes on increased community-police interactions and on decentralisation was strongly endorsed. But there was a clear sense that there needs to be more urgency in more fully rooting these directions.
12. There was also recognition that there is an inevitable and natural tendency in determining policing priorities to focus resources on the most serious crimes and those that create most concern. This tendency is also reinforced by what has been described as police 'managerialist considerations'. These considerations place a premium on quantifiable performance measures of the impact of resource allocations and on results that are demonstrable in the short term. But the community consultations were concerned that narrowing the focus in this way tends to diminish, if not rule out, community-based preventive strategies which might be highly effective but whose impact is less certain and may not become apparent in the medium to long term.

Policing priorities and London's diverse communities

13. In addition to the outcomes of the consultation, for the first time this year, MPA officers considered evidence from research and other data including those below.

Census data

14. In assessing the most recent Census data, the speed with which the diversity of London's population is changing has huge implications for policing priorities. As the recent work of the Audit Commission has stressed, applying a user focus and responding to the consequent differential policing needs of those users should be the basis and rationale for business change.
15. The data indicated that almost half of all ethnic minority Britons now live in London. London's non-white population is already the largest of any European city at just under 2 million – 27% of the capitals' total. Demographers at the GLA predict that this will grow to a third within the next 10 years. Most of Britain's 185,000 new immigrants each year end up in the capital. Over 300 languages are spoken in London.
16. London's accelerating diversity includes characteristics not only of race, ethnicity, and language and immigrant status. It also includes huge differences in crime and safety experiences, and thereby differential policing needs, based on age, gender, sexual orientation, and mental and physical disability. At least a million Londoners are from the lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender communities. At least 17% of Londoners have some form of disability. Further layers of

London's exploding diversity highlighted by the census data that impacts upon policing planning and priorities include the complex and overlapping differences and divisions that exist in London's population in terms of peoples' values and beliefs, lifestyles, life chances and levels of disadvantage and deprivation.

17. The dramatically changing and mobile nature of the population clearly creates greater urgency for more purposeful inclusive policies and practices that are accessible and equitable for all sectors of the population. The ongoing rapidity of demographic changes presents particular challenges to the priority setting process of the MPA and the MPS to ensure that all members of London's communities are able to derive different but equal service and benefit from the police.

Public perceptions of the police

18. In addition to the 2002/03 Public Attitude Survey undertaken for the MPS, a number of other recent satisfaction and public attitude surveys, etc, undertaken by various sources have highlighted areas requiring attention in the police priority setting and planning process. For example, confidence in our criminal justice system is not high.
19. In rating public service, the 2002 ALG Survey of Londoners found that only 28% of Londoners rated policing services as good to excellent, which was a 7% drop from 2001, the biggest drop of any public service.
20. Ethnic minorities are less confident that the criminal justice system respects the rights of, or treats fairly, people accused of committing a crime. The 2002 ALG Survey of Londoners, for example found that just over half (52%) of black respondents believed they would be treated fairly by the police if they were a suspect (compared to 64% of white respondents). Further, according to the Policing For London Survey (PFLS), 36% of all Londoners believe the police treat ethnic minorities unfairly.
21. These differences are significant and clearly reflect the effects of direct and indirect experience. In addition to race, these surveys also highlight differences towards the police based on gender, disability, age, work status, social class, housing, and borough residence (PFLS, 2002; BCS, 2000; ALG, 2002)
22. People who had contact with the police during the last year were less likely to say that their local police did a good job (75%) than those that had no contact with the police (81%). For victims of crime, levels of satisfaction have been falling from 45% very satisfied in 1981 to 32% in 2000 (PFLS 2002). In the ALG 2002 Survey, 25% of Londoners were not confident the police would deal with their situation seriously if they were a victim of crime.
23. A third of Londoners had been 'really annoyed' at the way the police had treated them or people they knew according to the British Crime

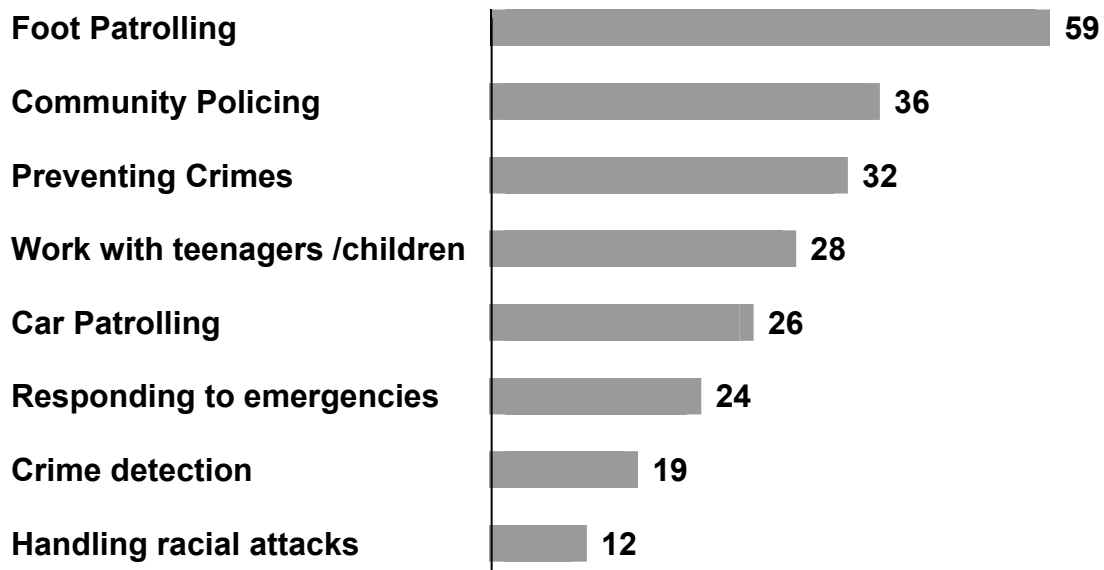
Survey. The main reasons for annoyance in the last five years were unfriendly manner, unreasonable behaviour and failure to do enough. Interestingly, failure to detect crimes rarely caused annoyance.

24. Public perceptions and, therefore, trust and confidence in the police are a critical foundation for effective policing in London. Irrespective of whether declining public confidence is a consequence of poor police performance or simply rising public expectations, the above figures must be of concern. They suggest a priority that needs to be addressed directly.
25. In considering an appropriate response, it is of interest to note that the ALG 2002 survey of Londoners concluded that any public service wanting to maximise the number of people who think they do a good job will need to ensure that their communications with residents are highly rated. Of the three dimensions associated with communicating with residents (informing, listening and involving), it was suggested that listening is the most important. Improving 'listening' ratings appears to be about managing expectations, telling people why a decision was made and having specific, targeted communication.

What Londoners want

26. In the Policing for London Study (PFLS 2002), which was a representative sample of 2,800 adult Londoners, people were asked to identify up to five priority problems, which 'the police in your area should spend most time and energy trying to fight'. Burglary, mugging and dealing in hard drugs emerge as clear priorities. The MPS 2002/03 Public Attitude Survey confirms these priorities.
27. Having canvassed views on London's crime problems, respondents were asked about solutions to crime and disorder. The lead-in to this section of questions stressed that the police had limited resources and could not always cover everything; respondents were then asked to say which activities the police 'should do more of'.

'Table 1' - Activities the Police Should Spend more time on:
% choosing each item



28. There was a clear desire for 'working with the community', crime prevention and work with teenagers and children. This desire is reinforced by many of the discussions of CPCGs such as the outcomes of the consultation undertaken by the Camden CPCG on behalf of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The Kingston CPCG for example, in stressing the quality rather than the quantity of policing as of paramount importance, see the priority through neighbourhood policing where beat officers regularly patrol the same beats and are pro-active in developing links and interacting with local community groups.

29. In this regard it is of interest to note that the MPS Public Attitude Survey 2002/03 identified two functions that the MPS carries out to a lesser standard than other police functions: providing a visible policing presence and consulting with the public.

30. The PFLS confirmed the overwhelming evidence of the public's desire to see more 'bobbies on the beat'. These findings are confirmed in the MPS 2002/03 Public Attitude Survey (PAS), which found only 15% are presently satisfied with the number of police on the beat. Few previous surveys, though, have tried to pinpoint what people actually expect from this extra patrolling. The PFLS asked those who advocated more time on patrol to say what types of activity the patrols should engage in. The most common responses can be summarised as:

What do people want from patrol?

- To deter or prevent crime (65%);
- Providing reassurance (49%),
- Work with schools (25%),
- Gathering local intelligence (24%),
- Dealing with disturbances (20%); and
- Providing advice on crime prevention (15%)

31. In the 2002 GLA survey of Londoners, 50% of Londoners think safety/crime should be the top priority to improve London as place to live. Concern about crime continues to increase and has increased by 18% over the past four years. The survey concluded that the public want to see and hear a focus on the 'liveability' issues of community safety.

Conclusions

32. The Policing For London Report (2002) argues that performance management requirements that depend on statistical targets have encouraged a simplification process of priority setting based on specific crime categories. The net effect of such quantitative performance measurement is to seriously limit consideration of the nature of policing priorities. Managerial requirements are in danger of determining police priorities rather than the reverse. As the old adage says, 'what can't be measured doesn't count and what doesn't count doesn't get done'. This narrow focus puts long-term investment in, for example, community-police relations at serious risk.
33. An overwhelming conclusion of the MPA consultation of what Londoners want is that policing priorities should be founded upon and responsive to the diversity of local needs at the borough level. More purposeful consideration therefore needs to be given to developing an array of local arrangements that increase the capacity and improve the quality of both community input and community accountability.
34. This conclusion suggests that the framework by which police priorities are established in a way that truly reflects Londoners needs can only be determined through a policing service that is 'diversified' and 'localised'. The expressed policing priorities by Londoners would appear to concur with and reinforce much of the deliberations from the Commissioner's Conference as well as the thinking of the Home Secretary towards a process of civil renewal through a new localism.

C. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

The consultation process undertaken by the MPA gave particular attention to many of London's diverse communities and the conclusions of a more localised process of police planning and priority setting should ensure a greater capacity to address equality issues.

D. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications of this report. Funding for the additional consultation processes informing this report were approved by the Consultation Committee at previous meetings.

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Background papers: On-Line Consultation Report

References

- Association of Local Government (2002) – *Survey of Londoners*
- Audit Commission (2003) - *Local Criminal Justice Boards Report*
- Aye Maung (2001) - *2000 British Crime Survey: Findings for London*
- Data and information taken from the MPA's CPCG minutes and reports (2003)
- FitzGerald et al (2002) - *Policing for London*
- Government Office for London (2002) - *Report from BME Communities Cracking Crime Event*
- Greater London Authority (2002) – *Missed opportunities – A skills audit of refugee women in London from the teaching, nursing and medical professions*
- Greater London Authority (2003) - *Annual London Survey*
- Haringey Peace Alliance (2003) – *Report from the Faith Breakfast Consultation*
- Home Office Police Standards Unit (2003) - *Section 17 in Action: Lessons from the first Priority Policing Areas*
- Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate No. 136' - *British crime survey 2000'*
- Institute for Employment Studies / MPA (2003) - *A Review of Community and Race Relations (CRR) Training*
- Kershaw et al (2000) – *The 2000 British Crime Survey*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin
- London Civic Forum (October 2003) – *Report from Policing Priorities Focus groups*
- Office for National Statistics (2001) - *Census Data*

MPA/MPS Online consultation for the 2004/05 Policing Priorities

The results of the above consultation are presented in the following report compiled by Dialogue by Design.

The process was considered a success and responses provided a significant amount of detailed information. The report provides an outline of the background and methodology, a summary of responses given by the participants, and identifies and prioritises the key issues raised. These were fed into the Commissioners Autumn Planning Seminar in September. An evaluation of the consultation process provided by the participants is included in the report.

The only disappointing aspect of the consultation was the low participation rate. The final section of the report, which outlines recommendations for next steps, includes activities designed to improve participation rates in future consultations. For example, the detailed information gathered as part of the process will be disseminated within the MPS and actioned where appropriate. Methods will be developed to ensure that these results are publicised and fed back to participants. The database from which participants were invited will be developed and where gaps are identified more community based organisations recruited.

These activities will form a start point from which to build an on-going consultation dialogue with organisations and ensure that lessons learnt from the process are incorporated into future strategic consultation activities carried out by the MPA/MPS.



MPA

Metropolitan Police Authority

dialoguebydesign

**Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and
Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)**

**Online consultation for 2004/05 Policing
Priorities**

**Final Report: Summary of Responses,
Identifying and Prioritising Key Issues and
Evaluating the Consultation**

Prepared by Dialogue by Design

8 October 2003

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Background

The Consultation

The MPA and MPS invited 826 community and local government organisations in London to participate in a consultation to identify policing priorities. The results will be used to develop the 2004/05 policing plan.

The consultation was conducted online in three sessions:

- Session 1 asked participants to identify which policing issues are of particular concern, and why
- Session 2 enabled participants to see all the issues identified by participants in Session 1, and to indicate what they considered should be the priorities for the MPA/MPS 2004-05 Policing Plan
- Session 3 showed participants the results of Session 2, and asked them to evaluate the consultation and suggest any lessons for future dialogue around policing.

Dialogue by Design provided the online consultation service. A full set of screen shots has been provided to the MPA/MPS under separate cover.

This report summarises the responses received from the 111 organisations that responded in Session 1, the 75 organisations that responded to Session 2, and the 50 organisations that completed the Session 3 evaluation exercise.

Rationale for Choosing this Consultation Approach

In previous years the MPA/MPS conducted its public consultation by a variety of surveys – a Public Attitude Survey, paper questionnaires to community groups and online questionnaires to the general public.

A review of this process revealed that these arrangements do not allow the Metropolitan Police to gain an in-depth understanding of community issues, but merely scratch the surface. Responses tend to be made in isolation at a given point in time and feedback is also limited.

This online consultation aimed to address these shortcomings and develop a more sophisticated approach that allows:

- A deeper understanding of the issues raised
- Contributions to be made from a position that is more informed about the policing context of London
- Transparency and feedback to responders on how they contributed to the process.

Recruitment

Drawing on a database supplied by the MPA/MPS, 748 invitation letters were sent to organisations on 13 June 2003. A further 36 invitation letters were sent on 24 June 2003 to organisations identified by the MPA/MPS following the first invitation mail out. The text of the letter is included in the report in

Annex 2.

Interested organisations registered their interest to participate by letter, fax or telephone. Copies of replies by post or fax have been supplied to the MPA/MPS by Dialogue by Design under separate cover. 203 organisations registered an interest to participate.

Registered organisations were provided with a username and password to give them access to the secure consultation site. They were also provided with a participant pack that provided guidance on using the consultation website. Copies of this document have been forwarded to the MPA/MPS consultation team under separate cover.

The week prior to the start of Session 1, the MPA/MPS consultation team were requested to allow provision for additional organisations to participate. To facilitate this, an online registration system was added to the consultation site. Organisations registering online were requested to provide the names of their organisations and contact details. 42 organisations registered to participate online.

A database of all registered users has been provided to the MPA/MPS under separate cover.

Consultation Schedule

Session	Task	Start	Finish
Session 1	• Identify what policing issues concern you, and why.	9 am 30 June 2003	5 pm 18 July 2003
Session 2	• Read the responses of all participants in Session 1 and prioritise the issues raised.	9 am 4 August 2003	5 pm 22 August 2003
Session 3	• Read the results of Session 2, evaluate the consultation and suggest any lessons for future dialogue around policing.	9 am 8 September 2003	5 pm 19th September 2003

Executive Summary of Responses to Sessions 1 and 2

In Session 1 of the consultation, participants each identified up to 10 policing issues of concern. These were collated into groups. In Session 2, participants reviewed the issues and reasons raised by all other participants in Session 1, and then completed a prioritisation exercise (allocating up to 7 points to one or more of these groups of issues).

Table 1 below summarises the responses to both Sessions 1 and 2. A shift in emphasis in Session 2, when individual participants were exposed to the opinions and views of other participants, is evident. This information is graphically illustrated in Figure 2 at the end of this report.

Table 1: Summary of Session 1 Issues and Session 2 Priorities

Groups of issues raised in Session 1 (Identification of policing issues)	% Session 2 priority points attributed to this issue group	No of issues in this group as a % of all issues raised in Session 1
Anti-social behaviour and low level crime	12.6	6.6
Drugs and drug related crime	11.8	6.0
Working with communities and key agencies	8.2	10.3
Access to the police and response times	7.8	4.3
Visibility and numbers of police	6.1	6.6
Violent and gun crime	5.1	2.8
Improving victim support	5.1	3.8
Youth crime and other youth issues	5.0	4.5
Street crime	3.4	2.9
Met management, recruitment and training	3.4	6.1
Communications and image	3.2	4.9
Hate crime	2.9	3.1
Better understand, recognise and promote diversity	2.7	3.4
Burglary	2.7	3.2
Fear of crime	2.3	2.4
Addressing domestic violence	1.9	2.0
Alcohol and alcohol related crime	1.7	1.8
Protecting vulnerable groups	1.7	2.2
Rape and sexual assault	1.5	0.4
Redeployment of officers to other duties	1.5	1.4
How resources are allocated	1.5	1.7
Assertive/ targeted policing	1.3	1.0
Address prostitution	1.3	0.1
Prosecution process	1.0	2.5
Begging	1.0	0.7
Traffic and road safety offences	0.6	2.9
Process of setting police priorities	0.6	1.8

Groups of issues raised in Session 1 (Identification of policing issues)	% Session 2 priority points attributed to this issue group	No of issues in this group as a % of all issues raised in Session 1
Targets, monitoring and statistics	0.6	1.7
Vehicle crime	0.4	2.4
Reporting and administration systems	0.4	2.5
Safe public transport	0.4	0.4
Major incident planning	0.2	1.3
Arson	0.2	0.8
Fraud, fencing and poor trading practice	0.0	1.1
No Comment	0.0	0.4

Process of Collating Responses

Session 1

During Session 1 participants were asked to identify up to 10 issues and explain why they were of concern. A total of 566 issues were raised.

Following the closure of Session 1, the consultation facilitators collated all the issues into groups of common issues. Where a number of points were raised in a single response, that response would be placed in more than one group (for example, the response "Youth issues and anti-social behaviour" is assigned to both the 'Youth issues' and 'Anti-social behaviour' groups).

All the group headings and the number of responses contained in each group are presented below. We would, however, advise caution about placing too much emphasis on the numbers of issues contained in each group. This part of the consultation is primarily a qualitative exercise, and it is the merit of each individual response that is of greatest importance. It is only after reviewing the issues raised that participants made a quantitative judgement in Session 2 on the relative importance of the groups of issues.

Where appropriate, we have included quotes from the participants in the summary below to provide a flavour of the range of responses.

Session 2

Participants were able to review the issues raised by all participants in Session 1. The information structure and navigation options aimed to simplify this process:

- Responses were summarised under group headings containing groups of common issues. Clicking on the group heading brought up all the responses contained in that group.

- Each response was tagged with a user number. Participants could click on their own user number to see how their responses were collated, or click on a user number associated with an interesting comment to see all the comments made by that participant.
- A summary of Session 1 responses with participant quotes aimed to provide a flavour of the responses for participants who may have been unable to read the responses in detail.

Once participants had reviewed responses made in Session 1, they were asked to prioritise the groups of issues raised. There were a total of 36 groups of issues, and participants were given a maximum of 7 points that they could allocate to these groups. Participants could allocate all 7 points to a single issue, or spread them amongst a basket of issues. This minimal allocation of points compared to the number of groups meant that participants were required to be particularly selective in their prioritisation.

The numbers percentage of prioritisation points allocated to each of the groups is presented in the 'Summary of Session 2 Prioritisation Responses'.

In addition to the prioritisation exercise, participants were given the opportunity to make notes. This gave them a chance to make their feelings known on any aspect of the consultation to that point: issue identification, collation and feedback, and the prioritisation exercise itself. 21 notes were submitted. Given this relatively small number, it was decided to feed these back to participants ungrouped (unlike the 566 issues raised in Session 1).

Note

Due to the close correlation between the issues raised in the "Youth Crime" and "Resolving Youth Issues" groups, these two groups have been amalgamated into a single group "Youth crime and other youth issues" in this report. They have not been amalgamated in the online consultation database in order to maintain a completely accurate record of participant responses.

Summary of Session 1 Responses

Working with communities and key agencies

(74 responses in this group)

These issues refer to the need to develop more working relations with public and community groups, to improve capacity and build on public goodwill, to better address crime reduction and support for victims of crime.

- “There is a lot of "goodwill" out there towards the police and reducing crime. It needs a real pro-active approach by the police to harness this goodwill.”
- “A lot of work has been put Police & community relations, these links are now being severed by the lack of community based initiatives.”
- “More joint enterprise between local councils and the police to prevent crime happening in the first place.”
- “Need to clarify importance of neighbourhood interaction and community/school interaction with the police - especially in the inner city areas where familiarity with the positive principles and practices of British policing are less well understood.”

Visibility and numbers of police

(47 responses in this group)

These groups of issues advocate a greater number of police on the beat to reduce fear of crime, discourage crime, and to build relationships between police and communities.

- “Many more fully trained Police Officers should be patrolling the streets of London to control the upsurge in crime that is affecting ALL Boroughs.”
- “It is good that at last something is being done to increase the number of police officers assigned to Boroughs. There is no doubt that seeing police officers on the street, either on foot or on bicycle, gives substantial reassurance to the public.”
- “All residents say they want more police officers out & about, not just whizzing by in cars.”

Anti social behaviour and low-level crime

(47 responses in this group)

Crimes falling in this group include graffiti, vandalism, and noisy and aggressive behaviour. Respondents recognise that these are not the most serious crimes, but identify these offences as having a serious impact on the quality of people’s lives. A strong response from the police against these types of offences would alleviate public fear.

- “This is not currently a recognised 'target' but it has a basic impact on the quality of life in our area and needs to be seen to be addressed.”
- “To often the public do not see the Police dealing with the job crimes in local areas.”

Drugs and drug related crime (43 responses in this group)

This type of crime is identified as having a major impact on the quality of life and on the public, and a catalytic effect on other crimes (such as violence and theft). Consequently, many respondents want to see greater effort and resources targeting this crime.

- “This refers principally to drug supply and dealing. If these crimes could be reduced there would certainly be a fall in other acquisitive crime committed by addicts funding their habits.”
- “I know that a lot is being done in this field as far as pushers are concerned: I would like to see this stepped up and I would also like to see more help given to addicts...”
- “Many communities are vulnerable to drug-dealers. Drugs or the fear of drugs dealers is an issue everywhere in London...”

MET management, recruitment and training (44 responses in this group)

A number of issues in this group identify that key personnel do not stay long enough in positions to build local relationships and understanding. Others highlight the impression that police are demoralised and lack the skills to better interact and engage the public. Others note that the composition of the police force does not reflect demographics.

- “Police officers are human beings doing a very important, at times difficult and dangerous job; they also deal with human beings. The officers need understanding support and guidance from those who manage them.”
- “Considerable turnover of police staff without clear continuity strategy and with large numbers of junior officers replacing experienced officers in high crime and complex areas.”

Communications and image (35 responses in this group)

Many respondents report incidents of rude and poorly attired officers, and of a force perceived to be disorganised and targeting easy/ inappropriate crimes. This has an impact on the confidence and support of the public.

- “The ‘traditional’ concept of the police being ‘the citizens’ friend’ is virtually non-existent nowadays. This needs changing.”
- “To reduce the fear of crime, greater use of positive PR is needed. As with most statutory organisations, the police are poor at self-praise and self-promotion.”

Access to the police and response times

(31 responses in this group)

Respondents feel that it is difficult to contact police by telephone and face-to-face. Once they have done so, respondents feel that they are passed from one officer to another, and that response times are poor. This has led to feelings of vulnerability and a sense that the police are not building on the public goodwill to assist in combating crime.

- “It is very difficult to contact police stations. One can wait a very long time, go through a number of people, repeating information again and again.”
- “A fast response to 999 calls is essential in a modern police force, but how the police respond to non-emergency enquires and how they follow-up on crime is equally important.”

Improving victim support

(27 responses in this group)

Both the perception and experience is that police empathy and support for victims of crime is inadequate.

- “Victims are not being kept informed of the progress regarding their case.”
- “For women who have been raped or sexually abused it is imperative that a woman SOAT officer is allocated to her.”

Better understand, recognise and promote diversity

(24 responses in this group)

This group of issues raises the need for police to better understand and appreciate racial, disability and gender issues to deal more sensitively with the public.

- “We are all entitled to be treated with respect.”
- “One of the concerns raised by the client group is the general disability awareness of the met when it comes to dealing with people who are visually impaired.”

Burglary

(23 responses in this group)

This crime is raised as being persistent and having a disproportionate effect on vulnerable members of the public (notably elderly people). Some respondents feel the police are doing a reasonably good job, while others want to see greater police effort dedicated to this type of crime.

- “Conmen seem constantly to operate in our area and continually come up with new ideas to con they way into people's homes...”
- “The current mechanisms for reporting and preventing burglaries are inadequate.”

Hate crime

(22 responses in this group)

Racist and sexist crime is identified as being widespread and under-reported, and as having a big impact on the quality of lives of those affected by it.

- “Since 9/11 many adherents of the Sikh faith have experienced an increasing number of hurtful actions such as verbal assaults and physical attacks by non-Sikhs (black and white) on the basis of being thought of as terrorists or Muslim or both.”
- “The Met seems to be doing a good job here.”

Street crime

(21 responses in this group)

Street crime is highlighted as prevalent and having a great impact on quality of life and creating considerable fear in the community.

- “Street crime contributes to increasing the fear of crime across the borough and in particular impacts upon young people. Hotspots are identified and policing priorities and deployment of resources should match this.”
- “We all know or know of someone who has been a victim of street crime whether this is a mugging or 'shoulder surfing'. This has to be a priority - it affects how people perceive their personal safety and their fear of crime.”

Traffic and road safety offences

(21 responses in this group)

This group of issues identify improved enforcement of traffic offences as a policing priority.

- “Road safety usually comes last in the Met's list of priorities. Is this justifiable given that many more people die on the roads of London than by guns, drugs, etc?”

Violent and gun crime

(20 responses in this group)

There is concern that violent and gun crime is becoming increasingly common and that there is an urgent need to eradicate this type of crime.

- “It seems from all the evidence in the press and anecdotally that this is a rapidly increasing crime linked to both organised crime and the drug trade. I do not know that plans the Met have to tackle this area of crime but I feel that it is destabilising areas within the capital and directly contributing to the general public's fear of crime.”

Youth crime and other youth issues

(32 responses in this group)

Issues in this group identify the high level of youth crime (notably by gangs of young people) and the need to deal assertively with this group. The need for interventions that prevent a future pattern of youth offending rather than a focus on detection and punishment is highlighted.

- “There is overall concern within the borough at the ever increasing escalation of youth crime.”
- “Youth provision for leisure activities is poor and community centres which do a good job are having their budgets severely cut, also it would be good if as in the past the police were allowed time to involve themselves with youth provision where it is happening though rarely now it is beneficial.”
- “Youth crime is on the increase and as a result there needs to be an aspect of youth diversion to deal with suspected offenders and offenders.”

Prosecution process

(18 responses in this group)

Lack of mutual support among police and prosecutors is identified as a barrier to increased conviction rates.

- “There is much hostility on both sides about who is to blame for what.”

Reporting and administrative systems

(18 responses in this group)

Inaccurate reporting and the burden of bureaucracy needs to be addressed to improve policing efficiency.

- “I have heard that every time an officer takes a suspect to a police station, he is almost drowned in a sea of forms...”
- “At the moment too much of police time is taken up with either form filling or computer inputting. This is not a good use of a valuable commodity.”

The paperwork has grown beyond what is reasonable and needs to be overhauled. The public is looking for a visible police presence.”

Vehicle Crime

(17 responses in this group)

Protecting vehicles (often representing a large individual investment) from theft and damage is advocated as a policing priority.

- “Like any inner London authority, we have a lot of community issues around vehicles, including abandoned cars and other similar issues. What is most significant is the level of vehicle theft and theft from vehicles.”

Fear of crime

(17 responses in this group)

Issues in this group identify fear of crime as a major issue affecting quality of life, but numerous respondents in this group note that this fear is out of proportion to reality. Visibility of policing and improved communications with the public are offered as solutions.

- “People, particularly the elderly, are fearful of leaving their homes for fear of being burgled or mugged in the street.”
- “The level of fear of crime is out of all proportion to the actual crime levels and to the statistical reality of becoming a victim of crime.”

Protecting vulnerable groups

(16 responses in this group)

This group of respondents highlights the importance of protecting vulnerable groups (notably the elderly) and that more could be done to do so.

- “Ensuring that people feel 'safe' within their communities, especially vulnerable groups, such as refugees and asylum seekers, the elderly etc”

Addressing domestic violence

(14 responses in this group)

Issues in this group identify both the prevalence of this crime and the importance of addressing it. Some perceive that the MET is doing a good job in responding to domestic crime incidents, while others are concerned that this issue is not being treated seriously enough.

- “Domestic violence reaches far into all communities and ensuring services meet the needs of victims is critical in the success of the action taken.”
- “Along with other parts of London domestic violence accounts for a very significant proportion of violent crime in the Borough.”

Alcohol and alcohol related crime

(13 responses in this group)

There is concern that alcohol related crime is not being treated seriously (with offenders often 'moved on') but that this type of crime has a high impact on the quality of life of those affected by it and that alcohol related offences lead to more serious crimes if not checked. A number of respondents explicitly identify concerns about under age sales and drinking.

- "Alcohol is a significant factor in many local crimes, particularly vandalism by young people, but also physical assaults, domestic violence and anti-social behaviour."
- "It would appear that violent drunken behaviour no longer constitutes the same penalties, as lesser charges are brought, probably to appease the Crown Prosecution Service."

Target, monitoring and statistics

(12 responses in this group)

This group of issues questions whether statistics rather than local concerns are driving policing priorities, and the overlooking of activities that result in crimes avoided. Targets need to be more realistic to be supported. In addition, the system for monitoring is not efficient.

- "The Police are currently judged on the amount of crimes they solve / clear ups. This is great but what about the amount of crimes they prevent by being in the community. A lot of good work done by officers is discounted because there is no box for them to tick when it is done."
- "The problem is in the Crime Reporting System (CRIS) which, I am told cannot produce crimes by street on a regular programmed basis. Had it been a standard commercial relational database any report could be designed and produced at the touch of a button."

How resources are allocated

(12 responses in this group)

A key concern in this group of issues is that there is insufficient local community involvement in the allocation of resources.

- "Resources often appear to be directed towards issues that are based solely on statistical data rather than towards addressing what communities' issues and concerns."

Redeployment of officers to other duties

(10 responses in this group)

This group deals with the deployment of local officers to other areas (such as to demonstrations in Westminster), leaving local areas short staffed.

- “Further instability - directly leading to increases in crime - by blanket abstraction policy.”

Major incident planning

(9 responses in this group)

The seriousness of the increased risk of terrorism is raised and a number of respondents in this group question whether enough is being done to prepare and react to major incidents.

- “Is enough being done? Can enough be done?”

Fraud, fencing and poor trading practice

(8 responses in this group)

This crime is seen as being on the increase and having a negative impact on the public perception of organisations (such as campaigning charities) and ethnic groups (the Sikh community is highlighted in one response).

- “There are too many fraudsters in London today peddling all kinds of scams.”

Assertive/ targeted policing

(7 responses in this group)

A stronger police presence targeting hotspots and suspected criminals is encouraged by this group of respondents.

- “The Stop and Search policy should be brought back to its former status.”

Arson

(6 responses in this group)

No supporting reasons are provided for the identification of this issue as a priority.

Begging

(5 responses in this group)

Issues raised in this group note increasing levels of begging and being approached for money in the street, and the feeling of intimidation this causes. A number note the need to work with relevant agencies to avoid passing the problem to other areas when beggars are moved on.

- “Beggars, who are invariably motivated by drug and alcohol abuse, should not just be moved on - the problem will only become re-located in other areas.”

Safe public transport
(3 responses in this group)

Issues in this group identify the need to improve the safety of public transport.

- “If we want to invest in the transport system and get more people using it, we must provide better security/safety measures.”

Rape and sexual assault
(3 responses in this group)

The seriousness of this crime is highlighted as the reason for ensuring this issue is a policing priority.

- “Rape and other sex crimes are a cause of concern, especially any of the latter that involve children as victims. In terms of volume these crimes are not significant but there is probably significant under-reporting.”

Address prostitution
(1 response in this group)

The one respondent that explicitly raises the issue of prostitution identifies the detrimental impact this has on the quality of life of residents.

Summary of Session 2 Responses

A total of 525 points were allocated by 75 organisations. A table of the results is presented in Table 2 over the page. A bar chart of the results is presented as Figure 2 (follows Table 2).

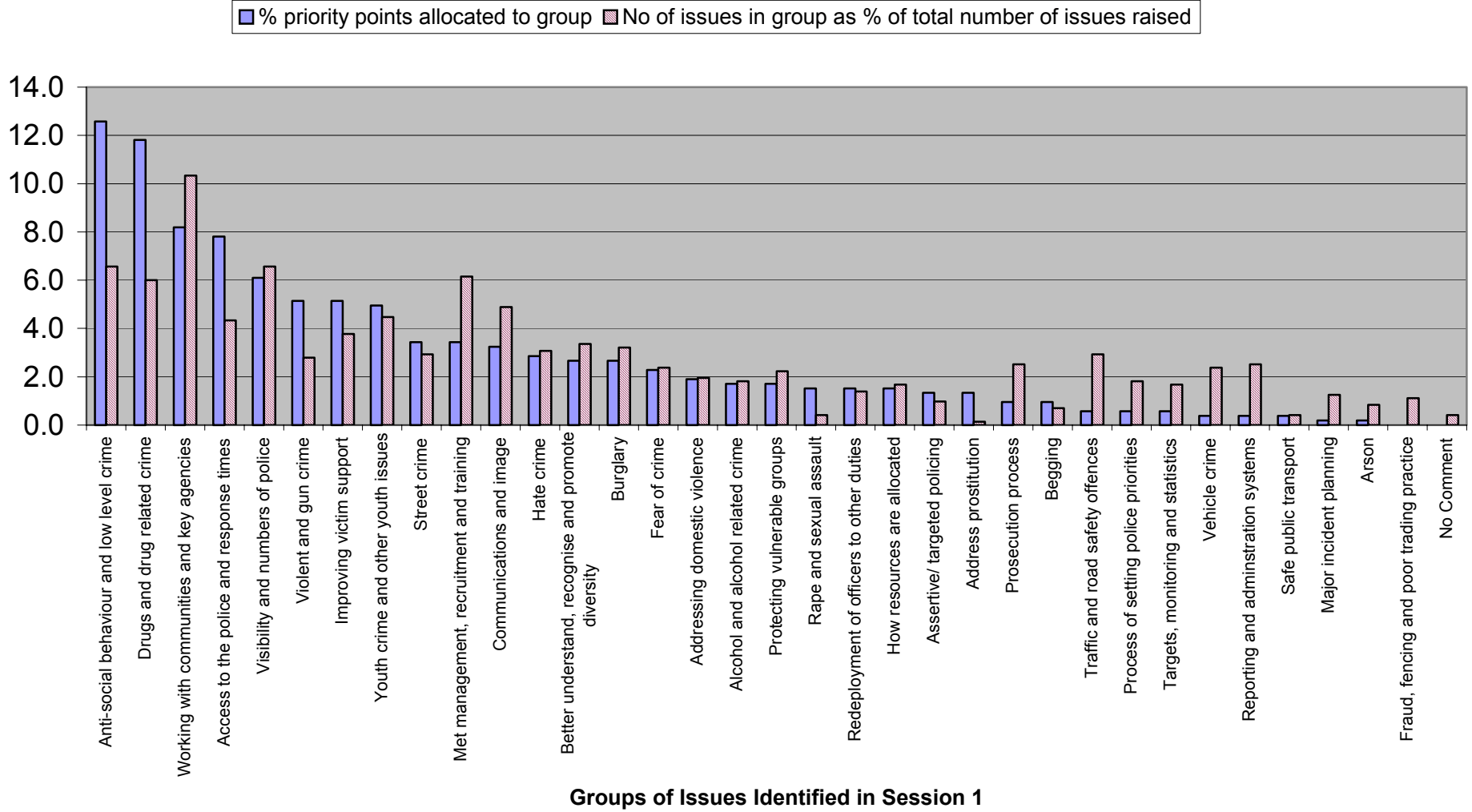
The two most dominant issues are “Antisocial behaviour and low level crime” and “Drugs and drug related crime”. The next two significant issues are “Working with communities and key agencies” and “Access to the police and response times”. The next cluster of high priority issues is “Visibility and numbers of police”, “Violent and gun crime”, “Improving victim support” and “Youth crime and other youth issues”.

It is interesting to note that the groups that received most comment during issue identification (Session 1) are not necessarily the groups most highly prioritised.

Table 2: Table of Results of Policing Issue Identification and Prioritisation Exercise

Group	Dots allocated (Session 2)	% Total Dots Allocated	Rank	No of issues in group (Session 1)	Issues as % of total number of issues
Anti-social behaviour and low level crime	66	12.6	1	47	6.6
Drugs and drug related crime	62	11.8	2	43	6.0
Working with communities and key agencies	43	8.2	3	74	10.3
Access to the police and response times	41	7.8	4	31	4.3
Visibility and numbers of police	32	6.1	5	47	6.6
Violent and gun crime	27	5.1	6	20	2.8
Improving victim support	27	5.1	6	27	3.8
Youth crime and other youth issues	26	5.0	8	32	4.5
Street crime	18	3.4	9	21	2.9
Met management, recruitment and training	18	3.4	9	44	6.1
Communications and image	17	3.2	11	35	4.9
Hate crime	15	2.9	12	22	3.1
Better understand, recognise and promote diversity	14	2.7	13	24	3.4
Burglary	14	2.7	13	23	3.2
Fear of crime	12	2.3	15	17	2.4
Addressing domestic violence	10	1.9	16	14	2.0
Alcohol and alcohol related crime	9	1.7	17	13	1.8
Protecting vulnerable groups	9	1.7	17	16	2.2
Rape and sexual assault	8	1.5	19	3	0.4
Redeployment of officers to other duties	8	1.5	19	10	1.4
How resources are allocated	8	1.5	19	12	1.7
Assertive/ targeted policing	7	1.3	22	7	1.0
Address prostitution	7	1.3	22	1	0.1
Prosecution process	5	1.0	24	18	2.5
Begging	5	1.0	24	5	0.7
Traffic and road safety offences	3	0.6	26	21	2.9
Process of setting police priorities	3	0.6	26	13	1.8
Targets, monitoring and statistics	3	0.6	26	12	1.7
Vehicle crime	2	0.4	29	17	2.4
Reporting and administration systems	2	0.4	29	18	2.5
Safe public transport	2	0.4	29	3	0.4
Major incident planning	1	0.2	32	9	1.3
Arson	1	0.2	32	6	0.8
Fraud, fencing and poor trading practice	0	0.0	34	8	1.1
No Comment	0	0.0	34	3	0.4

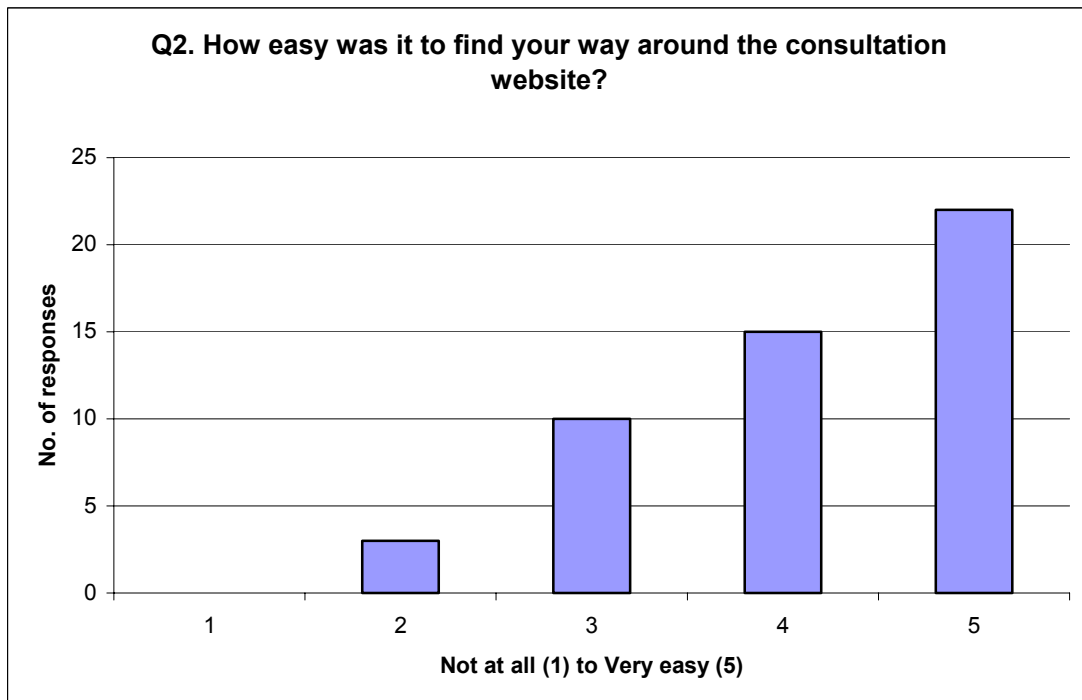
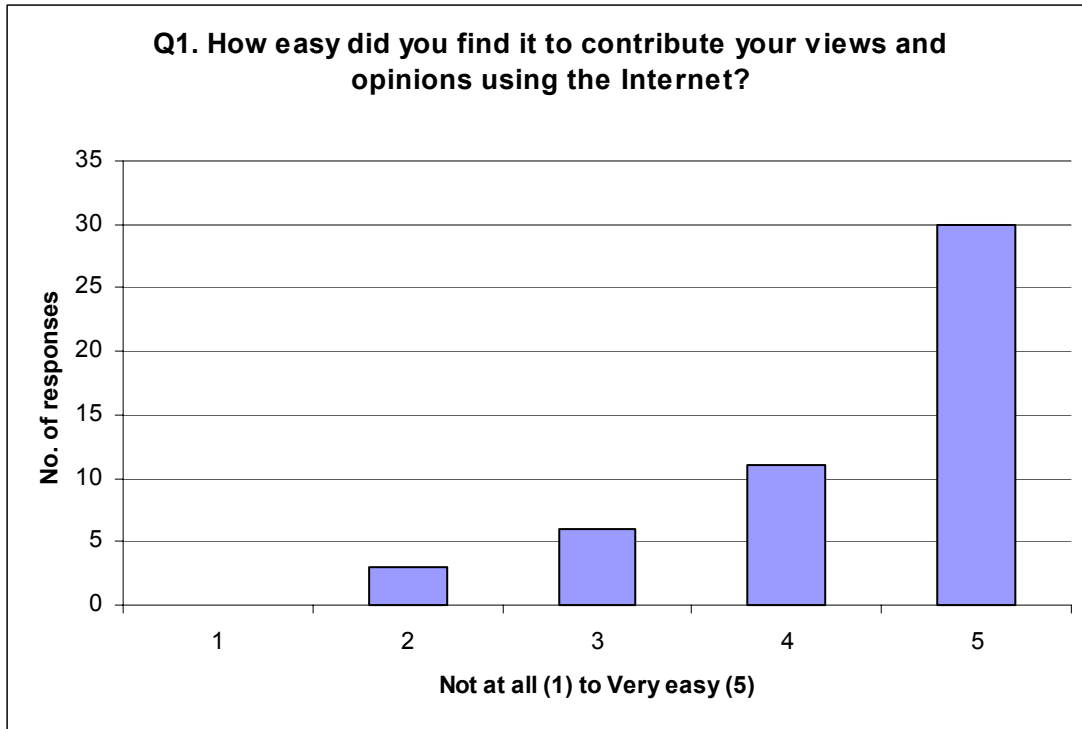
Figure 1: Chart of Results of Policing Prioritisation Exercise (Sessions 1 and 2)



Annex 1: Evaluation results of the MPA/MPS Online Consultation on Priorities for the 2004-05 Policing Plan

173 participants visited Session 3 of the consultation site. Session 3 provided feedback of the prioritisation exercise undertaken in Session 2 and an opportunity to complete an evaluation of the consultation. 50 participants completed the evaluation. The results are presented below.

Questions 1 – 3: Using the website to give your views



Q3: Please fill in any further comments you have on the Website.

Excellent way of doing consultation. Not too time consuming and easy to follow!

I came late to the consultation so was not involved in the frame of reference for the exercise. There are a number of comments about issues being misconstrued and lumped together. I think it is essential in consultation to have the ideas of those being consulted including how they frame an issue.

On the other hand I found many of the comments demonstrated a lack of awareness of what is going on within the MPS and wider organisations involved in the criminal justice system. There is clearly a difficult methodological balance.

The point system worked for me as it forced me to priorities the issues and ensured I completed the consultation.

I don't think the Website method is appropriate for consulting groups. For example, I came back from holiday in August and had only four days in which to complete stage 2 which meant I had to make an educated guess as to what were the priorities for members of my group.

I don't know if I have completed stage 3 because the only thing I have been able to find that is interactive is this questionnaire.

Fairly fun to use and relatively user-friendly. Not sure that this form of consultation is representative of Londoners - what is the socio-economic profile of those responding?

Found this exercise interesting and found the items that were of great importance others thought in a similar way.

I think this is a brilliant means of consultation, though there will always those who have no access to the internet and are therefore unable to contribute.

The response to our contributions has been collated very quickly, and it all seems to be very efficient.

I hope you are able to manage a similar type of consultation next year

From a purely logistics point of view, I found there were a certain number of hoops to jump through before successfully logging in my responses (in fact, my first submission didn't seem to work). The follow-up and presentation of results, however, has been excellent.

I found the website easy to navigate, the only real problem was outside anyone's control - the worm virus, which affected at least my own computer and meant that I was unable to access the website for the second session.

It looked difficult, until I actually started the process.

Unfortunately, I did not contribute to session one or two due to other issues I was dealing with at the time. However, I did log-on and found it very easy to use. It's a very good web site.

I had lot of difficulty in finding the site

The Website was exceptionally clear, as were the instructions apart, perhaps, from the ones for the voting which took a little thought.

The facility for participants to 'save' responses and go back to complete/modify them was a concept I've not seen before. It was invaluable. Thank you.

In this present evaluation session (3), I feel it could have been beneficial for participants to have had the facility to revisit the previous sessions (i.e. but not interactively) to refresh memories about the procedures used. Certainly, this would have enabled me to have been more specific in my present feedback. I seem to recall that I had a constructive suggestion (which I made over the telephone to you) about the voting procedure. Sadly, I can't recall it without seeing the web page.

I thought that the process was relatively easy to follow and the format was clear.

The grouping of issues between stage 1 and 2 was particularly helpful.

Generally |I was quite happy with the website and using it.

The timing of the review was problematic I struggled to get access on the 2 session and then went away on leave so I was unable to participate. Maybe review consultation schedule to avoid periods of high leave commitments.

3 cheers for the helpful people at Dialogue by Design for their help in logging in due to a stupid mistake on my part. Website itself very good and easy to use. Delighted you have not used any stupid artistic effects or pictures which always get in the way and slow responses.

For me this was a grave disappointment as I was not able to do session 2. I am busy and do get asked to do lots of consultations. However I appreciated this format very much

I was not aware how crucial the second session was. Did you tell me?

I remember being told there are other sessions so don't worry if you miss one - well I am upset especially as LGBT groups hardly feature.

It appears from Part 2 of the exercise that anti-social behaviour is a significantly greater concern than hate crime. The Metropolitan Police should consider shifting resources to take account of this. In particular it should consider whether the Community Safety Units, which I suspect were established for political reasons after the Macpherson report rather than for

sound operational reasons, should be scaled down and the officers involved redeployed to fighting anti-social behaviour.

I believe this to be a useful way to consult, and as then large majority of people have access to a computer (even in high poverty areas like Tottenham!!), this is a good way to reach many people. The exercises were easy to use and quick.

A few cock-ups by basically not reading the info properly. Some areas especially the click button to retain comments not intuitive as most web sites retain comments without requiring an added submit step for each comment made.

Some people unable to get into website at all.

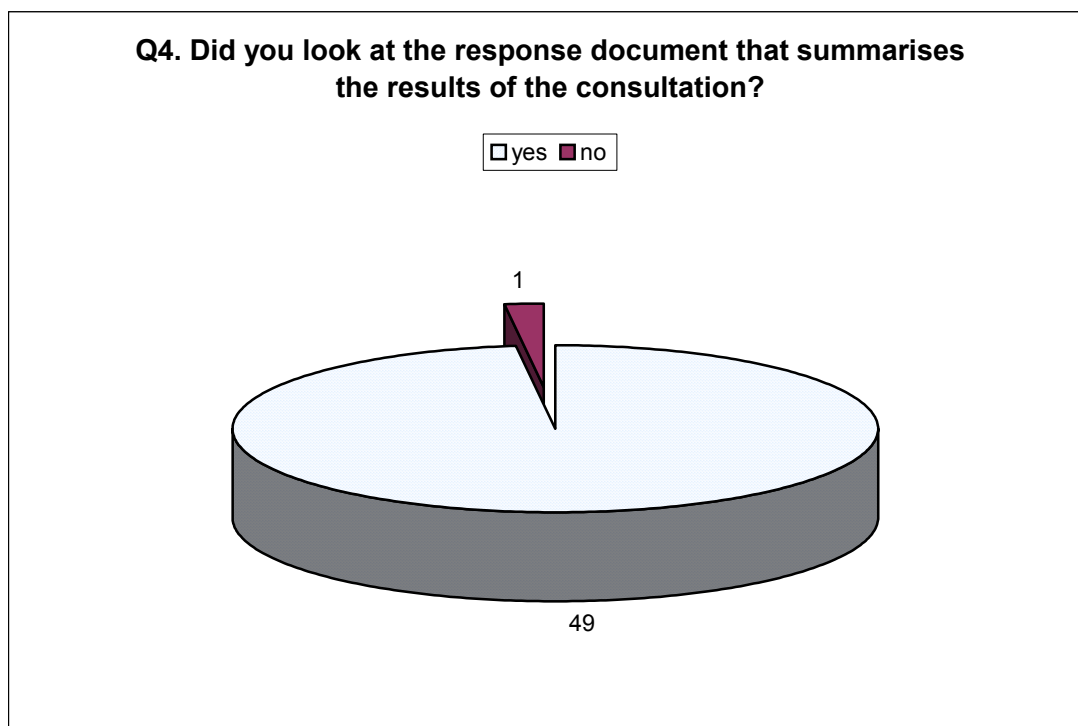
Very convenient and flexible.

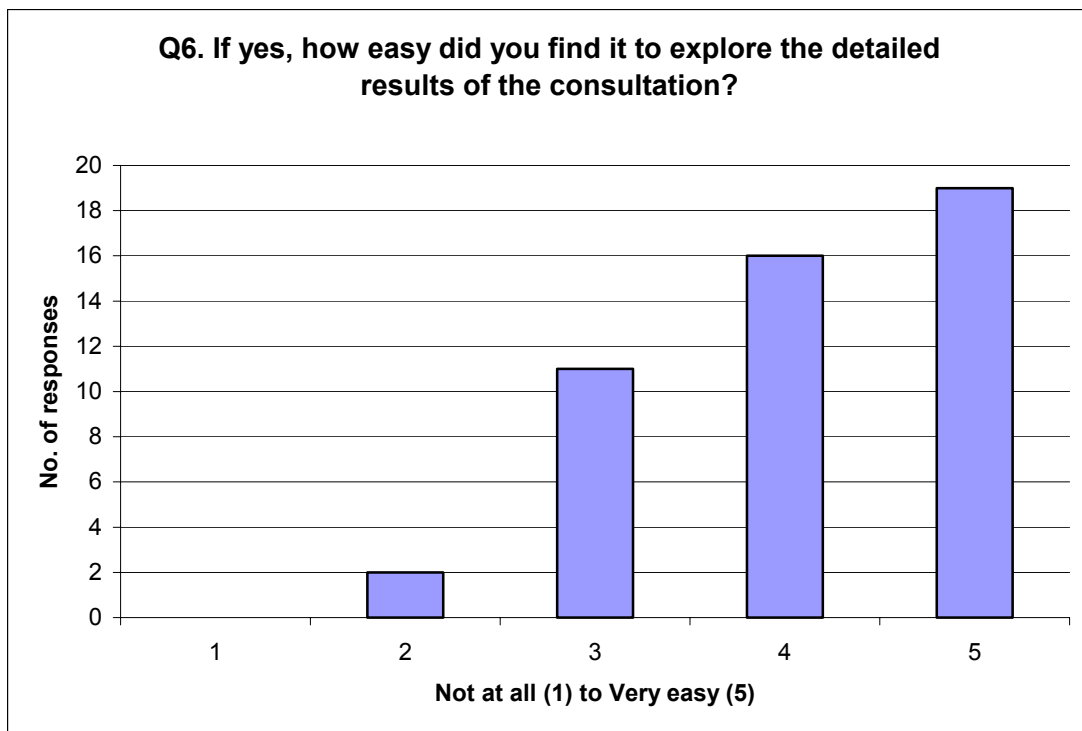
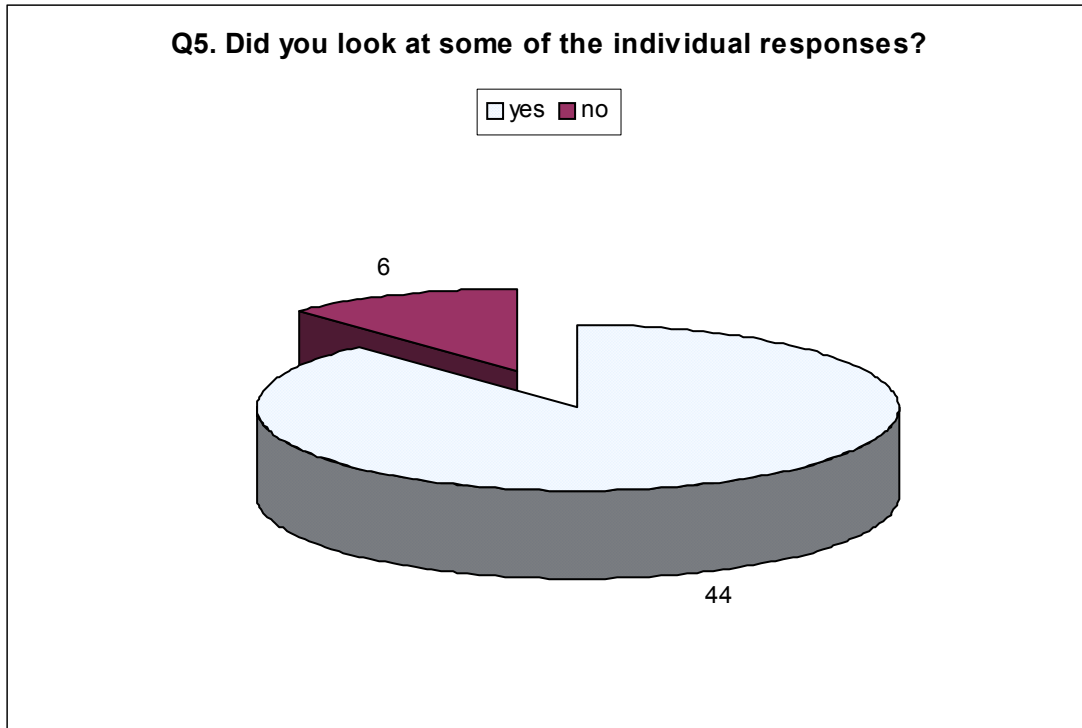
Not enough points in the last consultation to put all the views I wanted.

Second Session - with the number of items to choose from, with only seven points to allocate to these serious issues, we feel limited the impact this has on the final analysis.

Not enough space in boxes. Balance between too much and too little too much in favour of too little. I shortened my response due to text limits.

Questions 4 – 7: Presentation of the responses





7. Please fill in any further comments you have about the feedback on the consultation site.

Nice to have the opportunity to contribute in this way.

Interesting to see that ASB was at the top of the list, which reflected my concerns.

Surprised that there were only 120 responses.

The priorities of session two roughly reflect my own, although I'm never too sure if drug-related crime is as bad as I think it is or whether I perceive it to be worse because of media reporting of incidents.

Very thought-provoking information that I shall find very useful in my work as Cabinet member for Community Safety.

I find the 120 responses somewhat disappointing - how many people were included in the original 'mailing list'?

The Metropolitan Police must treat everyone in London with equal consideration.

See above - I would need some form of reassurance that those who took part are representative of Londoners. How many of us are middle-class and/or 'consultation anoraks'? Ethnic, sex and age profile of respondents?

Whilst this has been a worthwhile exercise and one in which I would be happy to participate again, I agree with some of the other contributors that some categories can be 'lumped together' as they are inter-related. I chair a local police and community group, as well as being a member of the local CPCG - the same issues come up time after time - youth crime (which covers many aspects) communication with the police are just some of those which are raised at almost every meeting I attend.

What my members ask for are results, not just surveys on how to achieve results. I would have liked to have a choice of how things were graded or the chance to link like-for-like in the grading system. At the same time, whilst I appreciate the time constraints are there to focus people's minds, a slightly longer time span would have been welcome, many groups have breaks in the summer months and this can result in the answers not being truly representative of the views of the group as a whole.

Its interesting that so many individuals felt as I did that the exercise was a bit limited in the responses required. So many of the items are interrelated as sociological issues always are, and I feel frustrated that I may not have fully communicated my views.

I would have like more people to respond to these exercises; this has to be the best method of communication yet for an exercise of this sort. I hope this kind of information gathering will continue so that the channels are kept open between the Police and the Public.

Not having dome session 2 the results don't make any sense to me that is the table of points

I have not had time to read through the report yet but have printed it off so I can do so at my leisure - so time is the main constraint for me. I found it very

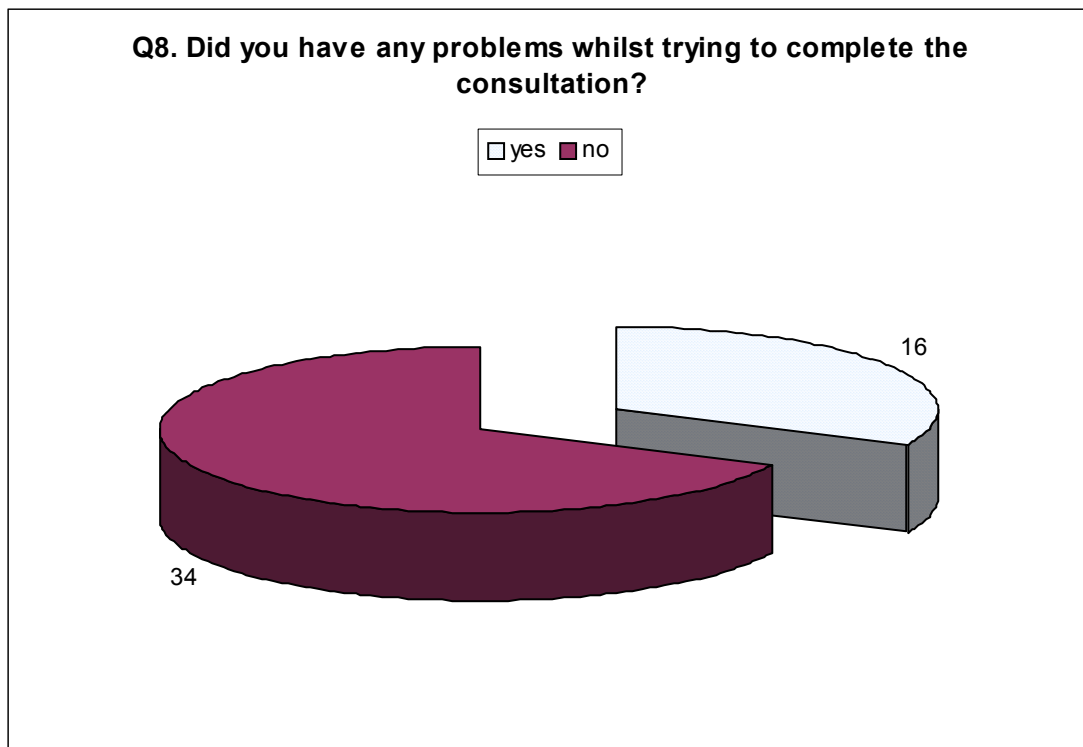
interesting to read other people's comments and it helped me think through my responses. Having the 3 sessions and the feedback on initial sessions really helped - made it feel responsive and 'organic'.

The points allocated to the individual for allocation to priorities, has caused a great deal of comment; as I mentioned, were we allowed to allocate points to all items with a maximum of say five, then I am sure the priorities picture would have been different, and would give management a clearer overview for planning.

We were concerned at the low number of people who took part in this exercise and would suggest that in light of experience gained, that stronger marketing is carried out in future.

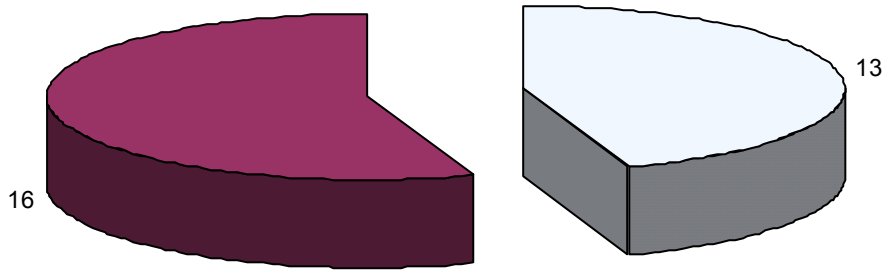
Summary document slanted responses – particularly Hate Crime.

Questions 8 – 11: Support provided by Dialogue by Design

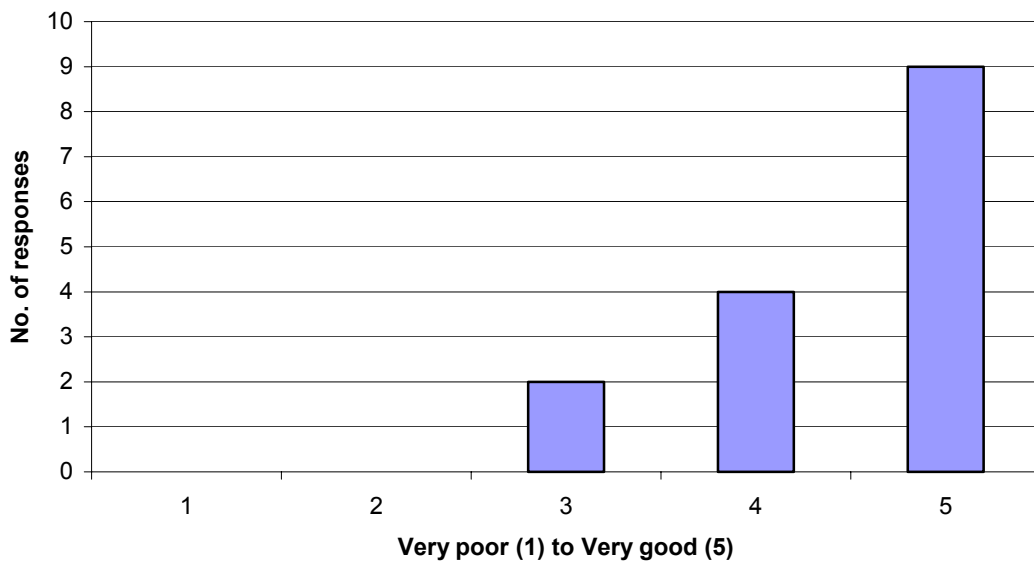


Q9. If yes, did you contact Dialogue by Design for help or advice?

yes no



Q10. If you contacted Dialogue by Design, how would you rate the help or advice you received?



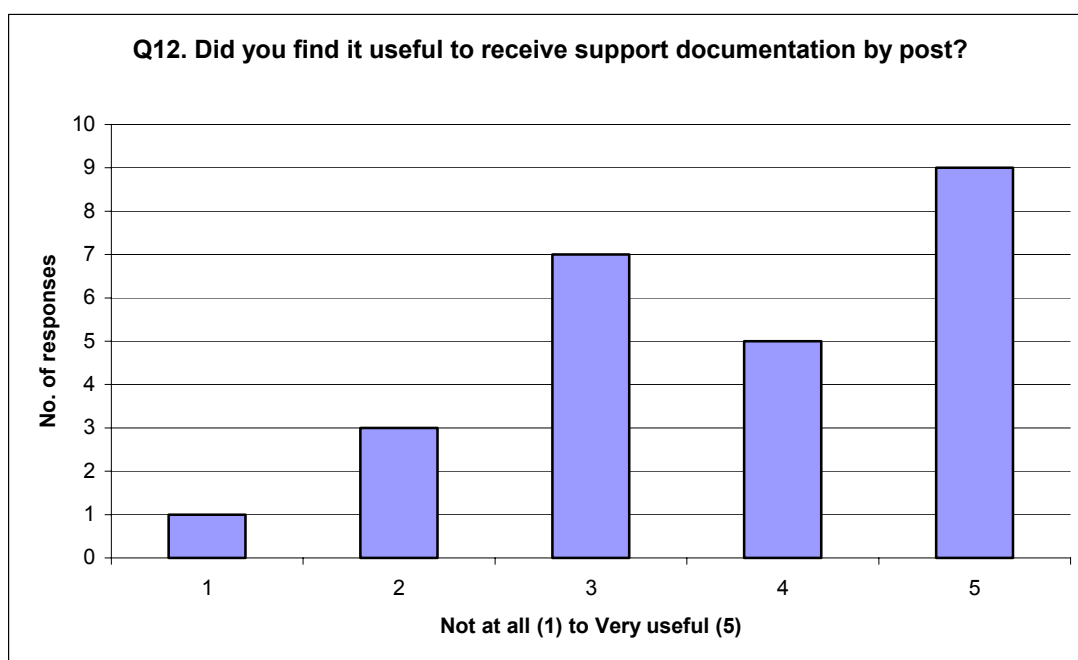
Q11. Please fill in any further comments you have on Dialogue by Design.

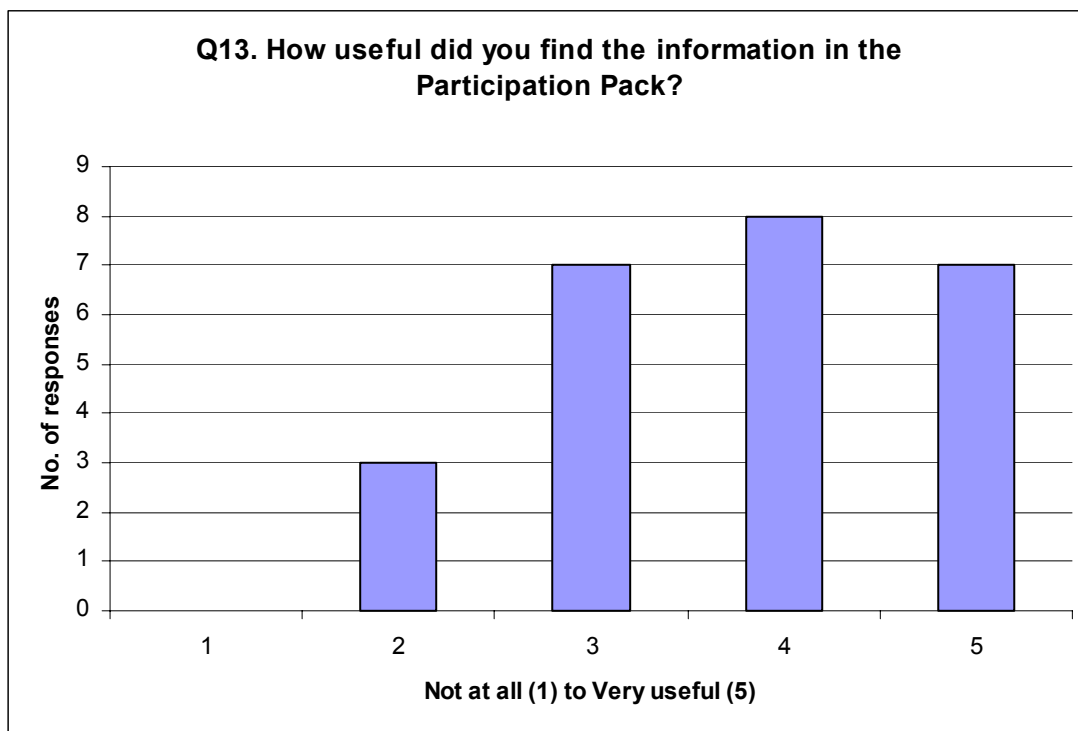
Brilliant!

Site did not work for me and this was fixed very quickly.

Response was too late: I had sorted it myself before e-mail arrived.
Attractive site, easy-to-read text.
The first session I was not sure that when I pressed submit the information had been transmitted because it appeared that the computer took you back to the complete figures rather than the percentage of the answers I had used, I contacted dialogue by design to check all was well and they were very helpful.
I do think it was good that I was called to say that my original response had not been received. Luckily I had kept a printout of my original responses otherwise I might have been a little put out.
I enjoyed using the site, clear guides to how to use the site enabled me to move around easily, even for someone new to the internet it would have been easy to use.
Sometimes the system logged itself out - problem this end I suspect.
I didn't have a problem, as such. I rang DbyD wishing to discuss some reservations I had about the voting methodology. I was most impressed by the professional, friendly, positive-minded attitude of those with whom I talked.
The solution presented did not operate at the time - maybe to do with own internal systems?
A good site and probably only a little fine-tuning required.

Questions 12 – 14: Supporting documents sent in the post





Q14. Please fill in any further comments you have on the supporting documents.

Surely having to send info by post defeats the purpose of Website consultation

As a new user of this type of consultation process, I found the documents enabled me to make sense of my tasks. Having the 'pictures' stopped me going into panic mode

Receiving written information was helpful to me. My working day is very busy and I spend a lot of time away from my desk. I can carry written information on the train, etc, to read. Had I been able to complete session one and two by post I probably would have done so, as I have so little time at my desk/computer.

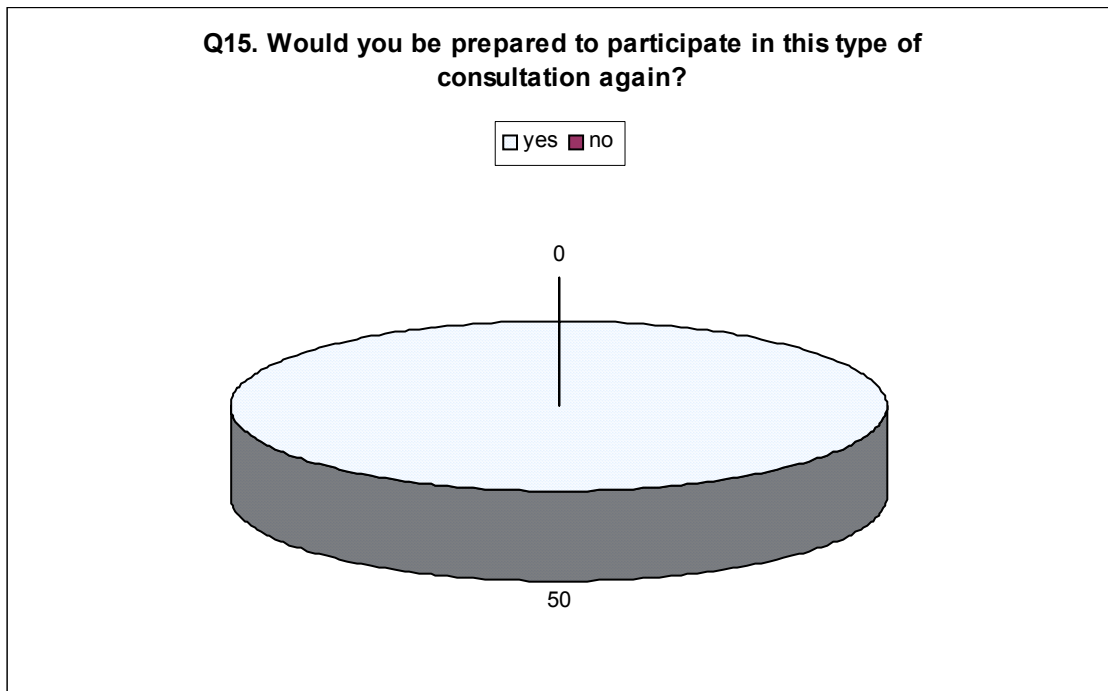
Great stuff... beautifully designed and presented.

I don't feel the postal info was really necessary - I didn't refer to it again once I'd started with the website and would probably have been fine without it.

Had no need of paper Participation Pack.

Questions 15 – 17: Assessing the future potential of this type of

consultation



Q16. How do you think we could have improved this consultation?
There was obviously some frustration at not being able to 'vote' for all the issues that participants regarded as very important ('only 7 points to allocate'). This could have been reduced if there had been a way to allow us to identify concerns that we felt were closely linked.
I have been happy with the process and haven't identified any areas where I think improvement can be made.
See previous comments. Take courage and use the consultees' ways of describing the issues, do not change any thing or re-group these.
I think a more detailed timetable should be published before consultation begins.
As noted above, vital to have some form of socio-economic profile of respondents - only around 48% of London households have access to Internet at home (albeit I am completing this at work...). Need to check profile against Census etc.
Probably a good forum for getting IDEAS - but not necessarily for prioritising MPS/MPA resources and actions?
In second session I would have liked to have used more than the 7 points allowed.

Always having our name and password attached, I am one of those people who don't remember, there are so many around these days

There was something about getting started that wasn't quite right and something about submitting the responses that I found quite confusing (I couldn't tell whether the responses had been received or not).

I think my earlier comments on time allocation will cover this point

For me the deadline needed to be more prominent. I work to deadlines, I had every intention of responding and even logged-on to the site you sent, however, I missed the deadline both times.

I found it open and accessible, whilst at the same time manageable.

It would have been helpful to have some idea as to where priorities were by organisation /personal view. But with only 120 participants, sample too low?

My views as a representative of my agency are a little different to those I would put forward as an individual (I live in a different area to where I work - there are different issues). I felt it was important to confine my responses to those relevant to my work - but did everybody else? It might be appropriate to include a statement guiding people about doing so.

How did you identify people who were invited to participate as individuals? It would be interesting to know the spread (by area, demographics) of those participating - and invited to do so.

Scheduling out of peak holiday periods.

Keep the sites open longer!

Be clearer how many steps and what each step is in the email so we don't go on the web to find it.

I am now on broadband and it is much easier when on my old connection it took forever to get on the web so needed lots of encouragement to do so.

Faster - easier - greater catchment of people.

As you may have gathered, I was very impressed by the consultation, which was, in my view, one of the best I've ever been involved with. I hope that the reservation I am about to make is seen as it is meant: constructively.

My only reservation was about the voting activity. [I feel that the results, to some extent, confirm the validity of this concern.]

I felt that the 7-dot approach – whilst easy to manage – might slew the results, over-emphasizing some topics and under-representing others. Review of the bar chart would tend to confirm this. There's a heavy weighting towards one end with a swift decline and – in my view – under-representation of a

significant number of topics towards the other end. This is a result of having limited voting points rather than the validity of those topics, per se. For example: domestic violence doesn't deserve to be so 'insignificant'; similarly, the fear of crime, particularly as perception plays such a significant part in residents' quality of life and, indeed, in their crime-reduction prioritisation. To some extent, the voting shows that fear of crime is playing a part in these present voting responses.

A suggestion: I think it might have been useful to have been able to vote (in some way) on the comments of other people. Some statistical method could be used to augment the results with the nested voting.

I think it was already very well done.

At phase 2, the points allocation was too limited for the range of areas which we were potentially being asked to prioritise. It would have been better to have had a larger number of points to allocate as this would have allowed (1) a more genuine spread of priorities to be expressed; and (2) real priorities to be more subtly weighted instead of, in effect, choices being made in 10% blocks.

I did not succeed in logging into session two, but having reviewed some of the comments I think I would have liked to be able to say whether I agreed or disagreed with the comment as well as being able to allocate a priority dot. I agreed with many of the comments and it was interesting that the experience in widely different boroughs is so similar to my own.

Unfortunately, like most consultation by the MPS, they seek to obtain the views of the community, yet do not take account of the fact that most community groups, from which the true views of the community can be obtained, do not have weekly or monthly meetings to obtain the views of the members, but meet at the very most two-monthly and therefore any views obtained are rather personal views of the individual, albeit tinged with the views of his/her group or organisation. With a total number of 120 participants this is not very representative although on this occasion the top priority shown is most definitely the top priority for most people in the communities across London. These are the things that are in their face every day and affect their day-to-day life most. More officers on the street dealing with the lesser crimes will make many individuals, particularly youngsters, think twice about moving on to bigger things in criminal activity.

Three visits to the site is a problem in terms of time used to do it.

A one off visit would have been preferable.

Putting all the issues into broad categories may have slightly skewed the results. You may wish to give further thought to this issue before next year's consultation.

Give consultees more guidance – what do the MET/MPA want from

consultees? What constraints are they working to - consultation could raise expectations to an unrealistic level.

Q17. Do you have any further comments you would like to make about the consultation?

Good idea, and deserves applause as a supplementary initiative - subject to comments above. Thanks for doing it.

Again would stress that nothing I believe can be looked at in isolation so much is interrelated and also it is not entirely within the power of the Police to improve conditions but only with the help of Councils and other agencies

Sorry, to join at this late stage. I think the consultation is great.

The structure of the consultation was impressive.

The garnering of opinions as a starting point was a brave and (as a web exercise) innovative approach which produced a remarkably inclusive range of topics.

The analysis of these opinions and the subsequent formulation of themes were also impressive. I felt that the themes accurately represented the opinions that had been put forward. Too often, in consultations, one feels that there are views that are missing and that there is no way to have them included. Your high quality procedures ensured that this shortcoming was avoided. This is important to those of us who take consultation seriously and know – sadly – that many can be little more than palliative PR exercises. Thank you for taking our views seriously.

One area that I would have liked to have seen (and perhaps could be addressed in the future?) was an appreciation of the relevance of partnership approaches to policing. Many of the topics are arguably partnership responsibilities rather than solely the domain of the police. For example: the highest priority has been awarded to ASB. However, this should be a partnership responsibility with agencies guided by and working with the police: council departments like social services, environment, enforcement (e.g. trading standards), education, legal, etc.; community organisations such as Connexions and anti-harassment agencies; and relevant voluntary bodies. The implementation of anti-ASB strategies is massively labour intensive and far exceeds police resources. There are others, which whilst being part of a police remit, are dependent for delivery upon a multi-agency approach.

I really enjoyed this exercise and offer my sincere appreciation.

It is the first time I have been involved in an electronic consultation of this nature and I found it to be an appropriate format and tool for communicating views.

I am not clear how those to be consulted were chosen; it would be useful to

know.

An extremely useful exercise and one which I hope is further refined in the future.

It was unfortunate that the website was not accessible when I tried to login for session two.

We feel that this has proved a very useful exercise in addressing our minds to the many aspects of the Community's attitude to law and order. We would be interested if this exercise was revisited questioning again the extent of concern at the six major elements produced by this survey.

Is anybody going to listen? Time will tell.

Annex 2: Letter of Invitation

The following invitation letter was sent to a total of 748 organisations on the 13th June 2003 and a further 36 organisations on the 24th June 2003

Dear Sir/ Madam

Annual Policing Priorities 2004/05

We write to invite you to participate in a consultation event on priorities for the Metropolitan Police Authority and Metropolitan Police Service's Policing Priorities for 2004/05.

We are very keen to consult widely on the priorities to ensure that Londoners are given the opportunity to influence the decisions on the policing priorities that affect them.

We may have invited you to take part in other consultation events in the past two years. This year, we will be running an online consultation with partner agencies and community organisations.

The consultation will take place over three online sessions:

- Session 1 (July) will ask you to identify which policing issues are of particular concern to you, and why.
- Session 2 (August) will enable you to see all the issues identified by fellow participants in session 1, and to indicate what you consider should be the priorities for the MPA/MPS in 2004/05.
- Session 3 (September) will show you the results of session 2 and ask you to evaluate the consultation and suggest any lessons for future dialogue around policing.

We hope the fact that you will be able to see the input from all participants in each phase will help to make this process both informative and transparent. For the first time, you will also be able to see a list of participating organisations who are also taking part in the consultation on the website.

We hope that you will help us in this activity by letting us know your views. Your responses will be non-attributable, so we hope that you will take the opportunity to let us know what you really think.

Please register to participate by [(24th June for letters sent on 13th June) or (4th July 2003 for letters sent on 24th June)]. You can do this by completing the attached registration form and posting it in the enclosed pre-paid reply envelope, or by faxing it to the number indicated. Alternatively, please call Dialogue by Design directly on 020 8683 6602. (Dialogue by Design is the independent company facilitating this consultation on behalf of the MPA and MPS.)

On registration, you will receive a secure password and username to access the consultation website, together with support material.

If you do not have Internet access or you feel you will not be able to

participate effectively for reasons such as language or visual impairment, please indicate this on the registration form. We will contact you to arrange an alternative way for you to participate.

We very much hope you will participate in this innovative process and find its results stimulating. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Yours faithfully



Cindy Butts
Chair
MPA Consultation Committee



Ian Blair
Deputy Commissioner

Annex 3

Online consultation - Next Steps

Recommendations for the Metropolitan Police

October 2003

Background

This report has been prepared for the MPS/MPA following the first online consultation on policing priorities for 2004/5. It is divided into four sections:

Section 1 - Participation reviews the participation rates from extrapolating log data on who participated from each sector, and provides feedback on a small cross section of invitees who registered to participate, but then failed to do so.

Sections 2, 3 and 4 suggest a strategy and recommendations for increasing participation rates for a similar event next year. These focus mainly on improving the contact database and starting to build some ongoing relationships with community groups, not just around the consultation process but linked into other initiatives.

Section 2 - Data base development

Section 3 - Recruiting more community based organisations to add to the database

Section 4 - Building relationships with community based organisations.

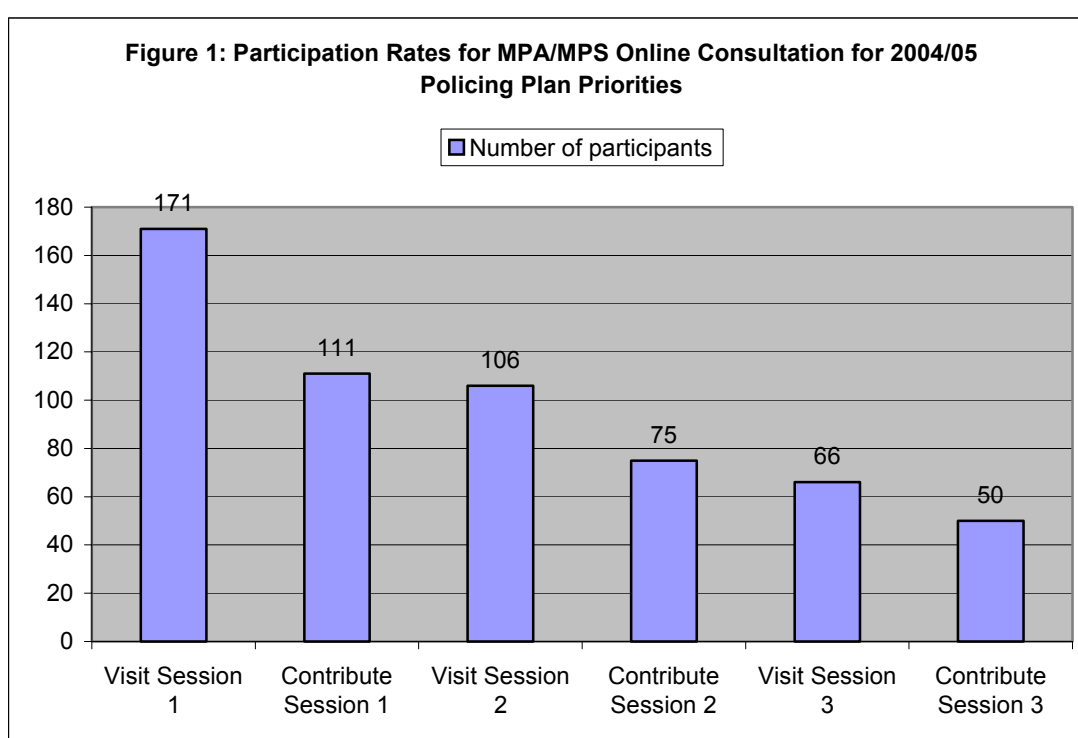
A proposal for running a similar online consultation to the 2003 event has been prepared. It includes steps to address the issues raised in this report.

Section 1 - Participation

Although the quality of data collected in the online consultation was identified by the MPA/MPS as a success, one disappointing feature was the number of participants.

A total number of 792 organisations were invited resulting in 170 registrations by post and 48 registrations online. Some marketing undertaken by the MPA just as the consultation was starting resulted in a further 25 online registrations. This is a total of 243 registrations.

Of these registrations, figure 1 below highlights the total numbers who visited and contributed to each of the three consultation sessions.



The value of looking at the participation rates in this exercise is largely to establish why relatively low response rates occurred in this exercise. We can draw some conclusions from the logs. To further establish why people chose not participate a number of telephone interviews were undertaken, with each of the following categories:

- Organisations that were invited, registered, visited the site but did not participate
- Organisations that were invited, registered, but did not visit the site to participate
- Organisations that were invited but declined to participate

Questions and notes from these conversations can be found in appendix A.

Why were participation rates low?

1. Size and quality of the original database

There were 174 registrations in direct response to the written invitations sent to 792 organisations (22%). 169 of these registrations were in response to letters sent to named individuals. The remaining 5 registrations were in response to letters sent to an organisation only.

It is clear from these figures that registration was very much determined by whether the invitation letter was directed to an organisation or to a named individual within an organisation.

Action

This finding illustrates the importance of improving the contact database in terms of absolute numbers and overall quality. Sections 2, 3 and 4 of this report suggest a strategy for achieving a much improved list of stakeholders from which to start an online consultation next year.

2. Confusion over whether people should respond as individuals or as representatives of groups

The evidence here comes from feedback to the MPS, to Dialogue by Design's telephone help line and feedback from the evaluations.

It was unclear to some individuals whether they were 'allowed' to provide input as individuals or had to seek agreement from their groups or committees prior to submitting a response. Some people asked Dialogue by Design or the Met while others assumed they could not give their own views. Some people gave a reason for missing the submission date as not being able to collate the views of the group in the time allowed.

Action

It would seem clear that future invitations to bodies who have a formal consultative relationship with the police (CPCGs etc) should clearly state that all or any of the members of the group are invited to participate as individuals.

It is likely that for most other sectors invited, a similar invitation to the 2003 letter should be sent, indicating that we are seeking views from a representative of that organisation. An improved contact list may well result in more individuals being invited from some organisations such as the probation service or NHS, but they will be invited as individuals. This assumption needs to be checked once revised sectors are agreed as part of the planning and design process.

3. Scepticism over whether contributions would make a difference?

This concern was expressed by a few people we spoke to before and during the consultation. It is not one unique to the Police and is one of the most common concerns expressed about the effectiveness of consultations

generally. This issue can only be resolved over time. People need to see feedback, and see that their views and the views of others have been considered. Unfortunately a bad experience with one consultation process (even for a different organisation) can leave people jaded and cynical.

Action

Following good practice in consultation and building an ongoing relationship is the way to deal with this issue: Sections 3 and 4 of this report address this.

4. Lack of time

Many of the people called after the consultation to find out why they didn't participate talked about lack of time. Clearly making the consultation window longer and avoiding the summer holidays may address this. However, we need to look a little further. Lack of time often means lack of priority. People simply did not regard it as important enough.

For people to consider a consultation exercise as important they have to recognise the source of the invitation, feel they will benefit in some way, and believe that their contribution could make a difference.

Action

In addition to increasing the participation window and avoiding the summer holiday period, building an ongoing relationship is the way to deal with this issue: Sections 3 and 4 of this report address this.

Section 2 – Stakeholder contact list development

One of the best ways to ensure a higher participation rate in future consultations is to improve the size and quality of the contact list. Beyond this, the contact list could form the foundations of an ongoing and growing relationship with community stakeholders.

Potentially an effective, extensive and up to date contact list can be used to enhance and develop other methods of communication with community-based organisations, including newsletters, e-mail alerts and information about community events.

It is possible to continue to use the Excel spreadsheet package to grow this list, and steps can be taken to ensure the data can be extracted and used in a number of ways. It is a severely limited tool, however, for running a contact list if you want to do anything but the simplest analysis¹.

For example, it is valuable to tag organisations by sector as is already done. As the list builds, it may also be of value to tag groups by geographical spread in London Boroughs or regions. Equally, some groups may need multiple tags (e.g. they serve in particular the interests of young black people or elderly resident). With time the list will become an increasingly valuable resource, and have value for purposes beyond annual consultation processes.

For the database to be used effectively for inviting groups to local events, or for sending newsletters to all of or parts of the list, it must be easy to extract the information stored in different ways (for example, being able to separate out different groups or areas for different messages). Finally, the easier the list is to update and add to, the more useful it will be.

For this reason we strongly recommend that the existing Excel list is converted into a relational database (for example Access or SQL server). If a decision is made to do this, it will be necessary to agree the functions that the database must be able to perform to meet MPA/MPS consultation needs and use an expert (internal or external) to set up a user interface. While this will certainly incur extra cost and time, we believe the long-term benefits would outweigh the costs.

The following bullets suggest the type of abilities it should have; these are not exhaustive but they may stimulate ideas about what a database could potentially provide:

- A clear and simple user interface. This means that inputting data is easy and reduces the likelihood that entries are entered into the wrong fields. It also makes it easy to update changes to personnel, address or other

¹ Useful information on this can be found on the following website address:
<http://msdn.microsoft.com/library/default.asp?url=/library/en-us/modcore/html/deovrWhereShouldYouStoreData.asp>

entries.

- A means of extracting lists of stakeholders according to:
 - ✓ Sector or multiple sector (e.g. all youth organisations in the North West Region)
 - ✓ Participation or registration in a specific activity (e.g. all organisations invited to a crime prevention conference, or all organisations registered to receive a newsletter)
 - ✓ A record of individuals' participation in past events.

Having made this recommendation, if the MPS does not have the resources to maintain a database, or it is felt that the list will be used almost exclusively for relatively irregular consultations, it may make more sense to continue with the existing Excel sheet, with some modifications, so that simple analysis is possible. This spread sheet can then be imported into a database for the online consultation exercise.

Section 3 - Recruiting more community based organisations to add to the database

As well as improving the quality of the existing list, there is significant scope for extending it.

Before starting it is recommended that a clear set of sectors is agreed. It may be that it is simplest to do this by headings and subheadings. The box below suggests a possible way of starting to adapt existing sectors. It is not complete but begins to develop sector headings into headline areas with each area having a number of sub-headings below it.

Formal consultative groups	Sector working groups CPCGs
Children and young people	Schools Youth clubs Support groups
Older people	Clubs Centres Support groups
Disability groups	
Ethnic groups	
Faith groups	
Health sector	Hospital trusts GPs Nursing groups Midwives
Public service organisations (Fire, Ambulance etc)	Ambulance Fire British Transport Police LDA Royal Parks Police
Local government	CEOs Community Safety Managers Solace
Criminal justice groups	Probation Service Courts
Refugee and asylum seekers	
Victim support groups	
Local community organisation (residents associations, community forums etc)	
Business	SMEs Chambers of Commerce Trade Unions
Political bodies	MPs Local Councillors
Individual member of the public	

Once these sectors have been agreed starting to populate the sectors with organisations becomes a lot more manageable. We suggest that these sectors are discussed with different people in the organisation. Do they make sense? Are there any other sectors? Would they be able to use information extracted from these sector headings?

A further sector overlaying all the lists could be a geographical one (Borough wide basis). Organisations with a pan-London interest can also be indicated.

Find new organisations

Once the database and the sectors have been agreed and set up it will be necessary to 'populate' it.

This requires research: the more time and effort invested, the better the results. There are some obvious starting points, using the Internet as a tool.

The following web address were found after only a few minutes search on the Internet:

[www. Actionlink.org.uk](http://www.actionlink.org.uk) - provided by the LVSC this lists details of many hundreds of community and voluntary groups in London

[http://www.obv.org.uk/ links/commongroup.html](http://www.obv.org.uk/links/commongroup.html)- is on the Operation Black Vote website and lists many Black interest groups

www.city-action.org.

Local authority websites often have lists or links to community groups in their Borough. The national offices of many organisations, such as the WI, WRVS, National Carers Association and the National Association of Youth Clubs, can provide details of local branches.

Other sources of information may well be held within the Metropolitan Police already by, for example, local police stations, police liaison officers, Community Safety Managers in Local Authorities, and members of police consultative groups. All these could be asked to suggest organisations and groups.

It is important to make the list good as well as long. This means finding as much information as possible, including contact names and e-mail addresses, even if this means telephoning groups and asking for more detailed information.

Section 4. – Building relationships with community based organisations

The effort invested to create a good quality community contact list means that it needs to be used for more than an annual consultation. In fact, it will contribute hugely to raising participation rates if participants have some form of ongoing relationship with the MPS/MPA, perhaps in the form of newsletters, e-alerts or bulletins.

It is important to consider the data protection issues around regular mailings and be registered as data holders if this is not already the case. Any mailing by post or e-mail should offer people the chance to be removed from the list.

An online registration form on the Met website would give people the opportunity to be included on a mailing list for information and consultations.

As well as regular communications to everyone on the list, it may be worth considering targeting some of the more hard to reach groups with special events, such as workshops, seminars, and community events.

Appendix 1: Interviews

Three categories interviewed:

- Invited, declined to participate
- Registered, not visited, not participated
- Registered, visited, not participated

Invited, declined to participate

We only had telephone numbers for two people in this group and we were unable to reach either person. The quotes below have been taken from individuals who returned their registration forms with a negative response. These were the reasons given in on their response forms

“Due to staff sickness we had no one to participate.”
“This is very short notice for such a commitment, and no one is free on 1/7.”
“I regret that I cannot prioritise this at this time.”
“Sorry, I’m just too busy.”
“Unable to resource at this time.”
“[Invited participant’s name] is on long-term sick leave.”

Registered, not visited, not participated

Questions asked

A. Having registered we wondered why you didn’t participate?

B. What would make you participate in the future?

Response to Question A	Response to Question B
Does not have a computer, did not want to go down to the police station because the police are busy and ‘I didn’t want to ask them how to use a computer. I wanted to do it by post’.	Enable me to do it by post.
I thought it was going to be easy and quick because it was online, but when I go the pack it seemed to be much more complicated and I thought it would take a long time. I don’t have much time	Make it very quick and easy.
I didn’t have a computer at that time, so could do it. [When prompted why she didn’t go down to the local police station] she said she didn’t think of it, thought she could easily have down this, she knows lots of people down there and would have been easy!]	Has a computer now and will do it next time.

<p>Never got around to it – lack of time. Away for three weeks. Appreciated the reminders, thought it was a good idea, but was not high up the priority list.</p>	<p>Ex chair of local consultative group – stopped due to lack of interest by police officers. Would probably have participated (given it greater priority) if there had been an ongoing relationship (lack of interest from the police in the past) and the consultation had not come out of the blue.</p>
<p>Low priority given resources – 3 people with high workload – although it does warrant attention. Not helped by having the consultation over holiday period. Also, at the time, a lot of Internet disruption (due to denial of service viruses) which caused the participant to miss a deadline when the intention was to participate.</p>	<p>Dependent on workload at time. However, pressure could be relieved by having consultation outside of busy summer holidays.</p> <p>Online consultation was a good idea in light of resource constraints (participate at any time and not waste time travelling to and attending meetings).</p> <p>More notice of consultation and longer sessions would help.</p>
<p>Workload – conflicting demands on time available to participate.</p> <p>Also awaiting input from mental health report to provide an ‘organisational’ view – did not think consultation was targeting personal views.</p>	<p>Face to face as well as online (people can see who they are talking to).</p> <p>Hold consultation outside of busy holiday period – less staff on leave and therefore greater capacity to contribute.</p> <p>More notice needed to enable them to consultation with their members.</p>
<p>New in job – workload high and not sufficient time to consult with membership to give composite view.</p>	<p>Methodology fine – needed more notice to consult with membership – would participate next year now is more settled in job. Cautioned against opening up participation to all membership as felt this would result in people with more extreme views taking part, so outcome would not be representative of broad spread of moderate views.</p>

Registered, visited, not participated

Questions asked

A. Having registered and visited the site, we wondered why you didn't participate?

B. What would make you participate in the future?

Response to Question A	Response to Question B
<p>Work demands.</p> <p>Felt that contribution to a previous police consultation did not make a difference in the consultation outcome – i.e. that the consultation is there to “ tick the box ‘consultation’” and that outcomes are pre-planned.</p>	<p>Would be encouraged to participate if it could be demonstrated that the consultation contributions would influence the outcome.</p> <p>Also, would attribute higher priority to the consultation if were locally focused, as London wide agenda not necessarily relevant to locally.</p>
<p>Work demands – short staffed.</p>	<p>Fine as is – one off problems with capacity.</p> <p>Noted the time/commitment needed to collect inputs from members to contribute an ‘organisational’ view. Would help if was asked to provide a personal view, or that members from the organisation could contribute themselves.</p> <p>Summer play scheme meant that consultation over the holiday period exacerbated staffing problems (holiday and play scheme commitments).</p>
<p>Needed time to reflect membership view rather than personal views – not sufficient time to do this.</p> <p>Principle excellent</p>	<p>Principle excellent – would welcome consultation being extended to membership to participate individually.</p> <p>Felt consultation could be more relevant if it addressed local vs. regional priorities (i.e. London priority may not be priority in their local area).</p>
<p>Omitted to hospital – lack of time.</p> <p>Unless they are used to dealing with consultations, the language used may have been a barrier to younger people (use of language).</p>	<p>Way was designed – no complaints.</p> <p>Reminders good idea.</p> <p>Unless they are used to dealing with consultations, the language used may have been a barrier to younger people (use of language).</p> <p>Through schools would be an excellent idea.</p>