



Our Ref: RL-lo

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Dear Siobhan,

MOPAC Police And Crime Plan – Southwark Submission

1. What, if any, other objectives and goals would you add to the Mayor's objectives and goals?

Southwark Response

We fully acknowledge how difficult it is to establish objectives and goals for an area as diverse as London. We also recognise that there needs to be greater focus on improving the confidence in the police and making the police more efficient in order to achieve the savings targets.

However, it has long been recognised that effective crime reduction is more effective through a strong partnership approach. The changing dynamics for London through the economic recession, migration, immigration and the changes to welfare reform will have a significant impact on crime and anti social behaviour. Community Safety Partnerships will play a crucial role in establishing long term intervention and preventative plans to reduce the impact of the above, ensuring they inform our priorities and goals.

Whilst the importance of partnership working is recognised in the overarching priority to, *"Ensure that all of London's public service agencies work together and with communities to prevent crime, seek swift and sure justice for victims, and reduce re-offending."*, this does not appear to be reflected recognised in the objectives and goals.

An example of how to embed the importance of partnership working would be to amend the first priority to:-

"Working in partnerships to cut 7 priority high impact, high volume neighbourhood crimes by 20%"

There does seem to be a disparity between the 7 crime types that the plan sets out for a 20% reduction over four years (burglary, vandalism/criminal damage, theft of and from

motor vehicle, violence with injury, robbery and theft from the person) and the crime priorities that Londoners identified during consultation in 2012. The draft plan states that:-

“During 2012, the biggest concerns raised were anti-social behaviour; gangs; stop and search; and the relationship between young people and the police. Other issues that are commonly raised are the accessibility of and visibility of the police, burglary and drug related crime as well as gun and knife crime and street crime.”

This would indicate that a better basket of indicators, which would tackle the crimes that matter to Londoners most would be:-

- Burglary
- Street crime including robbery
- Youth crime
- Weapon crime (gun and knife crime)
- Group offending
- Violence with injury (including domestic violence)
- Harassment (including a reduction in the number of repeat victims of anti social behaviour).

We believe that further reflection of blanket targets is important. The recent IPCC findings in their report of the Southwark Sapphire Unit highlight that pressure from central command to achieve universal targets can result in a poorer quality of service for victims, and result in the most serious of consequences. Further review of this 20% approach would be valuable.

In terms of criminal justice we do believe that there are two significant gaps in the objectives and goals.

Firstly the target to “reduce court delays by 20%”, does not recognise the specific issues that relate to the current challenges within the criminal justice system. A review of the whole criminal justice process is required as there are delays across the system, compounded by the move of the CPS away from aspects of specialisation, for example in the cases of domestic abuse. There are particular issues in terms of court outcomes which mean that there are a significant number of times when an offender is granted bail or the cases results in a not guilty outcome verdict due to breakdowns in the criminal justice process. A better target would to “improve the outcomes at court by 20%”.

Secondly, there are no targets for improving victim and witness care. Our experience is that approximately one third of cases that do not proceed to court due to the withdrawal of the victim or witness. In addition there is a significant need to develop and improve services in order to improve the victim satisfaction levels in London, including victim care, witness mobility and to ensure that support services reflect the needs of the diverse population of London.

2. What, if any, other things could be done to address police performance and resource issues?

Southwark Response

Southwark would be keen to work with MOPAC to improve police performance and resource issues.

We fully understand the impact on police resources due to the efficiency programme of the MPS. However, Southwark Council believes that the MPS should take careful consideration of the remit and size of central specialist teams. We are strongly of the opinion that there is an opportunity to reduce the size of central teams, reduce unnecessary duplication and place much needed expertise at a borough level where it can have the greatest impact. There are opportunities with a range of specialist central teams such as SCD3, 5 and 8, where a realignment of teams at a borough level would result in more targeted focus on those committing crime, providing greater ownership at local level. We would be keen to work with MOPAC to explore this further during and after the consultation period.

One of the key factors for improving Police performance is focusing on improving the sanction detection rates. Whilst the draft plan highlights that on average sanction detection rates are around 20%, there is a huge disparity with certain crime types; for example, robbery and residential burglary are still around 10%. At present the draft plan only states the aspiration for sanction detection rate as "improving..." rather than setting a proper target. Consideration should be given to setting a meaningful increase over the next four years.

Reallocation of policing numbers will be at the heart of police performance. The view from a Southwark perspective is that the allocation of 2 additional officers to the borough is woefully inadequate, based on the performance challenges that we face. In real terms we believe that Southwark has actually lost around 60 officers since May 2010, from the then borough establishment of 874.

Southwark has the highest level of knife crime and youth related crime and robbery is significantly on the increase, against a London wide overall reduction. Bearing in mind that the plan sets the target of a 20% reduction in a basket of crime indicators, including violence with injury and robbery, we feel that there should be a much clearer correlation between these targets and the police numbers. The crime levels in Southwark, combined with its high density and footfall demand a much greater allocation of resources.

The working population of Southwark has significantly increased as the regeneration of the London Bridge quarter and Southbank has attracted a wide range of businesses to the area. These areas have become a vibrant social scene, regularly attracting thousands of clubbers and party goers, throughout the weekend. London Bridge and Elephant and Castle are two of the biggest transport hubs in the whole of South London with millions of commuter journeys a day.

These increased pressures do not appear to make up any part of the formula for allocating the additional resources and as a result, Southwark will find itself with insufficient policing to manage the challenges that it faces.

3. Do you think the confidence in the Metropolitan Police needs to be improved? How do you think that could be done?

Southwark Response

The Metropolitan Police provide the lead role in keeping Londoners and those that visit our capital city safe. On the whole the police provide an excellent service and should be commended.

London is made up of a diverse range of communities whose concerns and needs are wide ranging. There will always be challenges facing the Police and its partner agencies in how to deliver services which meet the needs of the communities that it serves. The biggest challenges for the Police are to be fair, transparent, honest and accessible as possible. Providing meaningful consultation and involvement at a local and Met wide level will be important in meeting these challenges. This will include overhauling the role of the IPCC, extending the powers to investigate police and crime commissioners and to provide independent advisory groups with a greater scrutiny role, with the power of sanctions, rather than just recommendations.

There is no doubt that an increased involvement of lay people in the decision making process would be highly beneficial. This would be a positive move forward where contracts are being commissioned by the MPS, particularly to external bodies or third party organisations, an area which has caused considerable controversy.

Safer Neighbourhood Teams have proved a valued addition to providing local reassurance and community confidence. We are concerned that changing officer resources to a minimum of 1x PC and 1x PCSO will directly affect public confidence as the additional demands placed on those officers will impact on visible patrols and community engagement.

Local community safety partnerships will play a crucial role in engaging with those groups that have low levels of satisfaction with the police, particularly young people and victims of crime, and can provide opportunities to facilitate meaningful dialogue through their wide range of services. The Metropolitan Police would benefit from looking at integrating their management function at a borough level with councils, in order to improve their interaction with local service development and delivery. A good example of such integration can be seen at Harrow Council which could be reviewed.

4. The Mayor has prioritised keeping police officer numbers high rather than keeping underused buildings open. Do you feel that the focus should be on maintaining police numbers or police buildings? How else could budget savings be made?

Southwark Response

As a council, we fully understand the challenges that the police face in reducing the costs of buildings and front office counters. Such assets can be costly to operate and can potentially divert officers from much needed visible patrols.

We also recognise that this is an emotive subject; the local Police Station is not just a

place where people can report crime but is also a symbol of a local police presence, a place where people fleeing from crime or, the threat of crime can seek sanctuary.

In terms of the police estate it is vital that MPS and MOPAC are able to articulate a sensible, workable alternative. This should include exactly what the alternative offer of local accessibility is, in terms of times, location and the level of support on offer. The consultation events in Southwark and Lambeth have already highlighted that there are “black holes” in areas across borough borders where there will be significantly less police accessibility. The current plans are too ambiguous to say that this approach will deliver what Londoners want.

In terms of the neighbourhood policing model, from a Southwark perspective, the model will not deliver what Londoners, living, working and visiting the borough will want. We support the flexibility that the Borough Commander will have in the deployment of their local resources. However, the proposals are that an average of 30 additional officers across 5 wards, will have responsibility for a broader remit, including investigating crime, responding to non emergency calls, supporting victim and dealing with priority offenders. The actual guarantee is a minimum of one police officer and one police community support officer per ward. The reality is that this increased role will reduce the visible presence of officers as they are not only involved in the investigation and bringing to justice of offenders, but also responsible for supporting victims. It will be important that MOPAC and the MPS are transparent about the impact of this changing role and what local communities can realistically expect in terms of a visible presence. We would reiterate that the minimum offer of 1x PSCO and 1x PC per ward compared with the current 6 officers will reduce their visibility and impact negatively on public confidence. The proposed addition of only 2 officers for Southwark is also not consistent with the crime challenges that Southwark faces and we would urge a review of this allocation so that it is more aligned to address the high recorded incidence of robbery, youth violence and knife crime.

Southwark Council believe that the MPS should take careful consideration of the remit and size of central specialist teams. We are strongly of the opinion that there is an opportunity to reduce the size of central teams, reduce unnecessary duplication and place much needed expertise at a borough level where it can have the greatest impact. We would be keen to work with MOPAC to explore this further during and after the consultation period.

Finally, in terms of the allocation of the additional 2,600 officers, we refer to our response to question 3 above. We do not understand or agree with the rationale that sees Southwark only receive an additional 2 officers on the 2011 baseline figures. In real terms we believe that Southwark has actually lost around 60 officers since May 2010, from the then borough establishment of 874.

5. What, if any, other things could be done to prevent crime?

Southwark Response

This is a far ranging question which would require an extensive and lengthy reply. We would be more than willing to meet and discuss this with representatives of MOPAC, to working closely with its officers to explore this in more detail.

However, in broad terms there needs to be three areas of focus:

- Greater involvement and commitment from a wider range of key partner agencies at a local level. This includes organisations such as Her Majesties Customs and Excise, UKBA, primary health care, mental health services, transport providers, rather than transport bodies.
- Legislative changes that set out the role of the above services and a “duty to co-operate” at a local level. The changes should include a duty to prevent crime and share information.
- A defined central role of community safety partnerships and the voluntary sector in delivering crime prevention and interventions. This central role should be recognised more fully in the police and crime plan for London, highlighting the importance of co-ordinating a partnership response to the issues that make people feel safe in their local community.

6. What, if any, other things could be done to address justice and resettlement issues?

Southwark Response

We have covered a considerable part of this response under question 1 above.

There are two specific concerns that we would highlight.

Firstly, there needs to be a review of the current resettlement pathways for offenders with a view to the impact of the welfare reform and the economic recession. The pressures on employment for ex-offenders, particularly offenders in the age range of 18-25 are a major concern. These will be compounded by the benefit reforms and associated financial pressures. An effective review needs to look at a long term plan which includes and involves other regions of the UK.

Secondly, Southwark and its partner agencies have serious concerns over the proposed plans for managing offenders and the external commissioning of Offender Management Services. We feel strongly that the current proposals will impact significantly on our ability to manage offenders, and they do not reflect on the complexities of offender management where a client cannot be naturally categorised on a spectrum of low medium and high risk. The proposals have the potential of undermining the currently robust multi agency approach to managing the risk of offenders, such as Integrated Offender Management, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Case Conferences and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements. We would urge MOPAC and the Police and Crime Commissioner to look at the impact for justice and resettlement services for London, with a view to setting out a specific case that such reforms will not work for London.

7. What, if any, other key crime and safety issues that are important to you would you include?

Southwark Response

Part of the challenge in developing a police and crime plan for the capital is the wide range of priorities and competing demands that exist across such a diverse city.

With the limited resources that are available to both the MPS and its local partners, it will be difficult to deliver a cut in crime if the plan adopts a “catch all” approach, which it appears to be trying to do in its current form. In addition the draft needs to take careful consideration of the wide economic and social changes that are beginning to have a major impact on crime levels, particularly those crimes that happen in the home and in local neighbourhoods. Further pressure through the planned welfare reform will have a significant impact for individuals and families in certain neighbourhoods, who are already under severe pressure. These reforms have the potential of impacting on crime and anti social behaviour as socially disadvantaged groups may consider themselves as being more isolated, creating increased pressures.

The plan currently lacks any specific analytical information that would provide a valuable context into what crime impacts where, when and who are affected, both as victims or offenders. This information would add richness to the overall plan and provide a strong evidence base so that clear priorities can be stated with more clarity. Most importantly it is likely that it would highlight some of the regional variations in terms of crimes trends, thereby enabling a sub regional approach to crime reduction and providing a greater opportunity to the cut crimes in areas where they impact most.

8. Are there any other issues affecting you that have not been covered in the draft Police and Crime Plan?

Southwark response

The plan is very broad in its coverage and provides a useful guide to some of the policing and crime challenges.

We feel that there are opportunities to improve the overall plan and Southwark would be more than happy to assist MOPAC in any way possible.

The plan would benefit from the inclusion of a strong analytical evidence base. There appears to be lack of supporting evidence such a long term crime trends which would indicate the demographic and geographic changes across London.

There is merit for including social and economic data and looking at the long term impact of the welfare reform and economic recession on London. A good starting point would be to refresh the analysis conducted by Professor Betsy Stanko and Lizzie Paters from the MPS research and Partnership team in 2011.

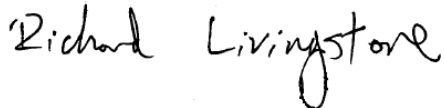
The plan would be improved by having a greater emphasis on partnerships and the role of the voluntary sector. Whilst we fully appreciate that this is a police and crime plan, it is well evidenced that the multi-agency partnership approach to preventing crime and anti social behaviour and reducing the fear of crime is the most productive way forward.

The plan also needs to have a much greater inclusion of health. It is well documented that the impact of emotional trauma, mental well being, ill health, alcohol and drug dependency are have a direct impact on aspects of crime and anti social behaviour. It is vital that health providers are seen as key players in the police and crime agenda. The

establishment of health and well being boards and greater involvement of GP's provides an opportunity to place health services at the centre of the community safety agenda, delivering sustainable interventions for individuals and families.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the consultation, please contact Jonathon Toy, Head of Community Safety & Enforcement (jonathon.toy@southwark.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Livingstone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'L' and 'S'.

Councillor Richard Livingstone
Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Community Safety