



# Consultation Committee Annual Report

September 2002 – June 2003

## **Forward by the Chair of the Committee**

**I am pleased that the Metropolitan Police Authority Consultation Committee is able, in this its first annual report, to demonstrate to Londoners the successes that we have achieved in the first nine months since the Committee's formation.**

**There is still a great deal to do, and aspects of the committee's work, such as the way in which the Authority engages with and seek the views of people at local borough level, is likely to require radical rethink.**

**'Policing by consent' is not new. This policy of engaging and seeking the view of Londoners on policing, crime and community safety issues has been promoted by the Metropolitan Police Service as one of the its key principles. I am keen to see that the Authority enables the MPS to achieve this principle and that consensual policing becomes a reality.**

**Cindy Butts  
Chair of the Consultation Committee**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The MPA Consultation Committee was established at the annual meeting of the Authority in June 2002 and held its first meeting in September 2002. The decision by the Authority to have a dedicated committee to progress its governance responsibility for consultation followed a fundamental review of the effectiveness of the previous committee structure, which was assessed as relatively ineffective in providing the level focus that was required on consultation and community engagement as a core function of the MPA.

Since its establishment, the Consultation Committee has been in a far stronger position to define, develop and progress the Authority's consultation and community engagement responsibility.

This annual report highlights the following aspects of the committee's work: -

- Year one successes and achievements
- Progress on the Consultation Committee annual work programme 2002/03
- Developments and challenges
- Resource issues
- Areas for progressing 2004 – 06

## **YEAR ONE SUCCESSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

The following are highlights of the successes that have been achieved in the last year:

- Progress towards the development of a clearer consultation framework and structures for MPA/MPS.
- Progress in the implementation of key recommendations arising from the first Best Value report on Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA)/Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) consultation
- Development and London wide consultation on first draft MPA/MPS consultation strategy
- Piloting the role of borough based community consultation coordinator to review borough consultation and community engagement structures and to pilot different structures that will improve effectiveness and efficiencies in the MPA role local consultation partnerships
- Improvements in MPS internal consultation structures
- Establishment of range of partnership relationship to progress consultation and community engagement on policing, crime and community safety issues;
- Four major consultation exercises organised on key policing and crime and community safety issues
- Review of the MPS annual Public Attitude Survey (PAS) to ensure improvements are achieved for the whole service and the Authority
- Excellent working relationship with key radio stations such as Kiss FM and Choice FM who have actively engaged with the Authority on promoting and raising the debate on key issues affecting the black minority and ethnic (BME) communities
- Membership on the Government Office for London BME Cracking Crime Partnership Board looking into the BME community role and involvement in crime and community safety issues

- Review of the MPA statutory responsibility and relationships with Community and Police Consultative Groups (CPCGs)
- Improvements in move to improve accountability of CPCGs
- Internal MPA structures to be able to progress a range of improvements in MPA Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) scheme

## **1. GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC OVERVIEW FRAMEWORK FOR MPA AND MPS CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the prime focuses of the Consultation Committee during its first term has been that of reviewing and developing a coherent and sustainable consultation framework for the MPA and MPS.

This has proved to be a most challenging task, bearing in mind that the MPS did not have a dedicated consultation structure nor well developed processes in place prior to the creation of the Authority. The appointment of a lead senior officer with responsibility for consultation has taken some time to achieve, however the appointment of a Consultation Manager for the Service has proved highly beneficial in progressing this area of work.

More recently the Committee have undertaken to work with the Office for Public Management to lend its expertise in this area to ensure that the framework that is developed is comprehensive, flexible and sustainable, taking into account the need for processes that will address the statutory and good practice as well as the corporate, pan-London and borough consultation coordinated and supported by the MPA.

## **2. MPA/MPS CONSULTATION**

At its inception, the Committee was faced with a largely uncoordinated, and largely incoherent consultation and community engagement processes. Whilst this was emerging, it was evident that there was a great deal to be accomplished.

The MPS Consultation Manager and MPA officers have worked well together over the term of the committee to progress a number of areas to achieve the strategic consultation framework that is required. Although there has been good progress in some area, others have been slower in being achieved.

The achievements to date have been:

- Increased engagement and consultation with borough commanders on progressing aspects of the consultation framework and emerging consultation strategy
- Development of guidance to borough commanders concerning local consultation on the policing priorities, including the need to interface and seek the views of groups and communities that may have previously been disengaged on policing issues
- Increased internal monitoring on the consultation processes in place by different directorates
- Detailed review and consultation on the redrafting of the MPA/MPS draft consultation strategy

- Improvements in the use of electronic (E) consultation on the annual policing priorities and the evaluation of the outcome of other consultation methods that inform the annual priorities.

Further areas of improvements have already been identified for progressing the MPA/MPS strategic overview of consultation and much of the work in the next phase of the Committee's work programme must be to build on and extend on the improvements that are already in place as part of its programme of continuous improvement in this important function for the Authority.

### **3. CONSULTATION BUDGET**

In the financial year 2001/02, members approved the application for a total consultation budget of £462,000. This budget excludes that separately allocated to fund CPCGs and ICV Panels that totals £1,024,000. This budget represents a significant decision by the MPA to prioritise and enhance its governance for consultation and community engagement and reassurance.

### **4. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME**

This is the first year that a clearly defined and achievable work programme was set out for the committee. The progress against each activity is outlined below: -

#### **4.1 Staffing and resourcing**

A policy development officer took up post in September 2002, but this post became vacant after four months. After much delay in the recruitment process, a further appointment was made in June 2003. In effect, therefore, the committee has had the equivalent of 0.5 FTE staff to progress much of its work programme in the last financial year. This has significantly reduced the level of success that could have been achieved in the past nine months; however, the Committee has had some successes and has been able to make significant improvements in some aspects of its work.

#### **4.2 Development and publication of the MPA/MPS consultation strategy**

A draft consultation strategy has been in place for several months. For four months, between December 2002 and April 2003, pan-London consultation, including E electronic consultation was initiated to seek the views of Londoners on the draft strategy. Copies of the strategy were distributed to the key stakeholder organisations and internal consultation has been held in the MPS. Overall, the response to the draft strategy has been positive. Aspects of the strategy receiving positive comments from those that responded to the draft document include:

- clear definition of consultation
- equalities and diversity principles in consultation
- priority groups inclusion in MPA consultation
- principle of engaging with wide range of parties and stakeholders in the MPA consultation

Of the 32 CPCGs that were consulted on the document, five submitted written responses. The aspect of the strategy that received least positive response,

almost exclusively by CPCGs, was the method for achieving a 'quick time' consultation whereby the MPA/MPS will be able to seek the views of specific groups, organisations and/or individuals on a 'quick time' basis, say within 36 hours. From the responses received from the CPCGs, it was evident that they were not capable of participating in assisting the Authority in this aspect of the strategy.

There was also a high level of concern voiced in the response of CPCGs on the principle in the strategy for a minimum six-week timescale for consultation. The Groups overwhelmingly proposed a longer timescale of 8 – 12 weeks as being the preferred time frame in which they would be able to respond to the MPA and MPS requests for consultation on a given policing matter. This is an issue which this committee will need to give due consideration in its planning where it wishes to continue to seek the views of CPCGs on key pan-London policing issues within this timescale.

The MPS also undertook a dedicated consultation on the draft strategy, and whilst there is overall support for various aspects and principles contained in the document, it was evident that further work was required in areas such as language and presentation in order to make the strategy equally applicable to the Authority and to the Service.

The consultation process has resulted in a range of improvements that will need to be made and the MPA/MPS consultation strategy is a 'living document' and as such will be subject to continuous revision and updating to reflect best practice as these emerge.

Following final amendments, the strategy will be published and launched in Autumn 2003.

### **4.3 Community engagement and consultation meetings and partnership support**

The following events are highlighted to demonstrate the range and types of community engagement and consultation meetings and partnership initiatives that this committee has initiated,

- July 2002 - GLA Respect Festival – over 2000 in attendance
- February 2003 – Gun Crimes Public meeting - 150 in attendance
- March 2003 - Consultation and implementation of Recommendation 61 in Hackney Borough
- consultation with Race Equality Councils (REC) on the borough implementation of the MPA and MPS race equality schemes
- participation in the Home Office research into the Police Authority role in community engagement

In addition, the Committee has supported a range of community engagement and consultation initiatives including support for the Haringey Peace Alliance Peace Walk (2002) and the Choice FM Gun Summit (March 2003).

### **4.4 Partnership events/initiatives**

#### **4.4.1 Government Office for London (GOL)/ Greater London Authority (GLA)**

#### *Black Minority Ethnic Community Cracking Crime Partnership Board*

A major pan-London initiative to provide information and support to small BME crime and community projects to enable them to become more engaged in the local crime and disorder reduction partnerships and crime and community safety issues.

#### *4.4.2 GLA Group Consultation Network*

Consultation on developing processes, identifying and publicising best practice and providing opportunities for joint working for progressing the recommendations arising from the 'Listening to London Review' among members of the GLA Group and pan-London statutory and voluntary agencies.

#### *4.4.3 Commission for Racial Equality*

Race Equality Scheme Best Practice Network – working in partnership with the CRE and MPS to promote some of the best practice developed by the MPA and MPS on consulting and engaging the public on the Race Equality Scheme. This well-established network is now attended by police service and police authority representatives from London and the southeast.

#### *4.4.5 Haringey Peace Alliance Annual Peace Walk*

The MPA has contributed a small amount of funding to support the peace walk, which the MPA Chair, Lord Toby Harris and other members of the Authority have participated in. The MPA is continuing its well established partnership with the Peace Alliance and will be working closely to organise the first major MPA event to engage faith leaders on policing, crime and community safety issues and to consult with them on the annual policing priorities. There will be a report of the outcome of this event. It is worthwhile highlighting that because of the lead that the MPA has taken in purposefully seeking to engage with faith leaders, the other major crime and community statutory agencies (GOL, GLA, ALG and MPS) are now working in partnership with the MPA to engage with this group also.

#### *4.4.6 London Civic Forum*

The MPA Consultation Committee has continued to develop a good working relationship with the London Civic Forum (LCF). The forum has a well-organised structure for engaging and seeking the views of Londoners through the different 'chapters' that make up its membership. This arrangement has served the MPA's consultation responsibility well. This year, the MPA and London Civic Forum will be continuing that partnership in facilitating a series of focus groups to seek views on the 2004/05 policing priorities. The results of this initiative will culminate in a report to be published in November 2003.

#### *4.4.7 Black Londoners Forum*

Like that of the LCF, the MPA has continued to work with the BLF to coordinate key consultation with the BME community. Additionally, the BLF has an established network of younger people that could be consulted on a range of issues.

#### *4.4.8 MPA Review of the MPS Diversity (Community and Race Relations*

### *(CRR) training*

As part of its evaluation into the MPA CRR training, the Committee has worked in partnership with the Association for London Government taking part in the annual survey that is conducted by local authorities. This year, the MPA were able to place two questions on this survey, which was completed by residents in eleven London boroughs. Additionally, a number of focus groups of residents, local community representatives have been carried out in four London boroughs.

## **5. OTHER PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS**

This committee has been keen to engage with the range of groups and communities. The GLA Group 'Listening to London' Best Value review (2001) identified eight equality target groups, which it was felt would be good practice to engage in all major pan-London or local borough consultation exercises. The committee agreed with this proposal and has taken steps to ensure that it establishes partnerships with groups and organisations working on behalf or representing the views of the following:

- women
- black and minority ethnic people
- disabled people
- groups identified by sexuality (i.e. lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people)
- age groupings (i.e. older people, young people, children)
- faith groups and communities

In addition to these, the Committee has tried, with measured success to see that it actively engages with a range of social inclusion target groups. This is an area requiring further development in the coming year.

## **6. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF AN MPA/MPS CITIZENS' PANEL, TO INCLUDE A YOUTH PANEL.**

The MPA/MPS should see the establishment of their first citizens' panel by the end of 2003. Progress towards establishing a citizens' panel has been slower than expected. However, final proposals have now been put before members of the Consultation Committee and should these get approval, steps will be progressed to establish a 1,000 strong panel, with a specific youth 'boost'. The establishment of a citizens' panel will add significant benefits to the MPA's ability to actively engage and seek the views of a range of Londoners on the full range of policing issues. Significantly, the panel will have the capability for getting 'quick time' responses to emerging policing policies and initiatives on which the Authority may wish to seek views. Subject to final approval, the Panel will be established in November 2003.

## **7. DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF E-CONSULTATION NETWORKS TO SEEK VIEWS FROM MPA/MPS PRIORITY GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES.**

The MPA has held E consultation on a number of work areas in the current year, these include:

- consultation on the MPA Crime and Disorder Reduction partnership Scrutiny



- consultation on the Draft Consultation Strategy
- consultation on the MPA role in assessing Gun Crimes
- fatal incident and police suspensions project, and
- annual policing priorities

The level of response to each of these areas have varied, however, it is encouraging that members of the public continue to represent their views by means of internet on a range of MPA and MPS issues.

This year significant progress has been by the MPA and MPS to work with an external provider to implement an extensive London wide e-consultation on the 2004/05 policing priorities. Invitations to take part in the consultation will be sent out to well over 200 organisations already on the MPA and MPS consultation databases. It is hoped that this will result in a far greater level of people actively taking part in the consultation than in previous years.

## **8. GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY/GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR LONDON CRACKING CRIME PROJECT AND PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

The MPA has been a key partner and contributor to this initiative since it was initiated in March 2002 following the BME cracking crime conference. A multi agency steering group was established to progress the outcomes of the conference and it was agreed that a discussion paper focusing on the concept of a BME crime reduction network be produced and considered by the steering group. A paper was produced for consideration in October and a number of actions were highlighted for progressing by the key agencies involved. It was also proposed and agreed that a consortium bid needed to be developed outlining the further work that was required to meet the identified gap in the level of involvement in the BME communities and groups in the local crime and disorder reduction partnerships framework.

Detailed research was carried out in two London boroughs to identify the level of BME communities and organisations in crime and community safety issues and the issues they faced relating to accessing funding for their work. This report has informed the work that is currently underway. This work is now well developed and the BLF and London Action Trust have been funded by the GOL to appoint staff to develop a clear fundraising strategy for the project. The MPA is represented on the partnership board that is overseeing this work and will be contributing to the ongoing development of this important project.

## **9. DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES**

### **9.1 Community and Police Consultative Groups (CPCGs)**

There are currently 32 CPCG in London. These groups were inherited by the MPA and form part of the framework available to the Authority to seek the views of the public at local borough levels. The MPA Best Value Review (2001) and subsequent reviews by the Home Office, Association of Police Authorities among others, have consistently questioned how effective CPCGs are in terms of representation and their abilities to purposefully engage with the wide range of the groups and communities locally.

The Committee has been continuously looking into ways in which it can work with CPCGs to enhance their accountability for the funding that they receive annually to undertake consultation and community engagement at borough levels. This has been a difficult task, however the 2003/04 funding process has resulted in significant improvements in the number of groups that submitted a supporting work programme as a basis for their annual funding.

The MPA administration arrangements and the financial management of the groups have been especially difficult resulting in strained relationships between CPCGs and the MPA. There is significant room for improvement, and resolving this area of the committee's responsibility will be a major area of achievement for the coming year.

A major initiative was initiated to review the constitutions of these groups, based on the legal advice received that the MPA has statutory responsibility for these groups. Since then, further advice is being sought in order to fully establish the relationship between CPCG and the MPA.

## **9.2 Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Panels**

Independent Custody Visiting Panels became a statutory responsibility for the MPA on 1 April 2003. Before that date, a number of initiatives were underway to make improvements to the scheme that had been in operation in London since 1981. Each of the 32 Panels operated differently, with different procedures and practices. The drive to harmonise many of the practices in place was initially met with a high level of resistance. However progress has been made in this area, and some of the achievements to date are:

- the development of a draft MPA Handbook for ICVs
- progress towards common ICV identity cards
- the development and use of a common IC visiting report form
- MPA insurance cover for all ICVs in London
- a regular programme of training and development for ICVs
- the recruitment of experienced ICV trainers to deliver training

There are, of course and number of challenges to be addressed in the coming year, these include:

- adequate administrative resourcing of ICV panels
- development of common codes of practices
- the collection of ICV data to inform the MPA overview and statutory responsibility in this area.

## **9.3 Community Consultation Coordinators**

In September 2002, the MPA appointed three Community Consultation Coordinators (CCCs) to pilot and test different models for local borough community consultation and engagement in the boroughs of Hackney, Kensington and Chelsea and Greenwich. In each case, the CCCs having evaluated the effectiveness of the local CPCG arrangement, have proposed alternative models for MPA engagement. These models are being further refined and piloted and will inform the overall strategic decision making of the Authority's governance for consultation.

As a pilot initiative, the CCC role has been very successful in enabling the MPA to carry out detailed action research and analysis of the consultation process and effectiveness of borough local frameworks. The next phase of the outcomes of the work must be to continue to pilot the proposed models proposed by the CCCs and to monitor and evaluate whether these models offer a greater level of effectiveness than that currently in place.

#### **10. AREAS FOR PROGRESSING IN 2004/05**

One of the significant areas for the committee must be that of developing a clearer framework for consultation and a clearer definition of the strategic consultation responsibilities. Although the MPA and MPS has worked collaboratively in all aspects of the developments highlighted, the committee may wish to have a much closer focus on the MPS internal processes for consultation.

#### **11. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The following are areas that require development in the coming year:

- development of a clear strategic framework and structures for MPA and MPS consultation.
- publication of the first MPA/MPS consultation strategy
- clear definition and policy decisions concerning the role and relationship between the MPA and CPCGs
- ongoing internal improvements in the administration, communication and financial service provided to CPCGs and ICVPs
- further improvements in the structures required supporting and progress developments required for the MPA ICV scheme.