

London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2016/17
Thursday, 31st January, 2019

Minutes of the proceedings of
the Living in Hackney Scrutiny
Commission held at
Hackney Town Hall, Mare
Street, London E8 1EA

Chair: Councillor Sharon Patrick

Councillors in Attendance: Cllr Sade Etti (Vice-Chair), Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Anthony McMahon and Cllr M Can Ozsen

Apologies: Cllr Michelle Gregory

Officers In Attendance:

Other People in Attendance: Deji Adeosun (Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS), Nicola Baboneau (Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board), Ayo Ogunjimi (Inspirational Leader, Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme), Councillor Caroline Selman (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector), Sue Williams (Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service), David Agana (Inspirational Leader, Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme) and Louise Brewood (Chair, Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board)

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Councillor Sharon Patrick in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Gregory, who had lost a close friend.
- 1.2 Cllr Ozsen attended the meeting but needed to leave due to illness.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

- 2.1 There were no urgent items and the order of business was as laid out.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Evidence gathering for review - trends in Stop and Search (and Section 60 notice) activity - numbers, outcomes and profiles

4.1 The Chair welcomed Sue Williams, Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service.

4.2 She said this item was intended to give the Commission insight into the latest trends in Stop and Search, patterns in terms of who was being stopped, and outcomes.

4.3 This was prior to a subsequent item which would explore the quality of interactions achieved during the use of the power. That item would involve the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service, and other guests who were in attendance.

4.4 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service made the following key opening points:

- Stop and Search was a really important tool for the police - when used properly and effectively – in its work to combat violence, and the threat and fear of violence.
- This was particularly the case in light of a number of tragic murders which had taken place in Hackney during a recent period. These incidents had been coupled with general increases in knife crime. Hackney did have a relatively high number of gangs. Stop and Search was one of the tools used to combat, contain and manage this issue and others.
- There was also significant public support for its use.
- This said, it was absolutely vital that it was used effectively and was deployed with high standards of professionalism and integrity, and with concern for those stopped.
- Positive outcome rates were relatively high for Hackney. Met-wide, the positive outcome rate target was 20%. Hackney had achieved a rate of 30.5% last year, which was the highest across the Met. This suggested that when it used in Hackney it was generally used correctly.
- She fully appreciated community concerns around disproportionality in Stop and Search. It was important to be open on data.
- 55% of those stopped and searched in the period January to December 2018 had self-identified as being black. The slides in the agenda pack showed this and also that over a 1 year period, 62.9% of those suspected of having been involved in knife enabled crime, were identified as black. This helped give context to the issue.
- In terms of Section 60s, these were only installed due to anticipation of, or following an incident of, violence. These orders were seen as blanket stop and searches, and were when grounds for stop and searches did not need to be given. Applications (which could be made verbally) for enacting a Section 60

were reviewed by a National Police Level Senior Officers, with significant grounds needed.

- They were usually deployed for a number of hours, but extensions could be applied for.
- There were 39 section 60s in Hackney last year. Only 12 of these were borough wide, with the rest in specific areas where it was felt that violence was likely or imminent. 345 searches were carried out as a result of these orders.
- It was important to note that Officers were not able to stop and search whoever they liked. There needed to be grounds and objectives for the search. Activity was intelligence based. This meant that they were acting on particular information around a particular area or person or group who may have committed crime or may be close to doing so and or where a person was found to meet the description of a suspect.
- The only other time they would stop and search would be in cases where they saw or encountered something leading them to believe that someone might have something on them (for example the smell of cannabis being found upon a vehicle being stopped).
- There was clear criteria for Officers in terms of approaches to follow. Information on the grounds for the search and the objective, the Police Officer's warrant number, identification and Police Station belonged to had to be given / shown to the person being searched, along with the subject's right to obtain a copy of the stop and search record. They needed to explain the legislation under which the search was being carried out.

4.5 A Member noted that there had been 5794 Stop and Searches in 2018. She asked how this compared with data for previous years, and if there had been an increase.

4.6 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service confirmed that comparing the 2018 numbers with 2017 would show that there had been a rise. This rise reflected the increase in serious violence which Hackney had experienced, along with London generally.

4.7 She noted the particular spike in numbers in April, where there had been 3 tragic murders. The numbers included the stop and searches in Hackney made the central Violent Crime Task Force and Territorial Support Group units which had been deployed in Hackney in response to these issues. These units gave a highly visible presence on their arrival, and had delivered stop and search activity.

4.7 She noted that the Stop It campaign delivered under the previous Metropolitan Police Commissioner had led to a decrease in activity, and an actual deskilling of Officers who did not wish to carry out stop and search given the directive. This approach reflected Theresa May's calls as Home Secretary to reduce stop and search.

4.8 This position had changed under the new Commissioner and there was now an aim to increase activity in all boroughs. This was being carried out in response

to calls from the community and partners on the need to take knives off the streets.

- 4.9 On a local level, the BCU had not responded to this development by setting targets for searches. However, management was actively encouraging Officers to use their stop and search powers when they were needed, and to deploy these effectively and appropriately. Training was being delivered to upskill the workforce in this area.
- 4.10 A Member noted the number of stop and searches carried out in the calendar year 2018 – 5794. He noted that this equated to an average of 11 per day, which he felt was high. From a ward forum he had delivered some nights ago, he was aware that there was significant concern from young people about the activity. Those attending the meeting had spoken about the impact that the activity was having on them; leaving them with a view that they would rather not go out. They had reported feeling targeted by the police.
- 4.11 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service appreciated the concern around increased use of stop and search. However, the tool was one of those being used in responses to an escalation in serious violence.
- 4.12 Alongside a general increase in its use, the BCU was working hard on quality and assurance measures. This included increasing the share of stop and searches recorded on body worn cameras to 93% in December 2018 in Hackney, compared to a rate of 85% across the Met.
- 4.13 The Stop and Search Monitoring groups were able to observe these encounters via dip sampling. The body worn cameras were delivering greater reassurance to the community; she was aware of cases where footage had been shown to parents who were concerned around stop and searches of their children, and where this had been able to reassure them that powers were being deployed professionally.
- 4.14 A Member said that young people in the Ward Forum he referred to earlier showed him information cards on their rights around stop and search, and standards which police should follow in the activity. He said that these had been useful in his and the young people's view.
- 4.15 There was a discussion around the origins of this card. During this, Nicola Baboneau, Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board, and Designated Chair of Hackney's Stop and Search Monitoring Arrangements, mentioned that Hackney CVS had previously produced information material around rights of subjects of stop and search and what they should expect during interactions. These had now become slightly out of date due to some legislative / approach changes, and MOPAC were currently working with community groups in the production of new guidance cards. She offered to share a sample of these with the Scrutiny Commission, when it was available.
- 4.16 The Chair noted that the share of stop and searches in Hackney in 2018 which resulted in a positive outcome stood at 30.5%. She worried that this suggested that in almost 70% of cases the subject was innocent.

- 4.17 She also noted that 55% of stop and searches in Hackney in 2018 had been carried out on people self-identifying as being of black ethnic origin. This was despite this group accounting for an estimated 23.1% according to the presentation. She suggested that the over representation of black individuals in stop and searches conducted coupled with the outcome data highlighted that innocent people from particular community groups were being disproportionately affected.
- 4.18 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service appreciated these points. However, she noted the slide in the presentation showing that 63% of suspects in knife enabled crimes over the same period had been of an African Caribbean background.
- 4.19 She said that the positive outcomes rate of 30% for Hackney compared to a Met target of 20%, and a positive outcome rate Met-wide of 28.1%. It was unrealistic that something would be found on everyone stopped and searched. However, the activity in Hackney was intelligence based; for example it was focused on where knife enabled robberies had been occurring, or where there had been high levels of general violence.
- 4.20 There was a deterrent aspect to stop and search, with the activity giving a message to young people that they were at risk of detection if they took a knife out with them.
- 4.21 A Member noted from the slides and presentation the spike in stop and search which occurred in April 2018, during a period where there had been a number of tragic murders. She noted that this had also brought a dip in positive outcome rates, and felt that this could mean that a lot of people in that time had had a negative experience.
- 4.22 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service confirmed that the rise of stop and search activity in April was due to the greater police presence following 3 homicides and a generally escalated level of gang activity and violence. That month had seen deployment in the borough of central units, and a greater usage of Section 60s. While there had been a dip in outcome rates, the 25% level for that month still surpassed the met target.
- 4.23 She felt that a range of police activity – including the effective deployment of stop and search – had helped the borough reach a position where knife enabled crime was reducing and where the knife crime under 25 rate (a key indicator around serious youth violence) had reduced by 36.6%. Targeted stop and search activity had successfully removed knives from the streets and – she felt – helped deter people from carrying them.
- 4.24 A Member noted that December had seen 93% of stop and searches recorded on body worn cameras. She welcomed this. She only asked about the approach to ensuring that any patterns of particular officers not recording searches were identified and addressed. She felt that this could help best ensure that any few rotten apples were identified.
- 4.25 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service confirmed that measures were in place. Supervisors took action where they found that body

worn cameras were not being worn. This was part of an approach where complaints against officers were monitored, and acted upon appropriately.

- 4.26 A Member noted that outcomes from stop and searches included finding people in possession of cannabis or khat. She asked if this might illustrate the police perusing low hanging fruit in their use of stop and search, rather than the tackling of violent crime.
- 4.27 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service said that while a lot of people used cannabis, that possession and supply of the drug was a criminal offence. Officers had the right to use their stop and search powers to help combat it. She said that the police would generally not arrest people for the possession of small amounts, and that this would generally be dealt with via tools including warning notes and postal charges. Arrests and the taking of people into custody for cannabis related offences would generally be reserved for those suspected of dealing the drug.
- 4.28 Feedback from the community regularly showed that residents did want action to be taken against those smoking cannabis in the public realm. While the police would generally not take people into custody for low level cannabis offences, they were seeking to be responsive to community concerns.

5 Evidence gathering for review - Stop and Search - ensuring quality interactions - work by the police and community

5.1 The Chair welcomed the following guests for this item:

- Sue Williams, Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service
- Nicola Baboneau, Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board, and Designated Chair of Hackney's Stop and Search Monitoring Arrangements
- Deji Adeosun, Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group
- Tim Head, University of Essex student and volunteer for Hackney CVS
- Ayo Ogunjimi, Member, Young People's Stop and Search Monitoring Group
- David Agana, Member, Young People's Stop and Search Monitoring Group

5.2 She said the discussion would focus on work by the police and the community to monitor stop and search activity, and to seek to ensure good quality interactions.

5.3 Sue Williams, Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service made the following opening key points:

- Noting the slides for this item which were available in the agenda packs, she said these covered the use of body worn cameras, the youth work underway between the police and the community, and the processes around information and assurance which formed part of the section 60 processes.

- On youth work, the Sergeant overseeing the Safer Schools Team met on a monthly basis with the Hackney Youth Stop and Search Monitoring Group.
- The Safer Schools Team sought to discuss tactics around stop and search openly and fully. They also delivered 'know your rights' sessions in PHSE classes. They were involving the Territorial Support Group in their work.
- A joint initiative with the Safer Neighbourhood Board had delivered 10 workshops in secondary schools to seek to increase understanding between police and young people of encounters from the other's point of view.
- In terms of Section 60 – and time allowing – the police would seek to consult on a potential enactment of a Section 60 order including through the Safer Neighbourhood Board and the Independent Advisory Group Chair. They would also seek to complete a Community Impact Assessment. This said, with Section 60s generally being enacted quickly following or in anticipation of violence (including during times out of office hours), this full range of prior engagement was not always possible.
- Reflecting this, they aimed to always ensure that partnership messaging was delivered further to enactment which advised on the area which it covered and the time period. They also did messaging via social media, and through OWL messaging to local Neighbourhood Watch.

5.4 Nicola Baboneau, Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board, and Designated Chair of Hackney's Stop and Search Monitoring Arrangements made the following key points:

- It was commendable in her view that the Commission was looking at Stop and Search. Stop and Search had been routinely scrutinised during a previous period by the now disbanded Community Safety and Social Inclusion Scrutiny Commission.
- She had been a founder member of recommendation 61, which made Hackney one of the pilot areas for stop and search to be looked at. At that time stop and search had been an extremely high temperature subject.
- Looking beyond that to the period of the Stop It campaign by the previous Metropolitan Police Commissioner, she had worked with the Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS to establish monitoring groups where superintendents and borough commanders were accountable to these groups.
- Hackney was particularly innovative in putting significant emphasis on arrangements for monitoring stop and search activity by young people. She, the Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS, and the Chair of the Independent Advisory Group had worked very closely throughout the period. They had facilitated discussions in a wide range of venues around the borough, allowing high levels of community engagement.
- They did not operate as fully distinct adults and young people's groups; they were fluid and took a joined up approach. The House of Commons had cited the arrangements and approaches in Hackney as best practice.

- Over many years, she had attended City Hall's Stop and Search Monitoring Network meetings. She had attended a Chairs meeting last night.
 - During a positive period, the groups had developed strong and trusting relationships with the police, whose Chief Inspectors had been fully engaged. They had been able to add value by acting as a critical friend; recognising good practice but also providing challenge when it was appropriate.
 - It needed to be said that a more challenging period had followed where engagement was less positive, and where things did not work as effectively. A Chief Inspector had been involved with the delivery of body worn cameras to uniforms and had engaged with the Safer Neighbourhood Board and other forums where he would demonstrate the insight gained. However, his engagement with the forums in terms of reviewing and interrogating stop and search data was less positive.
 - Following the recent establishment of the Basic Command Unit structure for Hackney and Tower Hamlets, there had been a quite barren phase in terms of engagement by the police. While this was understandable given the need to work through change, there had been cases where leads for engagement had been identified only to change soon afterwards. She looked forward to a full settling down of staff.
 - There had been progress; December had seen the young persons and adults monitoring groups meet the police for a robust discussion, and she was hopeful that moving forward activity would be more regular.
 - It needed to be acknowledged that post-the change to the BCU model, there was fuller communication in advance of an enactment of Section 60s. This had allowed her to be on the ground monitoring and discussing with the community how they felt.
 - Following the move to the BCU model, groups had only been advised of Section 60 enactments in unrestricted messages following the event, taking away the capacity for this responsiveness.
 - Positively, a protocol had been developed around the enactment of Section 60 which the monitoring groups had been consulted on. She had yet to see this protocol in action but she was confident that it would be followed. She had full faith that good practice would be reached in terms of communications on Section 60, with the scale of change making it inevitable that there would be some gap.
- 5.5 Deji Adeosun, Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group made the following key points:
- He was in agreement with the points made by the last speaker.
 - A key driver of his work was ensuring that local police were aware of how practices and approaches could impact on young people.

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- In terms of section 60 enactments, some of the feedback from young people was negative. There a common view that police officers approached those they were stopping and searching with a presumption of guilt. Searches under Section 60s often appeared to be even more disproportionately targeted at young black men.
- He took the point around the data suggesting that those from black backgrounds were over represented among suspects of knife crime. However, the manner in which the community was sometimes stopped and searched during deployment of section 60s caused issues.
- As an example, he knew a case where a young person upon leaving his home was immediately stopped and searched by a police van, just because his home was in an area where there had been an incident or where an incident was felt likely. The situation could have been handled differently; he could have been asked if he had anything to contribute to the investigation going on and or he could have been given the context around the situation. However, with this absent he was left with a view that the police felt that he must have done something wrong. This left him feeling aggrieved. He could give other examples of this kind of event.
- Young people regularly reported wanting more police officers visible on the streets. The solution was not just more stop and search, but greater visibility.
- He had been told by young people that by a single police officer being present, a situation in which two rival gangs were on the same street would not – in 9 out of 10 cases - escalate or result in any incident. This compared to the same situation where a police officer was not present, where escalation to violence would be very likely.
- He noted data referred to earlier around reductions in youth violence, and the view that this was partly explained by increased stop and search activity. He would argue back on this point to suggest that that the reduction might have been achieved by a greater police presence generally, and not a greater use of stop and search.
- Moving onto the work on the work of the monitoring groups, the level of engagement and the relationship with the police had very much depended on the extent to which the borough commander had been community focused.
- With the move to the BCU model, he felt that there was an improving picture, with a stronger relationship developing. For example, some members of the youth group had been able to visit the police station at Stoke Newington to speak to Officers around their experiences, and to gain an insight into the different roles and functions. They were then able to feed this insight back to the community in workshops they held with them.
- Earlier on that day the group had been given the opportunity to dip sample stop and search footage captured on body worn cameras. This had been very positive and also highlighted to value of the exercise; it had – as it should have done – raised questions which the group was able to put back to the police. For example, some of the cameras were pointing to the floor meaning that footage

could not be fully seen or heard. Also context was not available in terms of the reason for the stop and search.

- Regular meetings were back in place between the monitoring group and the police. This had included engagement by central units including the Territorial Support Group, and the Firearms Unit. This had been very useful.
- These events would enable the youth leaders making up the monitoring group to help guide and advise young people.
- However, getting more opportunities for more young people to talk directly to the police would be really valuable. This should very much include a wide range of officers rather than a single figurehead, and officers with influence and power to make changes.
- Generally, recent developments had been very positive. He would only caution on the need for this to be maintained and improved, and for the police to continue to assign the level of importance to engagement which they should.
- Summing up, he was optimistic about the way forward. He welcomed that the police very much appeared to be open to frank and honest conversations, and had taken measures to improve their engagement with the community.
- He hoped for the increases in contact to be maintained, and for this to also include greater engagement with centralised units deployed into the borough. He welcomed the ride along initiative, and said that all new recruits to the Young People's Monitoring Group would be required to attend a session.
- He said that the monitoring of body worn camera footage was positive and he looked forward to more sessions.
- As a final note, he was pleased that funding had been awarded by MOPAC for the establishment of the Young Person's Independent Advisory Group, which Hackney CVS would be facilitating.

5.6 Tim Head, University of Essex student and volunteer Hackney CVS summarised the dip sampling exercise carried out earlier today.

5.7 It had been positive that the process had started. Work was needed to overcome some technical issues which had prevented a full sample of clips being observed, but he was confident that these would be resolved.

5.8 Improvement was needed; of the 4 clips viewed 3 were almost unusable. They were missing large sections of the early stages of encounters due to camera being blocked by clothing or from them being focused on the floor. Information was missing; both visuals and sound.

5.9 This meant that checks could not be carried out on whether officers had explained the grounds for their stop and search and or gave the other information they were required to give those being searched as mentioned by the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service at an earlier point.

- 5.10 Without having this full context a fair view could not be ascertained on whether – when footage of later points of searches showed subjects protesting about their rights having being breached – they had grounds for these complaints.
- 5.11 In the cases viewed, police staff had needed to help interpret the footage, which was obviously not ideal. Transparency would also be improved by the spreadsheet of clips from which random samples were chosen for viewing, having some background context (for example what the grounds were for the search and what the outcome was). This could help more informed selections of clips.
- 5.12 He felt these issues to solvable, through and joint work.
- 5.13 One finding from observing the footage was that handcuffs had been used on the person being searched, in each of the clips viewed. Due to the issue mentioned of the clips often only capturing footage or sound some time into the searches, in most cases the handcuffs had already been deployed at the point from which footage was available.
- 5.14 It was therefore unclear what the reasons were for their use. However, from discussions with the police officer he understood that whether they were used or not was down to the discretion of the searching officer according to whether they believed there to be a threat.
- 5.15 Ayo Ogunjimi, Member, Young People's Stop and Search Monitoring Group advised that last year he had been involved with delivering stop and search classes to young people aged 21 and under.
- 5.16 A number of the young people reported having been stopped and searched but where they were not clear about the grounds on which these were performed. There was a lack of awareness around their rights in terms of the standards they could expect and the information which should be given to them. They had come to see stop and search as a normal part of being young and from black backgrounds. They were aware that as young black males they were more likely to be stopped and searched. Due to this having become normal, they did not clearly associate this with being stereotypes or picked on.
- 5.17 In response to the above points the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service firstly wished to acknowledge that community engagement by the police had not been at the right levels. The BCU was working hard to improve in this area. They were already implementing and rolling out a number of new initiatives based on feedback from the community, and she would be welcoming of other suggestions.
- 5.18 In terms of Section 60s, there was a period of time when the police were not enacting these. The Met had actively discouraged against their use. This had deskilled staff in terms of senior officers being unaware of where and how they should be used.

- 5.19 This had effectively meant that enactment of Section 60s had only started again in 2018 after a long gap. The use of Section 60s had therefore needed to be implemented as – in effect – a new process.
- 5.20 This situation had left communication processes – both with the community and with partners – as part of Section 60 consideration and deployment had not been as strong or as affective as would have been ideal. They were working hard to address these issues.
- 5.21 Regarding the point around young people wanting greater police visibility, she was in full agreement with this. She would place an officer on every street if there was resource to do so. However, this was not the case. It was important to note that there were two dedicated Police Officers and a Police Community Support Officer for each Ward. This said, it was not the case that there was a presence 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- 5.22 In addition, the Officers in these posts had additional demands put upon them which were not there some years ago or - in some cases – pre the move to the BCU model. They had their own investigations to manage, and centralisation had meant that they had to perform tasks which previously may have been delegated to support staff. This could mean that they were not on their patrols as much as she would like them to be.
- 5.23 More positively, the Met was delivering a recruitment campaign for an additional 2,000 officers. If posts were successfully recruited to, more officers would be available for the BCU to deploy in Hackney and Tower Hamlets. This would improve visibility and patrol time.
- 5.24 In terms of the body worn cameras, she fully appreciated the common issue of Officers non-deliberately having the camera focused on their feet rather than the subject, and or having (particularly during winter time) clothes obscuring the view. This was a source of frustration to the police; at times officers reviewed footage hoping that it would help identify a suspect committing a crime only to find that the footage captured was of the floor. She was in discussions with internal communications around the delivery of an information campaign for officers giving basic training on how to wear cameras effectively. It was hoped that body worn cameras would be increasingly used as evidence in domestic violence incidents. There were a wide range of benefits to improving the quality of footage gathered.
- 5.25 On the points around handcuffs being deployed during stop and searches, the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service confirmed officers were instructed in safety training that they should use handcuffs where they feared or felt there to be a threat to their own personal safety. A lot of officers did use handcuffs during stop and search. When they did so they needed to make a written record of it. This was recorded and treated as a use of force. Data on this use of force and others (use of Taser, firearms, and others) were publically available.
- 5.26 A Member asked how much work of the Monitoring Groups and Safety Neighbourhood Board with young people happened outside of schools.

- 5.27 The Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group confirmed that most of the work with young people was outside of schools. The group he supported would like to get into more schools. They had found challenges in reaching schools and had only successfully built relationships with one or two. Engagement with young people was generally achieved through other avenues including youth clubs and events; for example a football match organised between young people and the police on the Pembury.
- 5.28 The Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board, and Designated Chair of Hackney's Stop and Search Monitoring Arrangements added that through the Safer Neighbourhood finding had been given for the delivery of 10 'Stop and Think' workshops in schools, for Years 7 and 8. These had been well received by both staff and students.
- 5.29 The Member thanked guests. He suggested there appeared to be an inconsistency between the access to schools achieved by the Hackney CVS group compared to the Safer Neighbourhood Board.
- 5.30 The Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group noted that the focus of the group he supported was – generally – the older year groups and not Year 7 and 8. The work of this group was aimed at Year 11 students and above.
- 5.31 The Member suggested that a recommendation for the review may be for greater work to be delivered within schools.
- 5.32 In terms of work in schools, the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service confirmed that the Safer Schools Team had been delivering sessions within PHSE classes in schools. This was alongside Officers from Territorial Support Group Officers. She did not have data with her on the number of schools which were engaged, and which schools these were.
- 5.33 The Chair noted the work by the police in schools. She said it would be helpful to receive information on the schools which they had been able to engage and any which they had not. She also noted the challenges mentioned by the the Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group in terms of engaging schools.
- 5.34 She said that it would be very helpful to obtain details on the schools that each had been able to work with and any which had been more difficult to engage. She said that this information would then be shared with the Scrutiny Commission focused on children and young people, which was currently carrying out a review around school exclusions.

6 Evidence gathering for review - engagement between the police and community

6.1 The Chair welcomed the following guests for this item:

- Sue Williams, Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service

- Louise Brewood, Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board
 - Nicola Baboneau, Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board
 - Deji Adeosun, Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS
 - Ayo Ogunjimi, Inspirational Leader, Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme
 - David Agana, Inspirational Leader, Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme
 - Caroline Selman, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector
- 6.2 She welcomed the previous discussion on stop and search, and the police's commitment to rebuilding engagement with the community monitoring groups. She also welcomed the news about planned expansion of police numbers.
- 6.3 However, she noted that this item was to hear about the police's general work to improve trust and confidence. She said that the review which this item was part of, had started in response to an escalation in violence in Hackney.
- 6.4 The Commission intended to explore the response of relevant Council and partner services which were within its remit. She said that at the time of developing the approach for the review, some measures showed that Hackney residents had among the lowest levels of trust and confidence in the police in London. The Commission had therefore decided to explore the work of the police to improve in this area, as part of its review.
- 6.5 In response to these points, Sue Williams, Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service confirmed that on some measures, Hackney did score amongst the lowest in London. In reflection of this, a range of initiatives had been put in place following the move to the BCU model.
- 6.6 One example was the putting in place of a BCU-wide Confidence and Satisfaction Board. She and other senior leaders (including from the wider partnership) attended meetings. One measure coming out of this was that Professional Development Days between January and April this year would have confidence and satisfaction as its main focus. This covered aspects including how officers dealt with investigations and their liaison with victims of crime.
- 6.7 Partners within the Community – including the Independent Advisory Group, the Safer Neighbourhood Board, Victim Support, and local authority representatives – had been scheduled to speak at the Confidence and Satisfaction Boards to give views around what more could be done to improve in this area.
- 6.8 Two Police Academy sessions had been delivered in Hackney with four more to follow. This provided open and transparent forums where officers talked to the community on their work and approaches. This included discussions on the

- roles and usage of stop and search, firearms and Tasers, and guidance around complaints processes.
- 6.9 Her senior Leadership Team were delivering Ask Me events where the public could ask any questions, and the police engaged with the community events facilitated by the Safer Neighbourhood Board. She was keen for her senior officers to get out into the community and had recently taken the team to meet various community groups in both Hackney and Tower Hamlets. This had included round table discussions with young people around what they wanted and expected from the police. It was vital that both she and other leaders in the BCU were aware of the views of the community as they worked to shape the unit's approaches.
 - 6.10 In reflection of the commitment and focus on engaging with young communities, funding had been sourced for the establishment of a Youth Independent Advisory Group. Hackney CVS would be helping and aiding in the development of this. There would be significant focus of this group on stop and search and violent crime.
 - 6.11 She had recently met with the Free Formers group, who worked with and supported young people working in local radio stations including Rinse FM. In the meeting she had sought advice on how the police could effectively engage young people. This had been very promising and there had been a real desire those present to working together to achieve more successful engagement.
 - 6.12 She was already reflecting on the advice received so far. She had been told that in terms of communications seeking to help tackle youth violence that images of weapons or knives would not work, but that increased positive, caring stories would. Together they worked on possibilities around using online and social media platforms. Further meetings were planned.
 - 6.13 Another strand of work was seeing the coroner for the area talking to young people around the Coronor's Court process. This was in order to enable young people to better understand that the process of the Coronor was separate and independent of the police. It was being delivered in recognition that instances like the tragic death of Rashan Charles had left the community concerned around the independence and objectivity of the services involved.
 - 6.14 They were also working with The Crib in its Trading Places initiative. This involved practical exercises where young people swapped places with representatives of a range of organisations which interact with them. She had attended a session along with a number of Trident Officers which she had found very useful.
 - 6.15 Young people had been asked to perform as Police Officers. They had encountered a scenario in which the police were acting as uncompliant members of the public. Young people had fed back that this had given them an insight into the challenges and difficulties which Officers could face in discharging their duties properly.
 - 6.16 Similarly, Police Officers had found the exercise valuable in gaining a greater understanding of young people's views. It had been agreed that the group was going to deliver training with their new recruits. She felt this was very positive;

these new recruits would be delivering front facing interactions including stop and search and it was vital that they understood how young people felt.

- 6.17 Another project was in NLP Programming, being delivered along with a psychologist. She noted that new staff to companies such as John Lewis and Marks and Spencer would – as a first point of call – be given customer service training. This would cover how people should be spoken to and advice and guidance around how to deal with conflict and challenging situations. This – perhaps surprisingly – was not part of the training programme for police officers currently. Police Officers were not taught how to talk to people. She had always seen this as a gap and had delivered sessions in other boroughs she had worked in. However, this programme was an exciting one given the external expertise which would feed in.
- 6.18 The NLP programme was a research project which would be piloted in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, with the findings presented to the College of Policing. Officers would be given tools around body language, how to read situations, and how to best prevent incidents from escalating out of control.
- 6.19 Members expressed surprise that this training had been delivered previously.
- 6.20 As a final point, the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service explained that the Cadets Programme was another key example. These did work with other young Cadets. Those in Hackney and Tower Hamlets were a very good group of young people from a very diverse range of backgrounds. They were ambassadors for the Police, getting involved and making real contributions to areas including the tackling of cyber bullying. The scope for future peer to peer work focusing on other difficult areas including youth violence, weapon carrying and stop and search was currently being explored.
- 6.21 The Chair thanked the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service. She said it was really positive to hear about the range of work underway. Both she and other Members had been surprised to hear that Officers did not receive training in customer care or in how to read and respond to people. She suggested that this might help explain why officers sometimes appeared to be unaware of how they should react to people who were frightened and or aggressive.
- 6.22 She invited other guests to make any observations on what if anything the police could do to better engage the community and increase trust and confidence.
- 6.23 Nicola Baboneau, Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board said that the Safer Neighbourhood Board regularly reviewed data on trust and confidence and victim satisfaction.
- 6.24 Ayo Ogunjimi, Inspirational Leader, Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme said that it was significant that Officers had not received training in how to deal with people. He said that without this there was a risk that Officers would take any issues or their own beliefs and perceptions into their interactions with the community. From his work he was aware that young people were sometimes hostile due to feeling that Officers did not speak to them in an appropriate way.

- 6.25 The Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board said she was involved in the recruitment of officers and direct entries to senior positions. She confirmed that assessment criteria very much included competencies around dealing with people effectively and sensitively. This said, she welcomed the further work mentioned.
- 6.26 Deji Adeosun, Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS agreed with the view of the Chair that the re-engagement of the police with the community was a breath of fresh air.
- 6.27 This said, he did feel that unconscious bias was an additional area which needed to be looked at. This was in terms of the extent and nature of its incorporation into officer training. He noted the relatively low level of Hackney residents feeling the police to treat everyone fairly regardless of who they were.
- 6.28 A Member added to this point. She noted that the Met had introduced a comprehensive diversity programme following the Stephen Laurence inquiry. This had incorporated significant training around unconscious bias. She asked if this programme was still in place. She suggested that this training was as relevant today as it had been at that time.
- 6.29 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service wished to be clear that all Officers received equality and diversity training. This was a core item within their syllabus. Unconscious bias training was incorporated, and all staff on promotion courses received this. She had delivered unconscious bias training to senior officers in previous roles. She would incorporate this into Continuous Professional Days when refreshes were required.
- 6.30 The new approach she mentioned was specifically around customer care; in regards to how to deal with difficult people, how to achieve conflict resolution and how to read body language. Improving in this area would bring benefits; for example with the right body language and effective reading of the situations officers may feel that they did not need to use handcuffs in all of the situations they currently used them in.
- 6.31 A Member noted the points around greater body camera usage as discussed in the previous item. She welcomed the greater training in this area. She worried that – given the high shares of body worn camera footage being obscured or having other issues – that there was a risk that currently any few officers who were not behaving appropriately may be able to mask this despite the technology. She asked whether – further to the training being completed – whether monitoring would take place which would identify any concerns or suspicions around any officers deliberately voiding footage in which they may have behaved inappropriately.
- 6.32 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service advised that body worn cameras were a relatively new tool for the police, generally introduced to forces around one year ago. The current implementation stage involved ensuring that Officers were wearing them and were making all efforts to do so correctly. There were issues where Officers – including herself – had had difficulties in ensuring that they were not obscured by clothing and that they were facing the right way. The technology was evolving; explorations were

being made as to whether cameras might be better positioned on head gear and or on radios. The quality of footage would improve over time. In the meantime and as mentioned earlier, the BCU was working on basic training around how to wear the current versions effectively.

- 6.33 Alongside this, supervisors were tasked with working to ensure that Officers were working with the camera effectively. This included making notes and taking action where particular officers had greater issues than others in terms of body worn camera footage being obscured, not using camera during stop and search activity, and or numbers of complaints regarding them.
- 6.34 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service said it was important for the community to know that she took complaints and any other evidence of malpractice extremely seriously, and acted upon this. Upon supervisors showing her footage gathered from body worn camera she had ordered that some Officers be removed from the street. There were clear processes in place around complaints, and depending on the case these may be investigated locally, centrally, or by the Independent Police Complaints Commission.
- 6.35 The Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board said she wished to add balance to these points. From her discussions with a wide range of officers she was aware that in general they were very welcoming of body worn cameras. They saw the technology as providing greater transparency, and also protecting them by providing assurance that they were acting professionally and properly.
- 6.36 A Member welcomed the work of the police in seeking to improve interactions between the police and the community. She looked forward to receiving updates on progress and the impact.
- 6.37 She also welcomed the work of the police to deliver greater engagement with the community. However, she said that it was often a source of regret for her when attending community events that there was such little turnout. She wondered if there was anything more the police could do to work in partnership with others to promote these events.
- 6.38 Louise Brewood, Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board agreed with this point. She had attended an excellent and useful Police Academy event in which Police Officers spoke on the grounds on which they discharged weapons, and on the actual very small number of cases in which this occurred. The Officers spoke very well, and the session was hugely informative in helping to tackle some misconceptions in the community. However, only a very small number of people had attended. She had not seen the event advertised. She felt that work was needed around improving information on events.
- 6.39 The Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board agreed with this point. There was sometimes a lack of join up between those delivering the events and the range of partners who could aid in their promotion. There could also sometimes be greater consideration given to how events might be advertised; she felt that the issues which were evident in Hackney and elsewhere around the community's views towards the police meant that

sessions like the one mentioned may have attracted higher numbers if they were not marketed as a specific police-convened event.

- 6.40 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service recalled the event. It had been delivered at the Hackney Community College in the hope it attracting high numbers. This had not been the case.
- 6.41 She acknowledged that communications were difficult. The BCU did not have a dedicated communications person. Scotland Yard had a small central team but the message back was to do communications themselves locally. A Police Officer currently led on trying to get information out and was doing their best. However, there were challenges; including persuading local newspaper and radio stations to engage with the police and to give coverage to the wide range of activities being delivered.
- 6.42 A Member felt that a two or three year strategy of event was needed. The approach in place was reactive. A set strategy was needed which would be stuck to. He agreed with the need for a local communications unit. He would support a case for greater funding for this work.
- 6.43 The Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board agreed that communications and also the Police's response to media events, could be improved.
- 6.44 She cited some recent footage. She understood the police to have released this in response to criticism aired on a news programme by a residents group in Tower Hamlets around an apparent lack of police action against drug dealing and use in the area. The footage released had been of a group of many officers wearing riot gear moving in on a street. She had seen similar footage released for communications purposes previously and it could be counter-productive; exacerbating views among some that police were rarely seen until there were mass deployments of officers in combative mode.
- 6.45 The Member noted this point. This said, he had noticed a very effective use of a twitter account by Stoke Newington Police Station.
- 6.46 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service noted these points. She was in dialogue with the Council Communications Services in both Hackney and Tower Hamlets and there was a willingness on their part to help improve information and communications.
- 6.47 There were also improvements being delivered currently. Safer Neighbourhoods Teams were about to release a newsletter, and would seek to send ones out regularly moving forward. This was intended to help build trust and confidence between the community and their local Safer Neighbourhood Teams.
- 6.48 Coming in at this point, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector noted an earlier question alluding to how the police's significant work and commitment to engaging the community could effectively harness the reach and knowledge which organisations and groups had into these communities.

- 6.49 She noted that Hackney's Community Safety Partnership was currently developing its action plans for the next three years. This would include a plan around addressing trust and confidence, partly through the establishment of a working group involving Inspirational Leaders, the Safer Neighbourhood Board and the Police. This was within an aim of achieving a joined up approach and make the actions of a range of partners in this area greater than the sum of its parts.
- 6.50 She also recalled earlier points around the extent of community engagement by the police having differed over different periods, and levels being partly dependent on the commitment to this area by individual officers.
- 6.51 She said that the fact that the Partnership was now in a position to work together to address the issue of trust and confidence was testament to the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service and her Leadership Team.
- 6.52 This said, she suggested that the Commission might explore how it could play a role in guarding against peaks and troughs in engagement, for example in the hypothetical event of the current Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service leaving their post. She suggested that this might be achieved through regular updates being asked for by the Commission against the Action Plan regarding Trust and Confidence and or the general progress of the police against the actions they spoke about in a previous session.
- 6.53 The Chair noted the work to increase engagement between the police and the community and to achieve good practice. However, she noted that at some times central police teams would be deployed in Hackney, in particular in response to violence. She asked if there was any risk of the approaches or any poor practice of central teams undermining the work to improve relationships and practice locally. She asked how these risks could be mitigated.
- 6.54 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service said this was a very important point. The BCU always sought to have in place an arrangement where a Senior Leader from the BCU would meet the central team coming in for a period, to give them a bespoke briefing on the borough they were about to police, expectations around their approach, and the duties they were being asked to perform (Central Units were deployed on the basis of carrying out particular tasks). This included briefings last year where central teams had been coming into a situation which was quite delicate following a tragic death.
- 6.55 It was aimed that this briefing was supplied to each central asset deployed. This was not always possible; deployments were sometimes made with very little advance planning in immediate response to critical incidents. However, where it was known in advance that a deployment was to occur, briefings were arranged.
- 6.56 Moving to bring the discussion to a close, the Chair asked whether the Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS or the Inspirational Leaders in attendance wished to make any final comments. She asked whether the experiences of them and their peers were better or worse in terms of community safety in Hackney compared to previous years, and whether there were any

- recommendations which they felt that the Commission should make for the police in its review.
- 6.57 Ayo Ogunjimi said he did feel that the streets were safer when he was growing up, although he acknowledged that this might be due to him being less aware of things at that point.
- 6.58 There were gangs in Hackney, and some young people felt that they were everywhere. Gangs were generally groups of people trying to make money in a certain way, due to life events which had gone against them.
- 6.59 He himself did not feel unsafe personally. However, he was aware that some young people felt they were in constant danger. It was often this – and wishing not to be seen as a victim in the media - that was the cause of young people feeling the need to carry knives.
- 6.60 He recalled a time in Hackney where there were billboards advertising the borough as a safer place. He said that these had given him a level of assurance. He suggested that these might be reintroduced, along with a general move of the media to celebrating the achievements of young people.
- 6.61 The Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS agreed that there were concerns on the ground from young people. These were in relation both to feelings of safety, but also in regards to the police. The community had noted rhetoric by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner around increasing stop and search. There was a time in the past where young people were saying that they had been stopped and searched 7 times in a week. This had moved to a position where young people often reported not having been stopped and searched for a long time. There was worry that there could be a return to days where young black males felt particularly high levels discrimination through being stopped numerous times.
- 6.62 There were feelings and concerns around safety, which was linked to the carrying of knives. There were also issues of trauma, where young people had experienced really distressing events; for example having been stabbed themselves. There was further work needed to get to the bottom of this and respond.
- 6.63 He agreed that the factor of outside police units coming into the borough was a major one which needed close attention. The approaches of these units could jar and undermine the range of work with the community going locally; for example when the Territorial Support Unit came into the borough and kicked over dustbins. He was not saying that this had happened recently, but it had happened before, and it only took one incident to undermine all of the local work to improve trust and confidence.
- 6.64 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service wished to confirm that Officers on the Territorial Support Unit did receive intensive training, including in approaches to stop and search. The units had been involved with some of the engagement events delivered in Hackney. The Officers on the Territorial Support Unit did not have the approaches which may have been present some years ago. The unit was more diverse and had more women. The unit included many Officers who had worked in boroughs.

- 6.65 The Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS noted and welcomed the briefings delivered to outside units as mentioned by the Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service. He asked if the community might be involved directly in those discussions. This could better inform the central units. It would also better enable himself and the Inspirational Leaders get the message to the community around the greater diversity and different approaches of these units.
- 6.66 The Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service said that this was a good point and one which could be looked at.
- 6.67 The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector also agreed with this point. She said that she had met the Territorial Support Group earlier in the week. This had included conversations around trust and confidence, including perceptions around them being off borough units (in reality some of the officers had had in borough experience). The Territorial Support Unit did have its own trust and confidence section, and there were capacity issues around wider engagement work. However, she had discussed the potential for them to engage with the Stop and Search Monitoring Groups in Hackney as a one off item, which she felt would be very useful.

7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 7.1 The Minutes of the meeting of 10th December were agreed as an accurate record.
- 7.2 This was with the exception that Cllr Rathbone had not been recorded as being in attendance, as he had been.

8 Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission- 2018/19 Work Programme

- 8.1 The work programme was noted.

9 Any Other Business

- 9.1 There was no other business.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 10.00 pm