



Metropolitan Police Authority

Equality Impact Assessment Form

1. Name of the strategy, policy, or project:

Metropolitan Police Authority Safer Neighbourhood Scrutiny

2. Officer(s) & Unit responsible for completing the assessment:

Hamera Asfa Davey - Community Engagement and Neighbourhood Policing Officer
Policing Policy, Scrutiny and Oversight Team

3. What is the aim or intended outcome of the strategy, policy or project?

The scrutiny will have the following outcomes:

- A clearer understanding of whether a flexible Safer Neighbourhoods structure is required in London; or
- If not required, recommendations on how the existing Safer Neighbourhoods structure could be improved to better meet the needs of the public and partner agencies.

4. Would you receive a different outcome if you were from a particular group and would this outcome be adverse or beneficial?

A possible change to the existing Safer Neighbourhoods structure is likely to have perceived adverse and beneficial effects for all diversity groups. This point is expanded on in the commentary section of the assessment form.

Diversity group	Comments
Age	
Disability	
Gender, including gender identity	
Race	

Religion or Belief	
Sexual Orientation	

5. Can you, and how would you, mitigate any adverse outcome?

The MPA will ensure that it hears the views of a wide range of participants both strategic and operational and directly from Londoners via focus groups with Safer Neighbourhoods Panels, Key Individual Networks and the Metropolitan Police Authority funded Community Police Engagement Groups.

Feedback will be analysed and presented in the scrutiny report. Any concerns regarding the current Safer Neighbourhoods model and whether changes to this are required and the likely impact of these changes will be addressed in the report. Recommendations from Londoners on how the existing Safer Neighbourhoods structure could be enhanced without changes being made to the ward based model will also be highlighted in the report.

The Metropolitan Police Authority is delivering a product – a scrutiny report with recommendations. The recommendations will be the responsibility of the MPS to deliver on. The MPA will work with the MPS to ensure that communications with Londoners reflect and highlight the findings from both the scrutiny and the previously commissioned and completed Safer Neighbourhoods scoping study. The scrutiny will identify what key stakeholders including community volunteers require of Safer Neighbourhoods based on local need.

6. Use the action plan to describe the actions you will undertake as a result of this EIA

7. Submitted for quality assurance and peer review Yes

8. Signed by MPA lead:

9. Approved by Chief Executive:

10. Published on the MPA website Yes/No

Please return a hard copy and electronic copy (including commentary and action plans) to the Head of Equalities and Engagement once completed. The original signed hard copy & an electronic copy should be kept within your unit for audit purposes.

Commentary:

Write here how you arrived at your conclusions, the evidence you considered and anything that you discounted. Say how you determined relevance for equalities. Describe the information you have gathered, who you have consulted, and whether you have identified any

gaps in the information you have. Discuss what the research has revealed about any potential for direct or indirect discrimination, the effect on relations between groups, and any opportunities to promote equality. Describe any steps you have taken to mitigate against any adverse impact(s) and any changes you may have made to the policy.

Met Forward, the MPA's strategic mission was agreed by Members at Full Authority in April 2009. A key commitment in Met Forward was to undertake a Safer Neighbourhoods scrutiny (For further information please refer to the Met Streets section of Met Forward <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/publications/metforward/strategicmission/>). To inform the direction of the scrutiny, an initial scoping study was undertaken from February 2010 – June 2010. The findings from the study were presented at the 1 July 2010 Strategic and Operational Policing Committee <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/downloads/committees/sop/100701-09-appendix01.pdf>. (Relevant references to the scoping study are made throughout this commentary section.)

The scoping project identified a number of key issues. One particular issue that partners raised was that Safer Neighbourhood ward boundaries did not always best reflect the needs of partners agencies and communities. Consultees also informed the MPA that the current Safer Neighbourhoods ward model was not flexible enough to deal with pressing issues that matter most to partner agencies and Londoners.

For example, some scoping study interviewees felt Safer Neighbourhoods and policing on the whole should be based on the needs of individual communities. The suggestion was that it would be more useful to move from the static structure of a Safer Neighbourhoods team in every ward to more proportionate resourcing based on actual needs and requirements. These interviewees felt that Safer Neighbourhoods should not be 'one size fits all' and boroughs should have the autonomy to determine how available resources would be used to meet the needs of their residents.

Whilst, research has consistently highlighted the public's need for visible policing and the connection between visibility and confidence, the work of the MPS Strategy Research and Analysis Unit¹ suggests that whilst visibility can influence confidence, it is not just about Londoners seeing police on their streets; it is also about what police are doing and what they are seen to be doing. This point is further highlighted in fact sheets produced to promote the previous government's neighbourhoods strategy. The fact sheets highlighted research into what works in policing. Research undertaken to inform the neighbourhoods strategy² indicates that problem solving and targeted foot patrols in hotspot crime areas worked, whereas increasing officer numbers without regard to the activities they would be undertaking did not.

Having reviewed the scoping study's findings, Members agreed it would be useful for the MPA Safer Neighbourhoods scrutiny to focus on the issue of structure

The MPS are currently reviewing the delivery of Territorial Policing (TP) in London. Whilst this review is connected to the need to make savings, it is primarily about building on the successes of Territorial Policing and ensuring that the service remains customer focused. Part of this review will also consider the delivery of Safer Neighbourhoods. The MPA Safer Neighbourhoods scrutiny is therefore occurring at an opportune time and will support and inform the TP review.

Throughout the scrutiny, the Metropolitan Police Authority will ensure that it hears the views of a wide range of participants both strategic and operational and directly from Londoners via Safer Neighbourhoods Panels, Key Individual Networks and Community Police Engagement Groups. Feedback on each will be analysed and presented in the scrutiny. All commentary, positive and negative, regarding the current Safer Neighbourhoods model and whether changes to this are required and the likely impact of these changes will be reflected in the final scrutiny report.

The Metropolitan Police Service is committed to the principle of Safer Neighbourhoods. Members have been assured that the TP review will not result in the demise of Safer Neighbourhoods and that neighbourhood policing will continue throughout London. However, it is expected that the composition of Safer Neighbourhoods will change and that some teams may be brigaded or 'clustered', working across a number of wards as opposed to being based in one and that other Safer Neighbourhoods teams may be enhanced. The aim is to develop an approach that is based on the actual needs of Londoners. Data and analysis would also be used by the Metropolitan Police Service to determine

¹ Stanko, B. (2010) *Confidence in policing – the story so far* Strategic Research and Analysis Unit London: Metropolitan Police Service

² Home Office (2010) *Safe and Confident Neighbourhoods Strategy: Next steps in neighbourhood policing* London: Home Office

which wards have greater need for enhanced teams.

In the likelihood that it is agreed that the Safer Neighbourhoods structure needs to be altered to better meet the policing needs of Londoners, less affluent sections of London will benefit from an increased Safer Neighbourhoods presence, thereby ensuring that policing resources are focused on those with the greater needs.

However, Londoners living in more affluent parts of the Capital are likely to view this change adversely. During the scoping study, the Metropolitan Police Authority heard from a number of interviewees who felt there should be minimum provision for every London ward. Those who stated the current structure should remain felt resources targeted at less challenging wards should not be put at risk because of the needs of more challenging ones. They were concerned that in addition to a possible impact on reassurance, the removal of Safer Neighbourhoods teams from less challenging areas would result in a displacement of crime to these areas.

In making any changes to the Safer Neighbourhoods, it will be imperative that both the Metropolitan Police Authority and Metropolitan Police Service can provide clear evidential framework to support why these changes are required. The scoping study and the scrutiny will be part of this evidential framework as will existing Metropolitan Police Service data and analysis.

The key message that the Metropolitan Police Service and Metropolitan Police Authority will need to deliver to Londoners, will be that whilst some wards may lose Safer Neighbourhoods officers, public confidence and reassurance is more accurately assessed and measured by what officers deliver in each ward as opposed to the number of officers in each ward.

