

London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London, SE1 2AA

Marie Snelling

Director of Integrated Offender
Management and Neighbourhoods
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime

6 January 2014

Dear Marie,

Thank you for attending the Police and Crime Committee's meeting on 5 December to discuss the progress being made by boroughs in setting-up Safer Neighbourhood Boards (SNBs). It was an interesting discussion, and we are pleased to hear that a number of boroughs are now at an advanced stage in the development process. For those not so advanced, we would welcome further information in due course.

The meeting was also a useful exercise in understanding how the core functions of the SNBs will be carried out. I think you would agree that more work needs to be done on this. To assist in this, I have identified below some of the areas where the Committee feels further guidance could usefully be provided to the boroughs.

Additionally, I would welcome your response to the point raised at the meeting around the need for Equality Impact Assessments to be carried out when evaluating final proposals for SNBs.

- **Holding SNB meetings in public**

MOPAC should make it a requirement that SNB meetings are held in public. The Mayor has said that SNBs will bring greater accountability at a local level, and improve community confidence. It is not clear how SNBs will be able to do this without holding its meetings in public.

- **Escalating issues and complaints**

A formal process for how SNBs will be expected to escalate issues and complaints to MOPAC and the Met should be set out in future guidance. MOPAC should also outline how it will take forward any actions identified by SNBs.

- **Representation on Boards**

It is important that SNBs represent the community they serve. Final proposals from SNBs should demonstrate how they have engaged with BAME, LGBT and faith groups to ensure the widest representation. MOPAC should take consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty before final sign off.

- **Access to information**

A protocol needs to be established between MOPAC and the Met for how crime data will be provided to SNBs. The information made available should be easily accessible and understood. It should also be presented in a consistent format across the boroughs, and include sufficient historical data to identify trends.

- **Monitoring community confidence/victims' complaints**

There needs to be more information in future guidance about how SNBs will be expected to monitor community confidence and what outcomes are anticipated. The reference to hearing victims' complaints should be reworded to reflect the text of Mayor's letter.

- **Community payback**

While public oversight of Community Payback is welcome, MOPAC must establish a commitment from SERCO at senior management level to engage with SNBs. This would include attending meetings and making information publicly available on the local projects being delivered.

- **Funding**

There is still a concern that the core funding for SNBs is not enough, particularly when issues such as accessibility and training are factored in. MOPAC should reconsider the amount of money it is making available to SNBs. We are also concerned around the support SNBs will receive to bid for funding. Bidding is a skilled and resource-intensive process. MOPAC must give consideration to how it will support SNBs to do this effectively, including whether more training could be provided.

I hope you find the above useful in helping you to develop your thinking around SNBs. The Committee intends to revisit the issue before April to assess the new guidance provided by MOPAC to boroughs, and to assess how it is being used. It will also be interested to see how Boards are progressing across London. Thank you again for your contributions at the meeting, and your ongoing support to the Committee.

Yours sincerely



Joanne McCartney AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

cc Steve O'Connell AM, Mayoral Advisor on Neighbourhoods