

Joanne McCartney AM

Chair of the Police & Crime Committee
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London, SE1 2AA

16 January 2014

Dear Joanne,

Public Engagement on Water Cannon

Thank you for your letter of 9 January in response to mine of 7 January. I am now able to set out more details about the engagement plan for water cannon which the Mayor has committed to.

The formal engagement period begins tomorrow, **17 January and closes on Friday 28 February 2014**. As a result, the engagement will give Londoners a full six weeks to respond and I hope that this addresses your concerns that the previous timetable, with a decision made in mid-February, was too short.

The components of the engagement on water cannon are as follows:

- We are organising events as part of the engagement plan. I will be inviting borough leaders and heads of community safety to attend a joint briefing from Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley and myself, with invitations going out shortly.
- MOPAC will also host a briefing and Q&A session with London MPs and peers at Parliament in February, with a date to be finalised shortly.
- We are also organising a special public meeting for Londoners to learn more about water cannon and for the Metropolitan Police to explain how, when and where it might be used. In order that the public meeting can take account of issues raised by your committee, it will follow the meeting on 30 January and will be held at City Hall between 19:00-20:30 on **17 February 2014**.
- MOPAC will also host a discussion with interested stakeholder groups immediately before the public meeting and invitations for this will be going out shortly.
- As part of MOPAC's 'Your Police, Your Neighbourhood' town hall series, there will be eight borough meetings on policing across London in the consultation timeframe, where Londoners can raise water cannon as part of the Q&A.

Of course, you and your colleagues in the PCC and Assembly are welcome to attend all of these events.

To inform responses, we are making available official correspondence and ACPO briefing on the subject of water cannon, and these documents will be uploaded to the GLA website and available from tomorrow morning at www.london.gov.uk/mopac/watercannon. A dedicated email address

for comments from the public has been set up ([x]). Any comments already received will also be considered.

Following the engagement, MOPAC will share with the Home Office the results of the public engagement and I will be happy to provide your committee with a summary of responses received across the various engagement events at the same time. The Mayor and I would expect to be in a position to make a decision in early March, subject to the Home Secretary making clear her intention to licence water cannon for use in England and Wales. In addition, the Mayor has agreed with the Chair-designate of the new Ethics Panel, Lord Carlile, that they will undertake an inquiry into the ethical practice around the use of water cannon as an early priority, and this would report and make recommendations before any water cannon were ready to deploy.

Finally, I am aware that there has been some speculation about the potential costs of the water cannon identified by the MPS and currently owned by the German Federal Police. The sums quoted in the media of up to £1.3m per unit are incorrect. Initial quotes obtained from the Bundespolizei by the MPS confirmed that the three cannon would be available at €35,000 each, meaning around £85k for the three, and up to £200,000 taking into account around £110,000 for transport, refitting and related costs for all three cannon. While even this cost is below the limit for which the MPS have delegated authority, I have made it clear that approval must be sought from me because of the novel and contentious nature of the decision.

I look forward to discussing this with you further on 30 January.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Greenhalgh
Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

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