



# **CAMDEN COMMUNITY & POLICE CONSULTATIVE GROUP**



[www.camdencpcg.org.uk](http://www.camdencpcg.org.uk)

## **CAMDEN COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO MOPAC CONSULTATION**

### **Executive summary**

Attendees at the CCPCG public meeting called to discuss the MOPAC proposals reported that they felt confused and disorientated by the proposals – and certainly much less safe and secure.

### **Introduction**

The CCPCG Board was first briefed on the implications of the MOPAC plan at its meeting in December. The intention of the briefing by the Camden Police representatives was to explain the implications of the plan for the borough. At that meeting the police had not been able to formulate any details regarding the means by which the 20% reductions selected crimes would be achieved. Some general views on how the 20% reductions in cost were expressed particularly in relation to moving resources from back office functions to front line services. However the detailed numbers were not available. Whilst CCPCG is anxious to support the Borough Commander in achieving what he regards in general terms as achievable, CCPCG has no information of a detailed nature that support this stance. Recent requests have not produced any further information which would allow us to evaluate these plans in relation to participation by the community at large.

Notwithstanding the above, CCPCG has made efforts to ensure these changes have been given an airing with respect to public acceptance. A workshop was organized to engage all interested parties in a discussion of various issues that had emerged from the presentation in Camden of the MOPAC Plan.

At the December meeting of the CCPCG Board, the submission that Camden's police intended to make to MOPAC was presented. CCPCG gained an understanding in outline of how the plan was to be executed but this lacked any detail. The executive pressed for this to be released but until now this has not been available to CCPCG. In particular the Board was keen to understand how the redeployment of resources resulted in the claimed 20% reduction in costs and, more critically, the rationale for asserting that such a reorganization of resources would result in 20% reduction in selected crimes. CCPCG is not availed of the details of which crimes would be in the metric which has to be established if this target is to have any substantial meaning.

In general terms CCPCG is doubtful that these targets can be met at the same time as realizing an increase in the confidence of the public of 20%. To be

plausible, more details of the borough policing plan are required if CCPCG is to be convinced of the plan to realise MOPAC aspirations.

## CCPCG Workshop on MOPAC Plan

The Workshop was held on a date previously reserved for a special general meeting of the CCPCG. CCPCG general meetings are open to all interested parties. In the event 45 people attended and participated in this event. It was held in the form of a workshop in which various specific questions which arose from the MOPAC presentation in Camden. These were expressed as headings around which views from the attendees could list their observations and concerns. These lists are reproduced in Appendix 1. The workshop was divided into 4 groups, each of which were invited to express their views in free format and recorded on flip charts. A leader and scribe were appointed for each group. This meeting ended with brief presentation of the views collected from each group any additional points were noted.

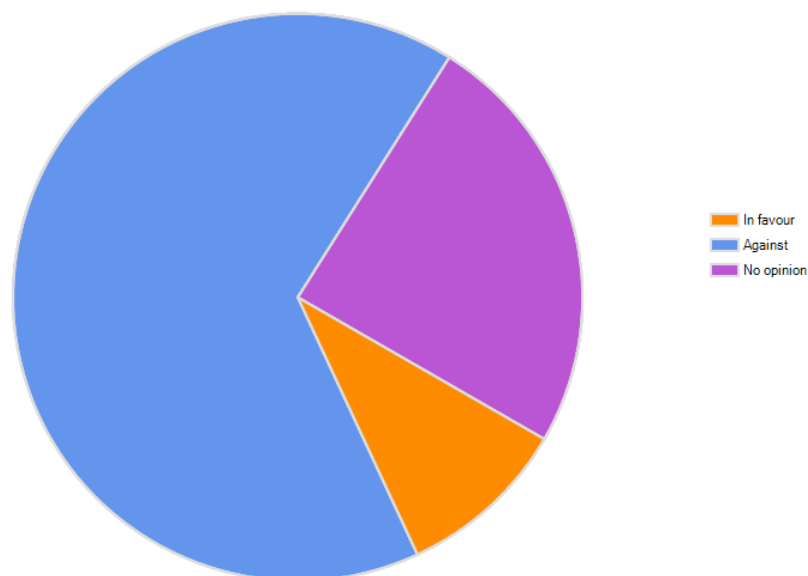
At the end of Appendix 1 the main points made are recorded.

## CCPCG Survey

The workshop resulted in a number of specific issues being identified. From these an on-line questionnaire was derived so that the opinions of a wider audience of correspondents could be canvassed. A copy of our questionnaire is attached in Appendix 2.

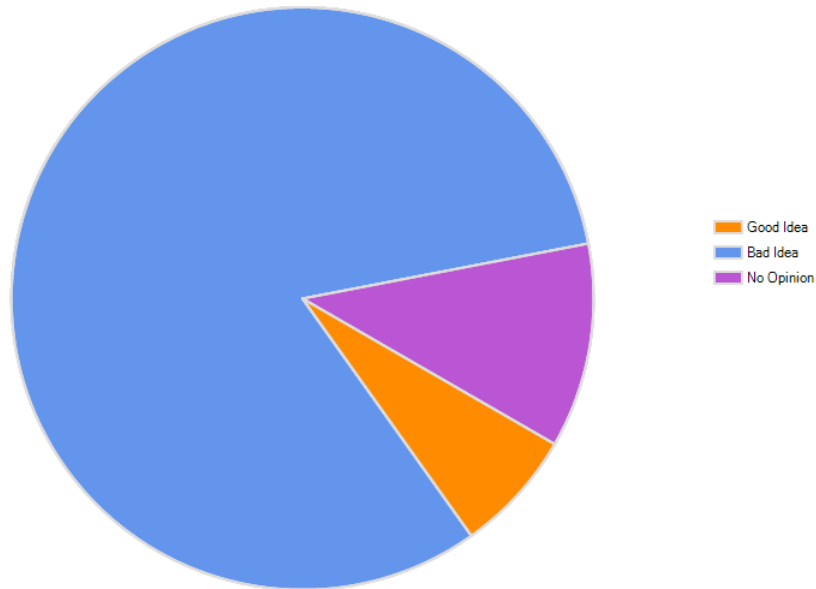
We received 43 responses to the survey posted on the internet. Of these nearly half (44%) had participated recently in the activities of their Safer Neighbourhoods Panel (SNP) although a quarter of these were not members of the SNP. A very significant majority of those who expressed an opinion on the reorganization of local policing into Local policing Areas were against this idea (87%).

MOPAC (the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) suggest reorganising local policing into Local Policing Areas (3 LPAs in Camden), increasing the resources in each area whilst retaining SNPs with less than half the current resources in each ward. What is your opinion on this?



With regard to the proposals for setting police priorities over 90% were against this. This translates into a view that the influence of local views on crime priorities has diminished.

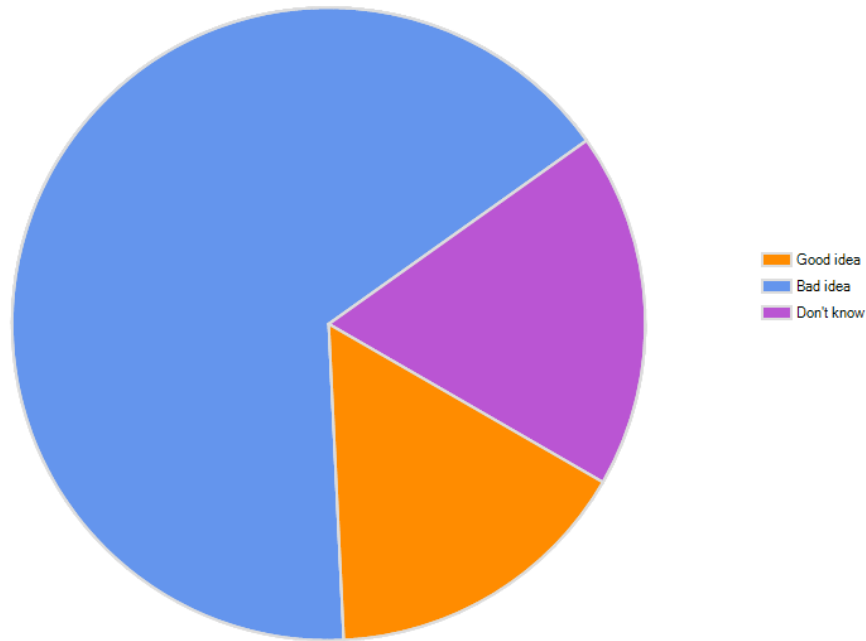
Currently Safer Neighbourhood Team priorities are set by concerned residents living in the community, MOPAC suggest that priorities will be set for an LPA by the police inspector in charge. What is your opinion of this?



To the general question about the impact on local policing there were a variety of responses but on the whole these lamented the loss of local involvement in policing that was perceived as resulting from the proposed changes. Selected extracts of these responses are given in Appendix 2.

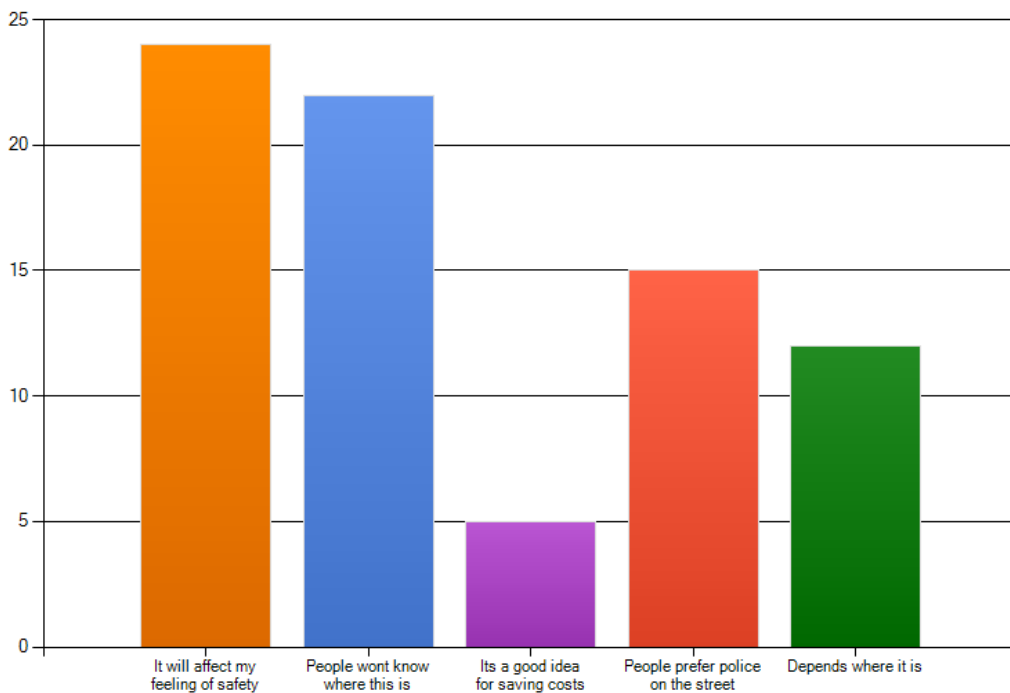
Of those expressing an opinion about a diminution of police counters over 80% felt that this was a bad idea.

Police front counters at police stations will be reduced in Camden from 5 to 2 so that resources can be reassigned to LPAs. What do you think of this?



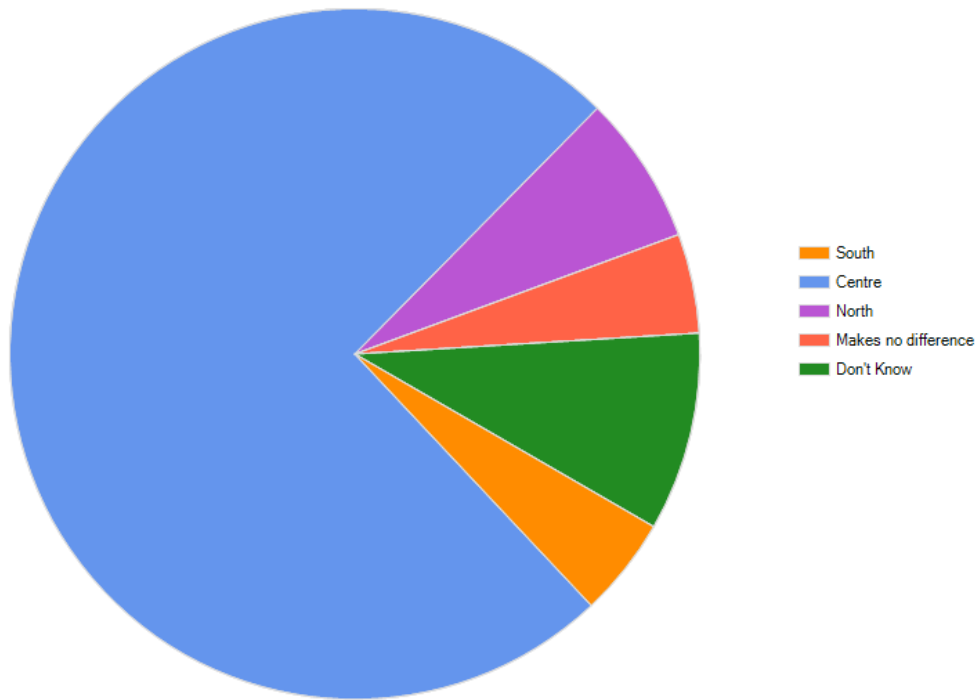
Having just one 24/7 police station in the borough produced a mixed response of reaction but these were on the whole negative.

There will be only one police station in Camden open to public access all the time. What do you think about this?



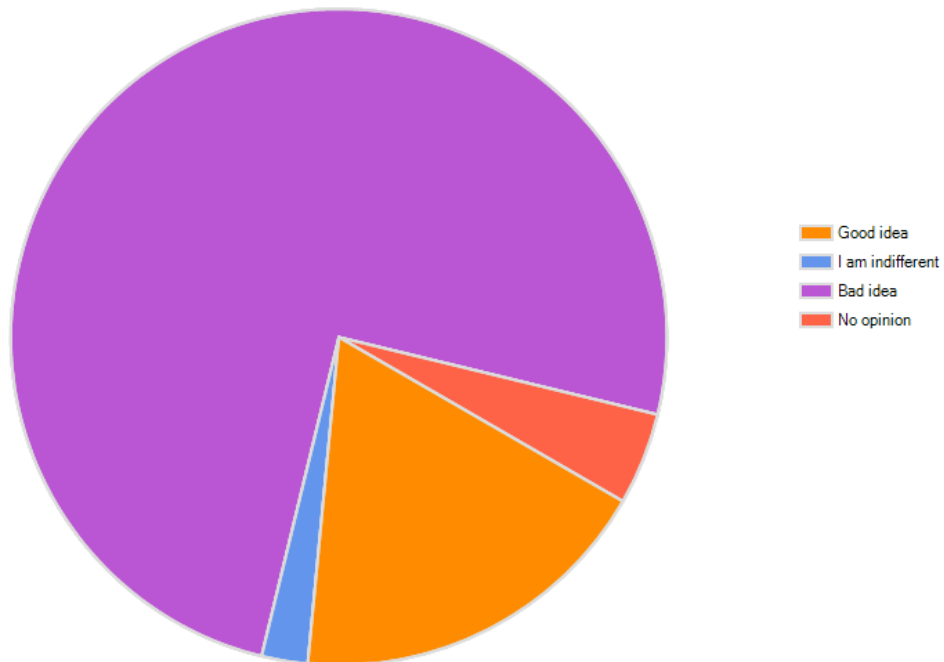
With regards to the location of the single 24/7 police station there was a very clear preference for one that is centrally located. This is a reaction to the suggestion made to the presentation made by MOPAC in Camden that the Holborn police station (located in the very south of the Borough) should serve this purpose.

**If Camden is to have just one 24/7 police station, where in the borough should it be located?**



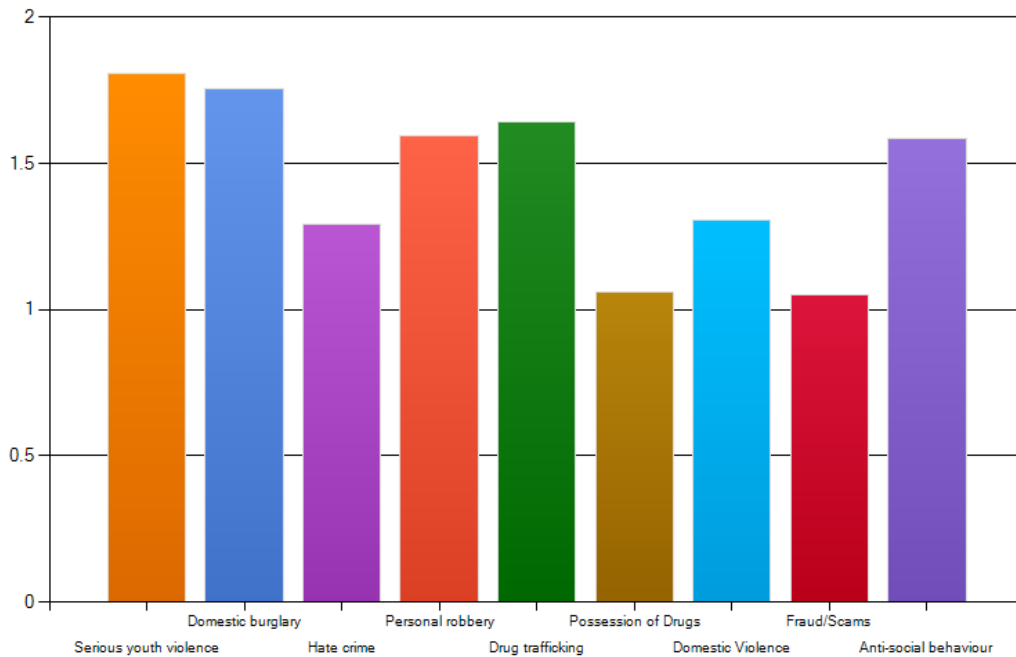
More than three quarters of respondents think that the MOPAC proposals for relocating counter services is a bad idea.

**To replace the loss of the front counter provision, MOPAC suggest that there could be Contact Points in locations away from police stations (e.g. public libraries, commercial premises) that will be open for four hours once a week. What is your opinion on this idea?**



With regard to views about priority crimes, data was collected using a scoring system that produced aggregate scores for the specified crime types.

Tell us what your crime priorities would be for Camden. You have 9 points to allocate, it is up to you which crimes you allocate these points to. The more importance you feel a crime should be given, the more points you should allocate. Or if you think all these crimes are equally important then you can allocate one point per crime.



This chart suggests that Serious Youth violence and Domestic Burglary are the most important crimes. Personal Robbery, Drug Trafficking and Antisocial Behaviour are second rank.

# **Appendix 1: CCPCG Workshop Questions and Answers**

## **Issues Raised by Workgroups**

### **Neighbourhood Policing**

- Turning the clock back
- How will views of public be given
- Decisions on priorities by police
- Panels will be disembowelled
- New model leaves us confused – too many layers
- Create joined-up groups locally and borough-wide (such as the CCPCG) to review and comment on policing at both borough and local level on a regular basis
- Local knowledge lost
- Power of local communities diluted
- Conflict of priorities at different levels (ward, area, borough)
- Need for better knowledge of panels
- Method of finding issues
- Cluster policing less personal

### **Police Front counters**

- Central location for 24/7 counter
- Must consider arrangements in neighbouring boroughs
- Reassess all locations
- People feel safer with local stations
- What are contact points?
- Contact points are inappropriate
- Should be on main roads
- No statistics available
- Loss of peace of mind
- Holborn PS is inaccessible
- What value is given to police stations as comforting locations
- Improved communications?
- Lack of privacy at contact points
- Improve on-line communication/publicity

### **Priority Crimes**

- Fraud and scams
- Violence
- Sexual exploitation
- Snatch of mobiles
- Domestic violence
- Better understanding of threat of crime
- Publicise reduction of crime in media
- Increase awareness

- ASB
- Guns and knives
- Burglary and Robbery
- Drug dealers
- Hate crime
- Domestic violence
- Gang on gang
- Racial/homophobic abuse
- Terrorism
- Antisocial cyclists



## Appendix 2: Survey Questions and Results

### Survey Questionnaire

**(A copy of the questionnaire is attached)**

#### Selected Responses to Question 6

1. Loss of trust in the police
2. It will lose the support of local people which will be vital in the future with resource cuts
3. It will have a reverse impact. The police would be forced to look and act on statistics. This means that police will have to depend on electronic intelligence more than human intelligence at a local level. The police do try to be connected with the local residents. And by the time they do they are transferred
4. Increase in the level of crime
5. Community policing is no longer a reality under this proposal. The perception and confidence of the public which has been built up over 7 years of SNP will be lost. The public and panels have been the eyes and ears for our teams and setting their own priorities of issues that directly affect their day-to-day lives will be lost. Community engagement will be the victim of enforcement, which, while necessary, is not always the be-all and end-all of solving problems in local areas. The police will become distant from the community with no lynchpin of a dedicated Sgt with whom panels previously communicated. This is sector policing in any other name and a successful model is being trashed
6. Camden area is a difficult place to police and we need more not less officers etc to keep the community safe and happy
7. Risk that policing becomes out of touch with residents and this is important because residents see the \*potential\* for crime before it happens rather than simply reporting crime after the event. This means working with residents can be effective in reducing crime There is a danger that resource allocation may become too stats driven and out of touch with things that are actually happening on the ground.
8. It is the community that will know what is required to safely police the neighbourhood
9. A much poorer Police presence on the Streets. People do not feel in control anyway & this scheme will take away any empowerment they may have
10. Loss of good local intelligence and misdirected priorities
11. Crime will increase. The downgrading and down management of criminal activity will worsen. This move is about tackling figures in a ledger, not figures who cause crime

- 12.** Hard to predict. It could lead to less public support for the activities of the police and/or it could lead to the police being able to devote resources to more serious crimes that have less public visibility and nuisance value.
- 13.** The police will not have the face-to-face communication that has taken place so far. Residents will feel their input is not important nor their concerns. The respect that has been built will be destroyed and the crime rate will go back up, thus defeating all that the Safer Neighbourhoods have done.
- 14.** police will focus on what interests them and this may not reflect the feelings of the neighbourhood
- 15.** It will make the police more remote from those they serve locally. "Big Brother" knows best and we are made to lump it
- 16.** Reduce focus on ward based issues but may improve efficiency of crime fighting