

# Report of the Safer and Stronger Community Select Committee:

## Confidence in and Engagement with the Police 2014/15



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## **Councillor Jeanne Alexander - Lead Members Foreword**

The Safer and Stronger Community Select Committee (SSCSC) is a scrutiny committee made up of local Councillors who want to help improve the safety of residents, workers and visitors to the Borough by working with the Council and its partners.

In 2014/15, as Lead Member for the Select Committee, I oversaw an in-depth review in confidence in and engagement with the local Police. We chose to review this area as we felt that residents' confidence and their safety along with the perception of crime needed to be addressed.

Our review found that the methodology of the Metropolitan Public Attitude Survey needed to be reviewed and revisited as the respondents did not provide a fair representation of the demographics in the Borough. This may change the understanding we have of the public's confidence in the Police.

The Metropolitan Police have various methods of engagement in place which can be built upon to ensure they are reaching the most vulnerable. During the course of the review, a television programme called "The Met: Policing London" was shown on BBC One. The programme was a fly on the wall documentary following officers from the Metropolitan Police and was used to build on public engagement.

In this report we have made recommendations that seek to improve confidence in and engagement with the Police in the Borough. We will review the progress of the recommendations six months after publishing this report. We hope that the Council and the Metropolitan Police Service support our recommendations so that as partners we can make a tangible, positive difference to our residents.

**Councillor Jeanne Alexander**

Lead Member, Safer and Stronger Community Select Committee 2014-2016



## **Chief Inspector Martin Kirby - Metropolitan Police Service**

In recent years Public Confidence in Policing has become an important part of measuring Police Performance and effectiveness. It has developed into one of the key bench marks by which Forces and individual Boroughs and Command Units are measured. This significance is likely to continue for some time as the Home Office and Police Forces agree on the importance of being accountable to the public, transparent in our decision making and being well positioned to understand and respond to local crime and ASB issues.

Policing has faced numerous challenges over recent years; austerity, complex historical enquiries, the changing nature of crime and terrorism and the continuing need to evolve and reshape Forces to face widening and ever more disparate areas of responsibility. It has been vital that against this uncertain and highly politicised backdrop Police Forces have invested in grass roots policing and maintained Neighbourhood Policing as a core function.

Neighbourhood Policing has been crucial to engaging with the public, dealing with ASB and low level crime and providing a visible and reassuring presence in our communities - all key ingredients of the complex mix that delivers high Public Confidence.

Public Confidence is critically important to the Police for a number of reasons. These reasons are both theoretical and practical and for me the most important are:

- 1) We Police by the Consent of the Public. We cannot expect continued consent from a Public that does not have Confidence in us;
- 2) In order to solve and prevent crime we need victims to come forward to report crimes to us - if they are not Confident in our response then we will never have the true picture of reported crime and thus never understand how to respond to the problem; and
- 3) From the local fight against ASB through to the National and International fight against terrorism the Police and Security Services are reliant on information from the public. The public will be more likely to give

such information, particularly in difficult circumstances, where they have Confidence in how we will safeguard it and respond to it.

For a time Barking and Dagenham had the lowest levels of Public Confidence within the Metropolitan Police Area. Some 18 months ago only 51% of surveyed residents were Confident that the Police did a good job locally. I am very pleased to say that after a great deal of reflection, reasearch and ultimately hard work with our Partners and Communities we have improved significantly with the latest available Quarter's results at 67% (very close to the MPS average).

I am confident that we have built the right attitudes and practical foundations for continued improvement. Indeed, one of our early undertakings was to ask the Safer and Stronger Communities Selct Committee to conduct a Scrutiny review of Confidence in local Policing. We were keen to understand the concerns behind the headline figures and to hear from Council Members as some of our keenest and most "in touch" partners.

This process has proven extremely useful and has certainly opened my eyes to some significant opportunities to better engage with our communities - undoubtedly it has played a part in so significantly improving Public Confidence in the Borough

**Chief Inspector Martin Kirby**

**Metropolitan Police Service**

# Members of the SSCSC 2014/16

The SSCSC members who carried out this Review were:



**Councillor J Alexander** (Lead Member)



**Councillor L Waker**  
(Deputy Lead Member)



**Councillor S Bremner** (Member)



**Councillor F Choudhury** (Member)



**Councillor K Haroon** (Member)



**Councillor J Jones** (Member)



**Councillor H Singh Rai** (Member)



**Councillor T Ramsay** (Member)



**Councillor D Smith** (Member)

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# List of Recommendations arising from this Review

For ease of reference all the recommendations are provided below.

## The SSCSC recommends that:

1. SSCSC approach the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) for reassurance of the methodology used for the annual Public Attitude Survey to ensure it is reflective of the residents of the Borough (and the other 31 Boroughs in London).
2. Neighbourhood Watch and BandD Together look further into how they can work together to provide a "one stop" service for residents, engaging with different community groups, for example younger people, through digitalisation and in particular the use of social media for Neighbourhood Watch.
3. The Council work with the Police to enable use of the Facebook and other social media accounts held by the Council to increase Police engagement with local communities.
4. Regular update reports be provided to the Council by the Police, as part of the quarterly performance review, clarifying how many Officers are patrolling the Borough and abstraction figures.
5. Alongside the ward promises, the Police attend licensed premises within their wards on a regular basis, where possible, to restore confidence in these environments and look at street drinking and begging where concerns have been raised.
6. The SSCSC work with the Police during and after the proposed budget cuts have taken place to ensure the role of leadership, positive values and stewardship continues.

## Executive Summary

The Council's vision for Barking and Dagenham is "one borough; one community; London's growth opportunity". To contribute to this vision, and in terms of this scrutiny review, the Council is working to build a community which is confident in the Police and provide increased opportunities to engage. This is encompassed in the priorities of:

- Encouraging civic pride
- Enabling social responsibility
- Growing the borough

Surveys have shown that Barking and Dagenham residents have a low level of confidence in local policing in spite of falling crime rates, in comparison with other Boroughs.

There is already available indicative information regarding residents' confidence in the Police.

Each year a random selection of around 400 residents in Barking and Dagenham are surveyed regarding the perception of the Police. As part of this, they are asked: "How well do you think the Police are doing in this area?" Responses to this question are used to measure public confidence in policing.

58% of respondents in the Quarter 4 2013-14 Police Attitude Survey stated that the Police were doing 'excellent' or 'very well'. The MOPAC confidence target is 75% responding 'excellent' or 'very well', and all boroughs have been challenged to increase their level of confidence.

MOPAC have set seven priority neighbourhood crimes with a target of every Borough reducing them each by 20% over four years, beginning with 2011-12 as a baseline year. MOPAC have also set a target of improving confidence in the Police by 20% over the same period. The MOPAC 7 priority crimes are:

- violence with injury;
- robbery;



- burglary;
- theft of a motor vehicle;
- theft from a motor vehicle;
- theft from a person; and
- criminal damage.

These key neighbourhood crimes have been set as London-wide priorities by the MOPAC Plan 2013 and were selected because:

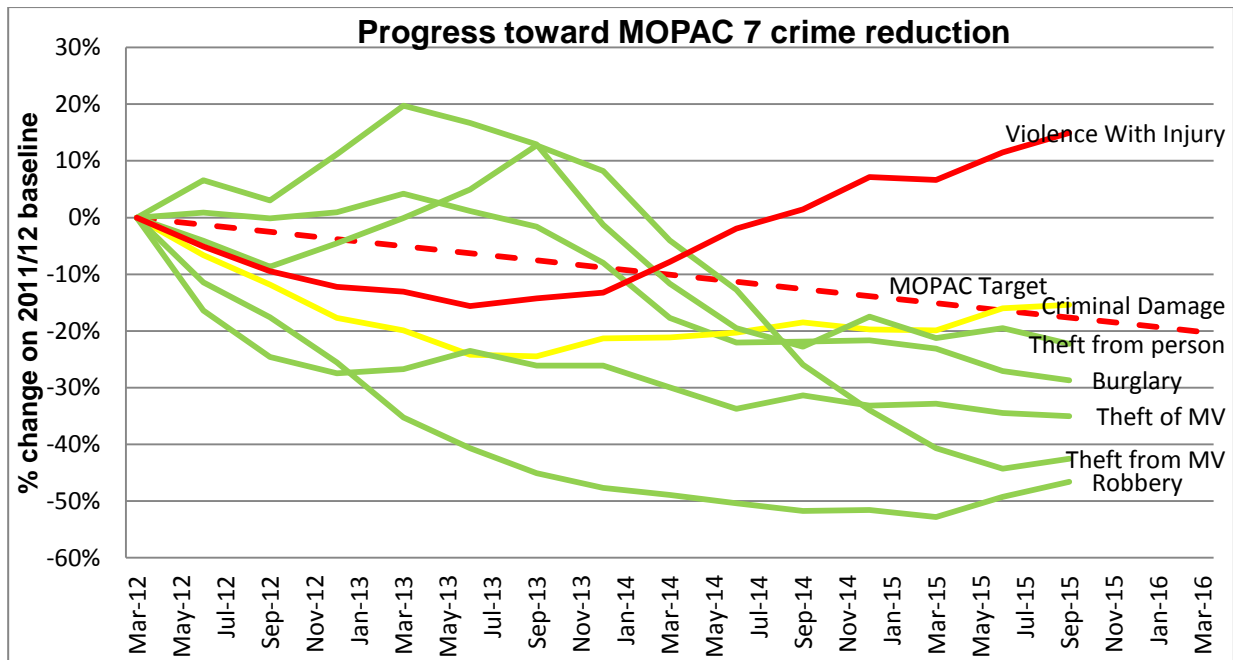
- they are high volume;
- have a large impact on London residents; and
- are victim-based offences and are clearly understood by the public.

These categories of crime account for 47% of all crime reported to and recorded by police in Barking and Dagenham.

To September 2015 Barking and Dagenham have seen an overall reduction of 23% against the MOPAC 7 priority crimes compared to the 2012/13 baseline (from 10,549 to 8259) and is therefore exceeding the overall target. However, violence with injury has seen an increase of 14.9% since 2012/13 and criminal damage has increased by 15.4%.

With the violence with Injury indicator, approximately 46% of crimes have a flag to indicate domestic abuse.

The following chart shows the trends between March 2012 and September 2015.



The Select Committee took this information into account when considering how to progress with the scrutiny review.

During the course of the scrutiny review the SSCSC received presentations and reports from the Police and relevant partners which provided a background on how the Police are currently engaging with local communities. The Select Committee also received updated information on confidence levels within the Borough and how the Police were trying to improve this.

# 1. Background and Introduction

- 1.1 Why did the Safer and Stronger Community Select choose to undertake an in-depth review on confidence in and engagement with local Police?
- 1.2 The Council's scrutiny committees decide what topic to undertake an in-depth review on based on the 'PAPER' criteria. The section below explains why according to this criteria 'confidence in and engagement with local Police' was a good topic to review.

## PUBLIC INTEREST

Surveys have shown that Barking and Dagenham residents have a low level of confidence in local policing, in spite of falling crime rates, in comparison with other boroughs. A review in this area and understanding of why there is a low level of confidence, would be in the public interest.



## ABILITY TO CHANGE

Members questioned whether confidence and engagement with the local Police could be improved. We presumed it could be but wanted to test this by engaging with local groups and professionals.



## PERFORMANCE

Performance indicators showed that people were not confident, but not the reasons why. We also had concerns over the methodology of the Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey (PAS).



## EXTENT OF THE ISSUE

We knew that people living in the Borough did not feel confident in local policing or feel safe in the borough



## REPLICATION

We considered that a member-led review into confidence in and engagement with the local Police would produce useful recommendations and would not replicate the work of other local bodies for example the Community Safety Partnership.



## 2. Scoping and Methodology

- 2.1 This section outlines the scope of the review which includes the areas the SSCSC wished to explore and the different methods the SSCSC used to collate evidence for potential recommendations.
- 2.2 Having received a scoping report at its meeting on 3 February 2015, the SSCSC agreed to consider the following areas:

**Area Teams:** What work can be undertaken with the area teams.

**Ward Panels:** How many are in place?  
What is the age range?  
Who is represented?  
How do residents know they are taking place?

**Independent Advisory Group:** Who is on it?  
What is it?

**Visibility:** Are Police present in the Wards at the correct times to enable the community engagement?  
Can Ward Members pass on key information to assist engagement?

**Other Areas:** Is Neighbourhood Watch still appropriate?  
How do the Police undertake crime prevention?  
How does an individual get involved in the Police Key Individual Network?  
Are young people represented?

### 2.3 Overview of Methodology

2.4 The review gathered evidence during the Select Committee's meetings held between 3 February 2015 and 16 September 2015. Details of stakeholders and their contributions to this review are outlined below:

- **Presentation – Public Attitude Survey**

At the meeting of the SSCSC on 3 February 2015, Chief Inspector Martin Kirby gave a presentation to the SSCSC on the PAS, which is undertaken by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on an annual basis, interviewing over 12,800 Londoners.

The survey, comparing all 32 London Boroughs, informed the drivers of the MPS Confidence Model. The current drivers are:

- Worry about crime;
- Alleviating local antisocial behaviour;
- Effectiveness in dealing with crime;
- Fair treatment; and
- Engagement with the community.

- **Presentation - Review of Local Policing Model**

At the meeting of the SSCSC on 18 March 2015, Chief Inspector Kirby gave a presentation on the Neighbourhood Policing Review 2014 – Phase 1. The information provided advised that the Local Policing Model (LPM) had increased Neighbourhood Police Officer posts by 2,600 Officers across London (138%). However the brand and clarity of neighbourhood policing required strengthening. As a result of the review, Dedicated Ward Officers would be differently tasked to allow them to focus on community engagement work and increase their visibility. This aimed to improve confidence in Policing and increase engagement.

- **Presentation - Current Engagement Methods**

At the same meeting, Chief Inspector Kirby gave a short presentation to SSCSC on the current engagement methods used by the Police, which included:

- Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board
- Ward Panels

- Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB)
  - Independent Advisory Group (IAG)
  - Neighbourhood Watch
  - Key Individual Networks
  - Neighbourhood Link
  - Stop and Search Sub-Group
  - Publicity Campaigns
  - Twitter
  - Crime Prevention Activities (such as road shows, home visits and working with victims to safeguard against repeat victimisation)
- **Borough Commander Visit**

At the meeting of the SSCSC on 3 June 2015, the Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Sultan Taylor attended to speak to the SSCSC about the review.
  - **Presentation - Neighbourhood Watch**

At the meeting of the SSCSC on 22 July 2015, a presentation was given by Sgt. James Browning on the current status of Neighbourhood Watch Groups within the borough.
  - **Presentation - Met Trace**

Sgt. Browning also advised the Select Committee on 'Met Trace' which was a MPS operation to help residents secure their homes better through the use of 'Smartwater'.

Smarter traceable liquid technology marked items of value with their own unique forensic code which is almost impossible to remove. Any traces of the liquid would glow bright yellow under ultraviolet light, allowing Police Officers to easily identify marked property.
  - **Presentation - BandD Together**

Martin Smith from Lifeline (part of BandD Together) also gave a presentation to the SSCSC on 22 July 2015 on Community Connect

and how the Routemaster website would be used by residents. This could also be linked with Neighbourhood Watch.

- **Presentation - Stop and Search Sub Group**

At the meeting of the SSCSC on 16 September 2015, Steve Thompson, Chair of the Stop and Search Sub Group gave a presentation to the SSCSC on the work of the dedicated Stop and Search Sub Group in the Borough. The Group reported to the Safer Neighbourhood Board and was independently chaired.

- **Visits to Ward Panel Meetings**

During the course of the review, Ward Panel meetings were held throughout the Borough with local Police Officers and members of the public. Select Committee members were encouraged to attend their own Ward Panel meetings where possible.

- **Safer Neighbourhood Board**

The Select Committee were invited to attend meetings of the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) however during the course of the review the meetings clashed with Assembly meetings of the Council.

- **Survey**

The Select Committee undertook a survey on confidence in policing with Council Members and the public through:

- the Police and Council websites;
- email distribution lists;
- social media;
- areas of high footfall in the Borough; and
- the BAD Youth Forum.



## **3. Levels of Confidence in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham**

### **3.1 Public Attitude Survey**

- 3.2 The Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey (PAS) has taken place since 1983 and measures Londoners' perceptions of policing needs, identifies priorities and experiences. It serves as the measurement tool for Londoners' confidence in Police and the tool for continuous improvement at borough level. This survey merges information on people's experiences of crime, antisocial behaviour and contact with police through a clearer structure of questions that enable a steer to action and challenge the problems people face in their local areas.
- 3.3 The survey is undertaken during the day and the sample includes anyone that is a resident within London and 16 years old or over (the sample does not include business addresses). Addresses are selected at random from the Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF). In total 12800 respondents are surveyed, a total of 400 people per borough.
- 3.4 During the scrutiny review, the Select Committee were concerned that the survey was undertaken during the day and therefore those who were working would not be represented. During a meeting of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), the Borough Commander recognised the concerns of the Select Committee and other partners. The Borough Commander advised that the Police were looking for better mechanisms to measure confidence locally and across London.
- 3.5 Notwithstanding the methodology, the 2013/14 Quarter 4 (PAS) shows that 46% of residents are worried about crime in the area (up 5%) on the previous year. Also 55% of residents in Barking and Dagenham feel that the Police are doing a good job in the area (down 3% on the previous year). The survey also indicates a reduction in residents' satisfaction in Police engagement with the

community. The results of the survey indicate that residents feel the Police are good at:

- listening to the concerns of local residents( 71% down 2% on last year);
- treating residents fairly and with respect (84% and 77% respectively, both up 2% on last year);
- being helpful, friendly and approachable (84%, up 2% on last year); and
- informing the public about what the Police in the area have done in the last 12 months (63%, up 11% on last year).

3.6 However, the survey indicates that improvements could be made in the following areas:

- understanding the issues that affect the local community(55% down 16% on last year);
- dealing with the things that matter to people in the local community (59% down 11% on last year); and
- being perceived as able to be relied upon to deal with minor crimes (51%, down 24% on last year).

3.7 The survey shows what issues are perceived to be a problem by local residents. The issues listed below were selected from the survey because they have seen an increase in the proportion of residents who perceive them to be a problem compared to the previous year. When asked how big a problem do you feel:

- are people being drunk or rowdy in public places? 29% said it was up 4% on last year; and
- are people using or dealing drugs? 38% said it was up 10% on last year.

3.8 According to the 2014/15 Quarter 4 PAS, 57% of residents in Barking and Dagenham feel that the Police are doing a good job in the area (up 2% on the previous quarter).

3.9 The results and data from the MPS PAS can be broken down to responses at a ward level and even at a Lower Super Output area which means that the information can be mapped. This is useful as it may help to identify the areas which are seeing declines in positive perceptions of the work delivered by the Community Safety Partnership as well as areas where particular strategic priority crimes are perceived to be an issue. This can then be cross referenced with the crime and disorder data on a routine basis to see if these perceptions are justified and require a more targeted response. Alternatively it can show where to target or inform communication campaigns to promote to residents what has been done to successfully lower the crime and disorder problems of concern in those areas.

### **3.10 Neighbourhood confidence and crime tool**

3.11 In 2013, the MPS introduced a new model for neighbourhood policing. Every ward in London has a dedicated PC and PCSO. Wards in each Borough are clustered into neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods were selected by the MPS based on operational policing experience. 108 core neighbourhoods were created. Each neighbourhood has an additional team of police officers and PCSOs who target crime in that area.

3.12 Each neighbourhood is led by a Police Inspector. This role is critical and the Inspector is responsible for policing on that neighbourhood, including crime reduction and investigation, police accessibility, confidence and victim satisfaction.

3.13 The Greater London Authority and MOPAC have analysed the characteristics of the 108 neighbourhoods and assigned them to 'most similar groups'. The map below shows the latest public confidence results from the MPS PAS. Within this map Barking and Dagenham has 3 neighbourhoods:

- **Barking:** (Abbey, Eastbury, Gascoigne, Goresbrook, Longbridge, and Thames Wards). This neighbourhood belongs to most similar group 7 – deprived ethnic communities;
- **Dagenham** (Alibon, Eastbrook, Mayesbrook, Parsloes, River and Village Wards); and
- **Whalebone** (Becontree, Chadwell Heath, Heath, Valence, and Whalebone Wards).

3.14 Both Dagenham and Whalebone Neighbourhoods belong to most similar group 9 - Green City Fringe. Neighbourhoods from Enfield and Waltham Forest are included, with three from Barking and Dagenham and Havering in the north-east. Single neighbourhoods from Greenwich, Croydon and Sutton complete the members of the Group.

3.15 50% of residents surveyed in the Barking neighbourhood during the latest 12 month period (October 2013 to September 2014) agreed that the Police do a good job in the area. Barking is ranked the lowest within its most similar group (with Waltham Forest Central being the highest). Barking is ranked 104 out of 108 neighbourhoods in London – or fourth lowest in London.

3.16 Results to questions from the PAS data are further grouped under the headings engagement, other and crime rates which show how well each of our 3 neighbourhoods compares with our most similar group and across London. Table A below summarises the results across our three neighbourhoods:

Table A

Category	Indicator	Barking	Dagenham	Whalebone
Confidence	% who have Confidence in the police	50% (106 of 108)	56% (96 of 108)	58% (93 of 108)
Engagement	% who believe the police understand the issues that matter to residents	57% (104 of 108)	75% (31 of 108)	62% (100 of 108)
	% who believe Police are dealing with the issues that matter	54% (103 of 108)	73% (30 of 108)	68% (66 of 108)
	% who believe police are Friendly	82% (68 of 108)	93% (2 of 108)	88% (14 of 108)
Other	% who feel Fairly Treated by police	71% (73 of 108)	80% (17 of 108)	80% (15 of 108)
	% who feel ASB is low in area	68% (104 of 108)	825 (87 of 108)	79% (93 of 108)
	% who feel Safe	65% (104 of 108)	73% (94 of 108)	69% (100 of 108)
	Communication - % who feel well informed about what the police have been doing over the last 12 months	61% (8 of 108)	43% (81 of 108)	56% (25 of 108)
	Policing presence - % who agree that the police provide a visible patrolling presence	44% (89 of 108)	35% (104 of 108)	48% (82 of 108)
	Wellbeing - % who agree that they are satisfied with their life as a whole nowadays – all things considered	78% (90 of 108)	77% (93 of 108)	78% (89 of 108)
Crime rate:	TNO rank	163 (37 of 108)	144 (63 of 108)	1.53 (48 of 108)
	MOPAC 7 rank	82 (42 of 108)	80 (48 of 108)	89 (28 of 108)
	Serious Youth Violence rank	1.4 (39 of 108)	1.8 (21 of 108)	1.4 (19 of 108)
<b>Areas of best practice in MSG</b>		Waltham Forest: Central, Waltham Forest: North Brent: Harlsden	Sutton: North Enfield: North Waltham Forest: North Havering: North	

3.17 The data indicates that confidence in the Police is lowest in the Barking neighbourhood and this neighbourhood has one of the lowest performance levels in London for resident perceptions of the Police understanding the issues that matter to them. Possibly linked to this the neighbourhood also has one of the lowest performance rates in London for dealing with the issues that matter to local residents in the neighbourhood.

### **3.18 2015 Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment Summary Report**

3.19 As part of this year's Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment, a workshop was held with key stakeholders from across the CSP. The focus of the workshop was to obtain the views from a wide range of people who live and work in the borough to find out what they think the crime and disorder issues are and which issues they feel should be prioritised by the Community Safety Partnership and why. The workshop was attended by representatives from statutory partners, voluntary sector and the community.

3.20 Prior to attending the workshop delegates were asked to review a list of crime and disorder issues listed in a matrix and consider how much of a problem each issue is in their opinion. At the workshop attendees were asked to highlight what crime and disorder types they felt were an issue, followed by facilitated discussions.

3.21 The results and feedback from each facilitator were then collated and analysed. The feedback received from this workshop was then inserted into the Police Crime and Priority Matrix. The priorities identified through this process were:

1. Violence With Injury;
2. Incidents of Domestic Abuse;
3. Robbery of personal property and Serious Youth Violence;
4. Residential burglary, Knife Crime and Hate Crime;
5. Other sexual offences, Theft from shops and Criminal Damage;
6. Violence without Injury, Rape and Robbery of Business property;  
and
7. Theft from the person.

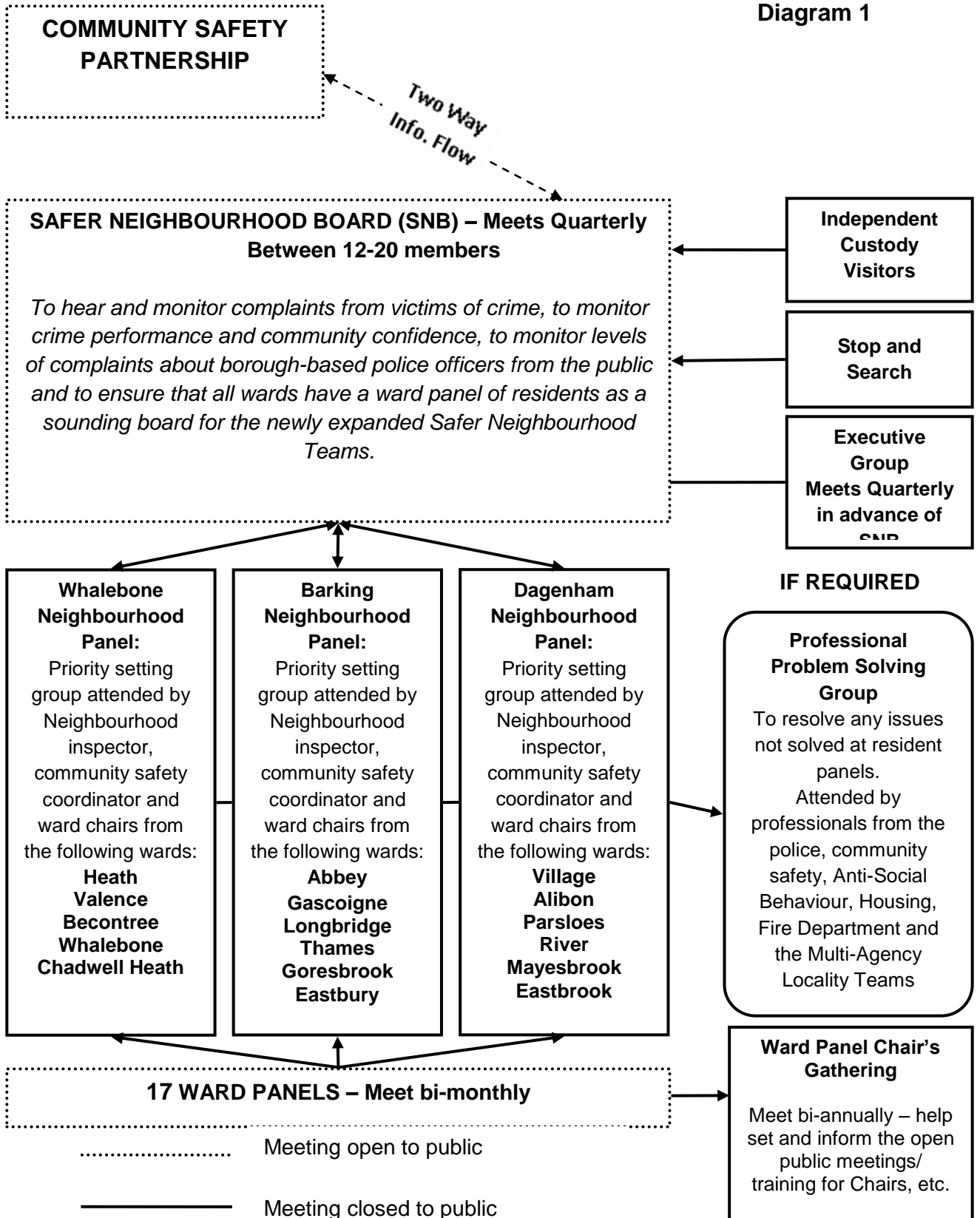
3.22 Other priority areas coming out of the stakeholder event was female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation, drugs and ASB.

## 4. The Local Policing Model

- 4.1 The Local Policing Model (LPM) was introduced to the MPS in 2013. The LPM gives each Ward three Dedicated Ward Officers: a Police Sergeant, Police Officer and a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) to respond to local issues.
- 4.2 As reported earlier, the 17 wards in Barking and Dagenham were grouped into three neighbourhoods: Barking, Dagenham and Whalebone. Each neighbourhood has a Neighbourhood Inspector to respond to issues across these wards.
- 4.3 The LPM aims to improve engagement between local people and the Police in order to improve confidence in the Police and ensure that policing priorities and promises respond to the concerns of residents.
- 4.4 The Police hold a Ward Panel in each ward every ten weeks to discuss policing issues in the local area and set policing promises. Policing promises address local community issues to which Police are capable of providing a response without the need for long-term activity or requiring little if any partnership working.
- 4.5 These meetings are attended by the Police, Ward Councillors, the public and Council staff. If required, concerns within each Ward are escalated to a Neighbourhood Panel, which also meet every ten weeks and are attended by the Police and chairs of Ward Panels. Policing priorities are set at Neighbourhood Panels, these will involve more complex solutions requiring medium to long-term and/or partnership approach to problem solving and are set and reviewed quarterly in conjunction with Borough crime priorities.
- 4.6 Neighbourhood Panels report and raise issues to the SNB. SNB open meetings are held every six weeks and discuss policing and community issues across the Borough. This structure is outlined at Diagram 1.



Diagram 1



- 4.7 A review of neighbourhood policing within the LPM was published on 23 February 2015. This stated that the LPM has increased neighbourhood Police Officer posts by 2,600 officers (138%) but that that the brand and clarity of neighbourhood policing requires strengthening. As a result of the review, Dedicated Ward Officers will be differently tasked to allow them to focus on community engagement work and increase their visibility.
- 4.8 The review explores the issues behind the perceived reduction of police visibility by local communities. It makes a number of recommendations for change to enhance Police visibility with neighbourhoods, enable effective problem solving and ensure confidence in policing continues to rise.

## 5. Current Police Engagement Methods

5.1 There are currently a number of ways in which the Police engage with the public, both face to face and virtually:

- **Community Safety Partnership**

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board is a partnership group which is accountable for ensuring development and delivery of the community safety priorities in the Borough. The CSP meets quarterly and key partners are:

- MPS;
- Barking and Dagenham Council;
- London Probation Service;
- London Fire Brigade;
- Clinical Commissioning Group;
- the Courts;
- Victim Support;
- Public Health; and
- the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS).

The key priorities for the CSP are:

- Integrated Offender Management;
- Integrated Victim Management; and
- Improving public confidence.

This meeting is open to the public, which facilitates transparency and enables resident engagement.

- **Ward Panels**

Residents can meet with their local Dedicated Ward Officers at their regular Ward Panel meetings. Attendance at Ward Panel meetings varies across the Borough however there is generally between 12

and 20 members of the public present. Residents can find details of upcoming meetings of their local Ward Panel by entering their postcode into the Find Your Local Police search bar on the MPS's Safer Neighbourhoods website and selecting their Ward.

The Police also hold Virtual Ward Panels, using an online survey to gather input from a wider audience, which feeds into and impacts actual Ward Panels. The survey asks individuals about local issues, the results are then shared at Ward Panel meetings and responses fed back to participants. Virtual Ward Panels are free to Boroughs and have the potential to raise participation of younger people and business and increase confidence and satisfaction. Typically, Virtual Ward Panel surveys are distributed to several hundred residents per Ward via Smartsurvey, an online survey tool. Engagement rates have been good, with reports of up to 20% responses per Ward.

As mentioned in section 4 (The Local Policing Model), Monthly Ward Promises have also been introduced, which address local community issues to which police are capable of providing a response without the need for long-term activity or requiring little if any partnership working. Examples include dealing with minor disorder caused by youths congregating; or speaking with partners to remedy issues caused by lack of attention.

Up to three Ward promises will be set at any one time and used to inform the neighbourhood priorities set by the local neighbourhood Police Inspector. Monthly promises and their impact will be reviewed and set at panel meetings, made up of representatives from the local community and attended by police.

This view however, is a different approach to what has been undertaken previously, with residents feeling that the Police attend meetings with a central view on what the crime issues are, not a local view, and therefore some residents have lost faith in the Police.

- **Safer Neighbourhood Board**

The Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) is held every six weeks. The SNB meeting ratifies priorities proposed by Neighbourhood Panels and discusses issues which affect the whole Borough. There are two parts to the meeting: a members section held by members of the Board (including the Police, Council staff, chairs of Ward Panels and sub-groups and representatives of community organisations) and a public section which is attended by the members of the Board and is open to the public. The open meeting is publicised to residents through means such as writing to residents who attend Ward Panels and information posted to the Police and Council's social media feeds.

- **Independent Advisory Group**

The Independent Advisory Group (IAG) is made up of volunteers from various communities within the Borough who make themselves available to assist the Police in two way communication with residents of the Borough. Independent Advisors work with the Police at specific incidents; during Gold Groups following serious and critical incidents and pro-active police operations, which they are invited to attend. Additionally, they are involved in ongoing consultation of a thematic nature, for example regarding the Police Confidence campaign.

The Borough has an active and effective IAG. They have made recent efforts to address demographic representation of the Borough on the Group, which are continuing. They are consistently reliable in their attendance at Gold Group meetings are often used to inform decision making around incidents and initiatives as well as acting as a "critical friend".

- **Neighbourhood Watch**

In June 2014 the Barking and Dagenham SNB agreed to fund a bid entitled 'My Street' which aimed to reinvigorate Neighbourhood Watches across the Borough and to form a new Borough-wide Neighbourhood Watch Association.

In September 2014 an event was held for residents interested in starting up a Neighbourhood Watch and those who already ran or belonged to one. This was attended by approximately 60 people. From this group a steering group was formed, which officially became the new association at their meeting on 6 January 2015. An initial audit of Neighbourhood Watches across the Borough has indicated that there are currently over 40 active Watches. The next step will be to conduct a health check on existing Watches to get an indication of member numbers, understand how they are functioning and offer appropriate support.

The Police and Council are supporting the new association through providing administrative, practical and advisory support. Dedicated Ward Officers have been trained to understand the role of the Neighbourhood Watch and the positive impact it can have on reducing crime. Ward Teams now actively recruit residents who are interested in the scheme.

The 'My Street' project will fund a number of small scale events and promotions that will promote Neighbourhood Watch in local areas over the next year. These events, including activities such as coffee mornings, will be supported by the local ward teams and existing coordinators where available. A key challenge will be engaging communities where there are not currently Neighbourhood Watches set up.

In late 2014, the Council launched the BandD Together initiative. BandD Together brings the Voluntary Sector and the Council together to support local people through difficult times they may be facing. The premise is, that no single organisation or agency is able to provide all the services needed or tackle the complex issues facing the local community in Barking and Dagenham. It is only by working together that it will be possible to achieve a goal of a unified, supportive and cohesive local community. Part of the consideration is how best to support front line capacity within communities and the voluntary sector to help manage demand. In light of this, consideration could be given to how Neighbourhood Watch and BandD Together might benefit from closer working.

- **Key Individual Networks**

A Key Individual Network (KIN) member is an opinion former, or influential and engaged person at ward level, who helps the local Safer Neighbourhoods Team to identify issues and understand the thoughts and feelings of the local community. Instead of attending Ward Panels, a KIN member can choose to be contacted by telephone, email, post or attending less formal meetings with the local Police Team. They may be asked to carry out surveys about crime and anti-social behaviour in the community, get involved in supporting an initiative or campaign or be asked their thoughts on a particular local issue.

Barking and Dagenham MPS currently have 1,451 KIN members. Their details are held electronically. They are sent crime prevention messages and newsletters to disseminate and are often contacted when a critical incident occurs to assist in gauging the impact it has had on the community.

- **Neighbourhood Link**

Neighbourhood Link is a community messaging service from the MPS that provides news and information about policing activity or initiatives as well as crime prevention advice. It delivers messages about incidents affecting residents' local area, the Borough or any major incident affecting the whole of London. Anyone who lives and/or works in London can sign up online to receive these messages.

- **Publicity Campaign**

A two week publicity campaign to inform residents of crime reduction and Police activity in their local area began on 2 March 2015. This included general and Ward-specific posters at rail stations, bus stops and phone boxes to let residents know what action the Police are currently undertaking and provide information about recent successes.

A dot matrix sign promoting the same messages was also displayed in prominent locations across the borough.

During this period, it was reported to the Select Committee that confidence had improved.

- **Twitter**

Barking and Dagenham MPS currently have around 6,200 Twitter followers. The Borough has drastically increased its Twitter usage over the past six months. Successful and engaging approaches to local tweeting have included:

- Witness appeals following incidents;
- requests for help in identifying unidentified suspects from CCTV images;
- crime prevention advice; and
- updates on crime pictures or offences in custody.

Twitter, and to a lesser extent traditional forms of local media, have proven to be key platforms for the "Get Involved" campaign currently being run by Barking and Dagenham MPS. This campaign aims to involve the public by promoting information about ways they can contribute to local policing such as through Neighbourhood Watch, the SNB and volunteering as a Special Constable.

- **Facebook**

The MPS does not permit individual boroughs to have Facebook accounts under its current Corporate Media and Communications Strategy. It may be possible to feed partnership communications through the Local Authority's Facebook account.

- **Crime Prevention Activity**

The Council's ASB Team and Police delivered regular Roadshows across the borough to give crime prevention advice and equipment to residents. These are particularly effective for crimes such as residential burglary and theft from motor vehicle; providing advice on how to secure homes and cars to reduce the likelihood of being targeted by thieves, as well as advice to identify scams. Equipment provided at roadshows includes tamper proof number plate screws and timer switches for house lights. These events can be tailored to



respond to recent increases in crimes or other identified specific issues. Overall engagement at Roadshows for 2011-2014 is given below. Due to a significant reduction in residential burglaries (reduced by 18% in 2014) and theft from motor vehicles (reduced by 39% in 2014), fewer roadshows were carried out in 2014 as resources were better targeted on other priority areas.

- 2,940 people in 2011;
- 8,463 people in 2012;
- 8,515 people in 2013; and
- 1,611 people in 2014.

The Police continue to provide crime prevention advice to victims and residents. This includes cocooning; visiting houses surrounding a property that has been burgled to offer burglary prevention advice and working with victims of all crime to safeguard against repeat victimisation.

- **The Met: Policing London**

A BBC documentary called “The Met: Policing London” aired weekly from 8 June to 6 July 2015. Weekly community events were organised across the borough with screening of the programme and a chance for residents to discuss the issues presented and any other issues with the Police afterwards.

Nationwide the programme had an audience of around three and a half million viewers in early episodes, which rose to over four million throughout the run. The series had more viewers every week, which is unusual for a documentary.

## **6. Engagement with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Community**

- 6.1 In the wake of the four recent deaths of men from the LGBT community and the subsequent arrest and charge of a borough resident with murder and other offences, it became apparent that there was a need to improve Police engagement with the LGBT Community on the Borough.
- 6.2 The need in question was twofold:
- 1) it was clear that links with the LGBT community needed to be stronger and deeper to allow fast time engagement and sharing of key messages/seeking of advice in the event of critical or serious incidents; and
  - 2) it was similarly clear that the circumstances of these incidents had seriously adversely affected the existing confidence of local LGBT residents in the Police.
- 6.3 To better understand where the opportunities lay to improve LGBT Confidence (not specifically measured in the PAS or elsewhere) two discussion groups were convened.
- 6.4 On Tuesday 17 November 2015, Police held a key stakeholders session at Freshwharf Patrol Base in Barking. This was attended by representatives from CVS, the central LGBT IAG, (Gay London Police Monitoring Group (GALOP), Flipside, Rainbow Hamlets, the Local Police IAG, the Local Authority and others.
- 6.5 This discussion presented the Police and partners with:
- 1) a range of concerns felt by the LGBT Community in terms of day to day engagement with the Police and Partners, understanding of the issues that matter to the community and delivering services to the community; and

2) opportunities to build some local relationships, use of the good offices of existing groups to foster better engagement and to work with specialist agencies/support groups/charities to improve the flow of information from the Police to the LGBT community (including witness appeals and crime prevention advice) and to engage those same groups to shape internal Police awareness training and advice.

6.6 On Thursday 19 November 2015, a public meeting was held in Barking to discuss concerns felt by the wider LGBT community around Police engagement. Again this discussion proved extremely useful in helping the Police understand where opportunities existed to improve engagement and to open a constructive dialogue with the LGBT community. As a result of this recent engagement a number of key pieces of work have been undertaken or completed:

- Whilst the local Police have had, for a number of years, an LGBT Liaison Officer efforts had already been undertaken to recruit more such officers. These officers would receive additional training and guidance on LGBT issues and be given time to work on LGBT issues and engagement in addition to their existing roles. In response to the issues raised by the community efforts are being made to make these officers more accessible and contactable directly (locally advertised mobile phone details/email address) and to raise their profiles amongst the LGBT community by encouraging their attendance at events and groups where possible;
- Advertising the support/help services of groups such as GALOP on the Barking and Dagenham Metropolitan Police website;
- Recruitment of a local LGBT community member to the Police IAG. A candidate has been identified by the IAG and will join the group in the coming weeks;
- Improving Station Office facilities in terms of LGBT related literature and staff awareness to ensure LGBT issues are taken

seriously and the public are appropriately directed to the Community Safety Unit, LGBT Liaison Officers or to outside support groups where appropriate. This comes with a commitment to ask LGBT stakeholders to carry out mystery shopper inspections of these facilities once implemented;

- Exploring the possibility of a local Police LGBT Liaison Officer social media presence (Facebook/Twitter etc);
- Engaging the three Boroughs with the highest rates of reported LGBT related Hate Crime to understand if this is a result of much higher levels of LGBT Public Confidence to report to the Police. If so seek out best practice to implement in Barking and Dagenham;
- Internal mandatory LGBT awareness training for front line officers to be rolled out in 2016;
- Efforts to identify existing LGBT groups and to make contact, build a relationship and offer LGBT Liaison Officer attendance at meetings/get together if the organisers so request it; and
- Creating an LGBT stakeholders contact list to ensure we have ready access to key opinion formers within the community to seek counsel and advice as well as to help propagate accurate messages of reassurance and crime prevention in certain circumstances.

6.7 The Select Committee were pleased to note that this work had senior level buy in from the Metropolitan Police, with oversight provided by the Chief Superintendent and Chief Inspector Partnerships. Delivery is being managed by the LGBT Liaison Officers.

## 7. Met Trace

- 7.1 MetTrace is a MPS Operation to help residents make their homes more secure by providing crime prevention advice and Smartwater packs to one in seven London homes.
- 7.2 Smartwater is used to mark valuable items (such as laptops, mobile phones, televisions and jewellery) which may be at risk of theft from the home. Each bottle of Smartwater carries a unique forensic code which is registered to a particular address or location. Once applied, it is almost impossible to remove.
- 7.3 Barking and Dagenham's first year of operation will see in excess of 11,000 kits delivered to households which have been selected on the basis of recent crime trends. This will be added to by similar deliveries in year two and year three of operation. The programme started on 8 June 2015 and the Borough Police have delivered over 2,500 kits since then, with the highest delivery rate of any of the boroughs who have started the programme. Around 250 kits are given out every week.
- 7.4 It is anticipated that the total number of kits delivered will be the highest out of any of the MPS Boroughs - due in part to partnership funding through the Council. The officers involved (a dedicated, trained team of one Sergeant and seven Police Community Support Officers) will use the visits to engage with residents about crime prevention, concerns regarding crime and ASB and Neighbourhood Watch. It is expected that this initiative will bring a significant increase in public confidence and lower crime rates in several key areas of the Borough.

## 8. Stop and Search Sub Group

- 8.1 The perception of Stop and Search procedures used by the Police can often be negative, causing a detrimental impact on confidence in Policing. Stop and Search is regularly scrutinised in the press and Police accused of using procedures unfairly to target specific groups. The Borough has a dedicated Stop and Search Sub-Group, which reports to the SNBand is independently chaired by a member of the local community.
- 8.2 The Group receive data on Stop and Search in the Borough and are able to give verbal and written feedback to the Police. The Group are also given the opportunity to quality assure stop and search slips completed by officers and to attend pre-planned operations, such as observing use of knife arches (walk through knife detectors). This aims to increase confidence in Police methods, allowing residents to feel confident that procedures are used fairly and appropriately.
- 8.3 Since 2012 the use of Stop and Search across London has reduced with a major reduction in no-suspicion Stop and Search. These reductions are reflected in Barking and Dagenham. At the start of 2013 there were over 800 stop and searches per month this has reduced to around 250 per month over the last year.
- 8.4 The ethnic makeup of those stop and search is also in line with the Borough's ethnicity statistics from the 2011 census, giving reassurance that specific groups are not being disproportionately targeted for stop and search. The arrest rate for stop and search is still low, around 20% at July 2015, however this has risen from an average of 16% in 2014 and a further 20% of those Stopped and Searched received a cannabis warning.
- 8.5 The SSCSC, considering the information put before them, were confident in 'stop and search' and 'stop and account' in the Borough.

## 9. Survey Results

9.1 A survey was undertaken on confidence in and engagement with the local police. All Council Members were invited to respond.

9.2 The results from the survey indicate that those who responded:

- know their local teams;
- think that locally the Police do a good job;
- think that the Police in London are doing an 'ok' job;
- generally see their local police patrolling monthly or less often;
- feel safer when they see a Police Officer;
- think they do not see their local police patrolling enough; and
- feel confident in their local Policing Team to deal with the things that matter to them

9.3 It was indicated that people feel there are less Police Officers patrolling the streets in the Borough and, whilst there are actually more in the Borough, they are being abstracted more often. There were also concerns that the few Police Officers in place had their hands tied and the justice system did not deal with offenders robustly.

9.4 Another consideration raised was the perceived concentration on central crime issues and the focus on issues that matter London wide to the Commissioner and MOPAC, which may not be relevant to the Borough.

9.5 The SSCSC also considered the impact of the environment on confidence in the Borough, for example beggars and street drinking, although this has been considered as a separate review subject by SSCSC.

9.6 During discussions on the survey, the SSCSC were aware that many residents only had contact with the Police when they had an issue that affected them directly.

## 10. Proposed Spending Cuts

- 10.1 During the course of the scrutiny review, it came to light that the Government Budget announcement due in November 2015 was expected to include a reduction to the Metropolitan Police budget of £800m or more over the next four years.
- 10.2 As part of the Metropolitan Police £800m budget reduction drive, the police force is considering removing all 1,000 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).
- 10.3 The Select Committee considered the proposed spending cuts to the Metropolitan Police Service as part of the review into confidence in the local Police Service.
- 10.4 It was noted that whilst the property crime levels had fallen, the emphasis was still on these types of crime, whereas in reality the focus needed to be on domestic violence and violent crime.
- 10.5 Confidence in the force may reduce in line with the reduction of staff, particularly PCSOs, therefore the Select Committee considered how this could be addressed positively.
- 10.6 One example considered was the model adopted in Scotland in 2013/14, where all eight constabularies were combined into one. This has enabled officers to be deployed more effectively and economically. Since the constabularies were combined there had been no significant change in public confidence.
- 10.7 The SSCSC were concerned of the impact of international terrorism has on confidence in policing in the current climate of uncertainty. Therefore the Select Committee felt that during times of austerity the Police needed to provide a leadership role for the community, encompassing positive attitudes and values for the communities in which it serves. The Select Committee were also concerned that local PC's were not on board with the corporate message from the Metropolitan Police.



## 11. Conclusions and Next Steps

- 11.1 The Scrutiny review has shown that confidence in the local police is increasing and is meeting the targets set by MOPAC. There are several different engagement methods used by the Police to encourage the local community to become more involved
- 11.2 The SSCSC noted that the Public Attitude Survey is undertaken annually across all 32 London Boroughs, however there were concerns with the methodology and whether it is representative of the Borough. The Borough Commander has expressed a need for change in how the survey is undertaken and therefore the SSCSC recommends that MOPAC undertake a review of the methodology used for the annual PAS to ensure it is reflective of the residents of the Borough (and the other 31 Boroughs in London).
- 11.3 The SSCSC received presentations from BandD Together and Neighbourhood Watch during the course of the scrutiny review. Both organisations are working against a background of austerity measures and are trying to help their communities in seeking out information and reporting crime. Following these presentations, the SSCSC recommends that Neighbourhood Watch and BandD Together look further into how they can work together to provide a “one stop” service for residents through the BandD Together Routemaster, engaging with different community groups for example younger people, through digitalisation and in particular the use of social media for Neighbourhood Watch.
- 11.4 Whilst considering the online Routemaster, the Select Committee were aware of the increasing use of social media to provide information to local communities. Whilst the police were active on Twitter, it was reported that they were not permitted to have a Facebook account. As the Council already have a Facebook account to promote information, the Select Committee recommend that the Council allow to Police to post information through their Facebook and other social media accounts to enable information to be disseminated further into communities, including the promotion of good news stories.

- 11.5 The environment was also a consideration for the SSCSC, particularly in relation to licensed premises, street drinking and begging. 11.6 The SSCSC recommended that alongside the ward premises, the Police attend licensed premises within their wards on a regular basis, where possible, to restore confidence in these environments and look at street drinking and begging where concerns have been raised.
- 11.7 The SSCSC were concerned that people felt there were less Police Officers patrolling the Borough, despite there actually being more Police officers in the Borough and therefore the SSCSC recommend that regular update reports be provided to the Council by the Police clarifying how many officers are patrolling the Borough as part of the quarterly reviews.
- 11.8 In undertaking the review, the Select Committee were acutely aware of the funding pressures faced by the Metropolitan Police at the current time and in the foreseeable future and therefore recommended that the SSCSC work with the Police during and after the proposed budget cuts have taken place to ensure the role of leadership, positive values and stewardship continues. This would be alongside a positive attitude with strong corporate messages from Police Constables and the Council, with an emphasis on pride over performance.
- 11.9 In six months' time, the SSCSC will receive a monitoring report explaining the progress of the implementation of the recommendations.

## 12. Officer Support for this Review

12.1 Members thank the following Council officers for their support during this Review:

- Anne Bristow: Strategic Director Service Development and Integration and the SSCSC Scrutiny Champion
- Glynis Rogers: Lead Divisional Director for Adults and Community Services
- Martin Kirby, Chief Inspector, Metropolitan Police
- Karen Proudfoot: Interim Group Manager - Community Safety and Offender Management
- Will Donovan: Support Officer, Community Safety and Offender Management
- Leanna McPherson: Democratic Services Officer, Legal and Democratic Services