

## LIVING IN HACKNEY SCRUTINY COMMISSION

<b>Council and partnership response to escalation in serious violence review – Draft Report</b>  Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission – 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2019  Cabinet - TBC  Council - TBC	<b>Classification</b>  <b>Public</b>	<b>Enclosures</b>
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### 1. FOREWORD

We set out on this review following an escalation in the most serious levels of violence, both in Hackney and elsewhere.

There are a very wide range of aspects which could have been considered, given the multiple areas with roles to play in preventing and tackling serious violence. Domestic violence is an issue which affects disturbingly high numbers of people. Analysis points to significant shares of violent incidents to be associated with the borough's night time economy. Our review could have explored the Council' and our partners' work in these areas. There are many others.

In the time available we gave significant focus to the work of the Council and its partners to prevent and tackle violence related to gang activity.

Gang activity accounts for very small shares of violent crime. However, gang-flagged crime trends to be more violent in nature. Gang-related activity had also largely accounted for an increase in the most tragic incidents which were in evidence in the lead up to the review.

Hackney's Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU) is delivering excellent work. Its co-located model enables a joined up approach to addressing gang-related violence. We have seen how the unit's focus is on preventing or diverting young people away from involvement in criminal activity, and exploitation by gangs, alongside delivery of enforcement action where this is needed to keep the community safe. Our recommendations here are aimed at enabling more areas to contribute towards supporting the IGU cohort towards positive outcomes.

Looking more broadly than the IGU, we welcome the considered approach of the Council, its partners and the community to the spike in violence which led to this review. We look forward to exploring what the next steps have been here.

On policing, we reach a view that reductions in officer numbers and operational change in local policing did not prevent an effective frontline response to the escalation in violence. However, reductions have left responses like this unsustainable in the longer term, and a reduced local police presence has affected feelings of safety which in itself can be a driver of harmful behaviour.

Greater use of stop and search across London formed an explicit part of the response to the escalation in serious violence. The use of stop and search powers – in particular no suspicion searches – are controversial and a source of concern. It is positive that the police's engagement with the borough's stop and search monitoring groups was reinvigorated under BCU Commander Sue Williams. It is vital that this continues.

Trust and confidence generally must be an area of ongoing focus. Here we also welcome the recent levels of community engagement of the Police. This also needs to continue.

Aside from thanking all of those who participated in the review, I want my final comments to be focused on the hugely positive contributions that the vast majority of our young people are making to life in the borough. This is in particular regard to those community groups who can suffer stigmatisation.

I would like to give specific thanks to the Inspirational Leaders within the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) Programme, and to the Youth Leadership Manager supporting them. They are demonstrating and broadcasting the successful lives which the majority of boys and young men in the borough are leading, and are working with the Council and partners to help identify and address barriers where they exist. We hope this report does at least some justice to their level of contribution to the borough, as well as that of the communities they represent.

I would also like to play tribute to the two St Giles Trust workers who spoke articulately and powerfully on their own personal journeys from involvement with the criminal justice system, to being mentors and sources of support for young people. They highlighted the potential for people to turn their lives around and to make invaluable contributions to improving the life chances of others.

I commend this report to the Council

**Cllr Sharon Patrick**



Chair- Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. We set out on this review in September 2018, following an escalation in the most serious forms of violent crime. This was in evidence both in this borough and elsewhere.
- 1.2. We have given significant focus to the work of the Council and its partners to prevent and tackle violence related to gang activity.
- 1.3. At the outset, it is important to be clear that gang related activity accounts for relatively small shares of overall levels of violent crime.
- 1.4. For London, it accounted for 5% of all knife crime with injury offences in 2016<sup>1</sup>. The Community Safety Partnership's latest Strategic Assessment for Hackney found high shares of serious violence to happen in time periods and geographical areas which suggested association with the night time economy rather than street gangs. Domestic violence is also known to account for significant proportions of violence, both nationally<sup>2</sup> and locally<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.5. However, it is also the case that gang activity is a driver of some of the most serious forms of violence, and that gang-flagged crime trends to be more violent in nature.
- 1.6. On a London wide level in 2017, 57% of gang related stabbings featured a serious or fatal injury, compared to 34% of non-gang-flagged stabbings<sup>4</sup>. Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) is one of the most serious forms of violence. Hackney's Strategic Assessment found that it accounted for only 3% of all crime in the borough in 2017/18. However, amongst all crime which was gang-flagged, GBH took a 40% share.
- 1.7. We were also aware that gang activity had largely accounted for the upsurge in the most serious and tragic incidents in evidence between November 2017 and early April 2018. That period saw what Officers had stated were six gang related murders in the borough.
- 1.8. This considered, we spent time exploring the work of Hackney's Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU), its links with other service areas, and the tools and methods it uses.
- 1.9. Our review followed soon after Amnesty International released its 'Trapped in the Matrix' report. This was focused on the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS)

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<sup>1</sup> [London Knife Crime Strategy](#)

<sup>2</sup> <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2018-0124/CDP-2018-0124.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> It is estimated that 35,000 of our female residents have experienced domestic abuse, and that 6,000 children under the age of 18 have experienced domestic violence in the home<sup>3</sup>. Domestic Violence also features heavily in cases of serious youth violence specifically<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Internal MOPAC analysis cited in MOPAC Gangs Violence Matrix Review

Gangs Violence Matrix. This is defined by the MPS as an intelligence tool used to identify and risk assess gang members in every London borough within an aim of reducing gang-related violence and preventing young lives being lost<sup>5</sup>.

- 1.10. The overall Gangs Violence Matrix is a tool which is owned and managed by the central MPS. There is a local Matrix for each borough. On a daily basis, these local matrices are combined to produce the current, London-wide MPS Gangs Violence Matrix. The lead responsibility for the management of local matrices falls with the local police in each borough.
- 1.11. The Amnesty report made a range of criticisms of the Gangs Violence Matrix, in a London-wide context. These included the measures used to inform who went onto the Matrix, how information was shared within some boroughs and – given this - the adverse effect across a range of areas which being on the Matrix could bring, particularly for those groups who are disproportionately represented on it.
- 1.12. During our review, both the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) reported significant issues around the ways that the Matrix was managed in some cases, although both also found evidence to support the use of such a tool. The MPS is working through an improvement plan in response to these findings.
- 1.13. Hackney's IGU uses the local, Hackney-based, Gangs Violence Matrix.
- 1.14. Given the concerns raised about the tool we explored the measures in place in Hackney to best ensure that people are not added unnecessarily, that data is tightly managed, and that those who are on it are best protected from unwarranted poor outcomes as a result of this.
- 1.15. Multiple areas both inside and outside the Council have roles to play in preventing and tackling serious violence. These go far wider than those represented in the IGU.
- 1.16. Examples include early years, transitions into and beyond different stages of the education system, prevention work to avoid school exclusions, health care provision for young people and young adults, support for parents of both younger and older children and young people, and securing and communicating positive opportunities. Many of these are outside of the Commission's remit.
- 1.17. Going into the review, we were aware that that one of the Council's responses to the escalation in violence had been its hosting of an event involving partners and community leaders.

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<sup>5</sup> [news.met.police.uk/news/mps-response-to-amnesty-report-into-gang-matrix-305755](https://news.met.police.uk/news/mps-response-to-amnesty-report-into-gang-matrix-305755)

- 1.18. This forum explored the impact of serious violence on young people, communities and the organisations which support them. Four broad areas were identified which were most relevant to the prevention and tackling of the issue.
- 1.19. Following the event, the Council embarked on a detailed mapping exercise to gain a fuller understanding of the provision (be that delivered by the Council or other organisations) in the borough within the four identified broad areas. This was intended to help provide a fuller understanding of what was already in place, and to identify any further work needed. [We explored the broad findings of this exercise.](#)
- 1.20. It was timely to also look at aspects around policing.
- 1.21. Focus is needed on addressing the root causes of violence. However effective enforcement by the police - and its effective engagement of the community - forms a crucial role in the response to incidents, at least in the immediate term.
- 1.22. Local policing has undergone significant operational change.
- 1.23. 12 Basic Command Units (BCUs) have replaced the 32 borough model. Hackney formally joined with Tower Hamlets to form a Central East Command Unit in October 2018.
- 1.24. These changes came at the same time as significant funding reductions and reduced police numbers across the MPS. Prior to our review the Council's own Foot the Bill Campaign highlighted the impact of MPS funding reductions, with Hackney having seen a reduction from 770 Officers to 584 in the 7 years to October 2017, the most severe cut in London<sup>6</sup>.
- 1.25. We explored any affect which these operational changes and funding reductions had on the police's capacity to respond effectively to the spike in violence in Hackney.
- 1.26. In the lead up to the review there had been announcements around increased use of stop and search being one of the measures to tackle escalations in violence<sup>7</sup>.
- 1.27. Most stop and search powers require the police to have reasonable grounds to suspect that the person or vehicle they are searching is carrying particular items.
- 1.28. However, certain powers – when applied – allow for non-suspicion searches. This includes the use of Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order

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<sup>6</sup> More recently, the Government recently announced plans for the recruitment of 20,000 police Officers for England and Wales, by 2022. This rows back on previous reductions of 20,564 Officers amongst police forces between March 2010 and March 2019

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/sadiq-khan-reveals-police-will-significantly-increase-stop-and-search-to-tackle-knife-crime-a3736501.html> and <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/942469/London-news-met-police-knife-gun-crime-stop-and-search-powers>

Act 1994 (commonly referred to as section 60 searches), which are searches designed to tackle serious violence. The use of these powers are particularly controversial.

- 1.29. There had been an increase in the use of Section 60 orders on a London wide level at the start of our review. Since the end of it, the Government has made it easier for police forces to use them.
- 1.30. One of the major concerns around stop and search is the disproportionate shares which some communities take of those being stopped.
- 1.31. There have also been long standing concerns around the quality of stop and searches, and the damage done where they are not delivered legally, fairly, and with respect.
- 1.32. We explored stop and search data for Hackney. This included volumes, Section 60 enactments, profiles of those stopped, and positive outcome rates (the shares of stops where offences were detected).
- 1.33. We also looked the work of the police and the community to better ensure good quality interactions. This included hearing from the local groups who lead on the scrutiny of stop and search in Hackney.
- 1.34. Ensuring that stop and search is deployed in an intelligence led and professional way has an important role to play in enabling communities to feel trust and confidence in the police.
- 1.35. However, we also wanted to look more broadly at the work of the police and the Community Safety Partnership in this area. Data highlighted that it should be an area of focus. At the time of scoping the review there had been quite significant reductions in the proportions of Hackney residents reporting positive perceptions of the police, across a range of measures. The scale of these reductions had not generally been replicated on a London-wide level.
- 1.36. Community engagement (in relation to policing) is the process through which citizens and communities are enabled to participate in policing, at the level chosen by them. It ranges from providing information and assurance, to empowering citizens to identify solutions to local issues and to influence priorities and decisions. Evidence shows that effective engagement with the community is one of the ways through which public confidence in policing activity can be increased.<sup>8</sup>
- 1.37. We explored the range of activities being delivered around this currently. We looked at the liaison between the police and the formal engagement mechanisms designed to enable challenge and improvement. We also

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<sup>8</sup> Royal College of Policing



explored other work outside of these mechanisms to build confidence, trust and mutual understanding between the police and community.

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## **2. SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOMES**

### **Summary**

- 2.1. The IGU is significantly focused on preventing or diverting young people away from involvement in criminal gang-related activity, and exploitation by gangs. We have heard and seen many examples of this work.
- 2.2. As was stated to us a number of times during the review, serious violence is not an issue which can be arrested the way out of. We fully agree on the need for a focus on addressing the root causes of violence.
- 2.3. However, we were also supportive of the police element of the IGU having helped deliver robust enforcement action, where it was needed to keep communities safe.
- 2.4. We have been convinced of how a co-located model better enables a joined up approach to addressing gang-related violence.
- 2.5. Social media monitoring is one of the tools used by the IGU Intelligence Team. We have a clear view that young people should be able to express themselves freely – including on social media - without risk of repercussion. However, we have also seen that monitoring plays an important role in helping to keep young people and the wider community safe.
- 2.6. Further to the spike in violence in Hackney, we are convinced the IGU played a key role in the reductions seen across a range of violent crime indicators. We play tribute to this.
- 2.7. Quantitative police-reported crime indicators play a key role in measuring the impact of the IGU. However, we welcome the unit's move to develop a broader range of outcome measures. We also heard acknowledgement of the need to improve the recording of information; it was not clear that full data was available to assess the impact of interventions.
- 2.8. We have identified what we feel to be excellent and effective practice by the IGU. However, we were left concerned around what we saw as a lack of transparency. This was in regards to the characteristics of those it works with (the IGU cohort).
- 2.9. The terms of reference for our review stated that 90% of the IGU cohort were aged 18 or over. This understanding was based on background research, papers provided to the Commission, and points made in meetings.
- 2.10. As the review progressed we gained an understanding that the IGU had a greater focus on young people aged under 18, than was made clear at the start of it.

- 2.11. We found that under 18s were the predominant focus of the commissioned services (St Giles Trust, Empower London, and Mentivation) operating within the IGU. This was in reflection of the IGU reaching a view that that this is where these services could have greatest impact. Based on the data provided to us, young people aged under 18 made up between 27% and 52% of the total IGU cohort in March this year.
- 2.12. It is positive that the IGU works with young people aged under 18. This work is fundamentally focused on protecting young people from exploitation and harm, and supporting them to towards more positive lifestyles. It is also important to put the IGU's work in context; it works with a tiny fraction of the borough's under 18s (and adults also). We support the unit using their specialist experience to deliver prevention and diversion for some under 18s, alongside the services in the Council's Children and Families Service.
- 2.13. However, if the lack of clarity which we encountered was replicated elsewhere, this could hinder a joined up response to issues. It is important that all those with roles to play in supporting people to move away from harmful behaviour – (including those being supported by the IGU) have clear information to enable this. Evidence does suggest the misconception we had to extend wider than this Commission, into areas directly relevant to helping to improve outcomes for those in the cohort.
- 2.14. We found the links between the IGU and the Children and Families Service to be effective and improving. However, having seen the practical benefits of a co-located model, we see room for further representation of Children and Families service, inside the IGU.
- 2.15. We heard the challenges IGU partners face in securing settled accommodation for individuals being released from custody. This is a major and long term issue, going wider than Hackney. The shortage of housing for ex-offenders is replicated with shortages for all groups, in what is a housing crisis.
- 2.16. The Council is embarking on a review of its lettings policy. During our scrutiny of this, we will explore the housing support provided to ex-offenders. This is in relation to any specific regard applied to ex-offenders in allocations of social housing, and any wider housing related support available to this group and the pathways to accessing this.
- 2.17. Other providers of housing in the borough have roles here also, and we will intend on asking the same questions of Housing Associations.
- 2.18. Mental ill health is a common issue among both children and adults in the IGU cohort. We did not explore provision in detail, but arrangements for ensuring support for those aged under 19 appear sound.
- 2.19. For those aged 19 and over, we ask for assurance around the referral pathways in place setting out when the IGU will seek mental health support, and the routes it will take to doing so.

- 2.20. In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU<sup>9</sup>. This would better enable needs to be met at early stages and for our NHS partners to take fuller roles in tackling some of the drivers of serious violence.
- 2.21. Turning 19 does not automatically bring an end to one life development stage, and the start of another. This brings a need to review models of service and care which typically change at this time<sup>10</sup>. We suggest that the relevant Scrutiny Commission explores the differences in mental health provision for children and adults.
- 2.22. A significant share of the IGU cohort is made up of black boys and young men. Evidence shows that tailored approaches can provide more effective pathways to mental health care for this community group, in cases where it is needed. This is due to cultural and structural barriers which can make traditional routes less accessible. We note the effective pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust which delivered support in community settings. We ask for an exploration around whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.
- 2.23. We heard about the barriers to employment faced by many in the IGU cohort, sometimes due to a lack of readiness to access the types of opportunities available.
- 2.24. We know the Council is playing a very active role in increasing employment opportunities and pathways to them, including for more vulnerable groups who may be further away from the labour market.
- 2.25. We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement.
- 2.26. The lack of accessible work opportunities for often vulnerable, ex-offenders, is a well-known barrier to rehabilitation generally. We ask that the relevant Scrutiny Commission looks how the Council and its partners are working to provide and employment and skills support.
- 2.27. On a London wide level, there tends to be between 3,000 and 4,000 people on the MPS Gangs Violence Matrix at any given time. There were 118 individuals on the Gangs Violence Matrix for Hackney, in March 2019.

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<sup>9</sup> If enacted, one of our recommendations would see greater involvement of the Children and Families Service within the IGU which we would hope would include the Clinical Service offering specialist psychological support to children aged up to 19 and their families.

<sup>10</sup> There are complexities to this. In some cases, young adults are entitled to higher levels of support, beyond age 18. This includes care leavers (the definition of which has been extended to cover young people having spent a 13 weeks or more in custody), and those with learning disabilities. On this point, we heard that IGU played an active advocacy role in encouraging eligible young people to utilise this support.

- 2.28. The reviews by Amnesty, the ICO and MOPAC confirmed significant shortcomings in some boroughs around an open sharing of Matrix information. However, on data management processes in Hackney, it is not an exaggeration to state the Commission found them to be exemplarily. In March 2019, the MPS was not sharing Matrix information with any boroughs, given concerns on information management arrangements. Hackney was the single exception to this. This was due to the strengths of the processes in place, and its model being one of best practice.
- 2.29. We also received high levels of assurance around the measures in place to ensure that people were only added to the Matrix when there was corroborating evidence to support this, and that people were removed as appropriate.
- 2.30. There are clearly issues with the Gangs Violence Matrix, particularly on a MPS-wide basis. There is a need to ensure that the stringent data management processes which are in place in Hackney, are in place elsewhere also. There are community concerns about the tool, including in this borough.
- 2.31. This said, evidence points to it having long term positive impacts, including in levels of offending and victimhood. Despite our concerns we have reached a view that an intelligent model is required to identify those at risk so that interventions can be delivered for them.
- 2.32. The ways that the term 'gang' is sometimes used can marginalise communities. This view appeared to be shared by Council staff in the IGU, and by the police. We ask the Council to consider changing the name of the IGU, in consultation with the community.
- 2.33. Our review found the Council to have responded to a spike in violence in a considered way, within an approach of joint reflection with partners and the community. We welcomed the detailed mapping exercise which has enabled a fuller understanding of relevant provision in the borough, and the identification of areas where work across all partners was needed.
- 2.34. We see the challenge now to be ensuring continued focus on this area, and achieving a joined up response.
- 2.35. For the Commission, an aspect which particularly resonated was the crucial need to appreciate the fear and potential harm which could come from overstating issues. We must not shy away from an issue which needed to be addressed. However, there is also a need to give context.
- 2.36. Recognising and celebrating the hugely positive contributions which the vast majority of our young residents are making to life in Hackney, helps with this. This is particularly important for those community groups suffering from stigmatisation.

- 2.37. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Commission were humbled by the input into the review of some of the Inspirational Leaders within the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) Programme.
- 2.38. Taking the words of our own Chief Executive, we saw how they are creating a movement around setting examples, supporting their community, and working with public bodies to help them identify and deliver the improvements needed.
- 2.39. We saw how they are demonstrating and broadcasting the successful lives which the majority of boys and young men in the borough are leading, therefore raising hope and aspirations. This provides an effective response to the negative connotations and racist stereotypes sometimes associated with young black men. We heard examples of work to set up businesses and enable the involvement of the community in these, and their mentoring and supporting of young people.
- 2.40. We also heard about some of the barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points, which committed to ongoing engagement.
- 2.41. In our view the reduction in police officer numbers (nor the move to the BCU model) did not prevent the police from delivering an effective immediate, frontline response to the spike in violence which had been seen in Hackney prior to our review.
- 2.42. However, evidence points to the reduction in police capacity meaning that responses such as these are unsustainable in the longer term.
- 2.43. Evidence also suggests that the reductions in the police's local presence has impacted on the capacity of the police to provide reassurance to the community and to prevent incidents occurring or escalating.
- 2.44. The stepping up of stop and search on a MPS wide level has been replicated in Hackney. Stop and search and the use of section 60 formed an explicit part of the response to the spike in violence seen in the borough.
- 2.45. Hackney's local monitoring groups are playing a vital and important role in holding the police to account around their deployment of stop and search. However, their success in doing so is fully dependent on effective engagement with them by the police.
- 2.46. It is vital that the BCU's current levels of engagement on stop and search is maintained.
- 2.47. It is for the monitoring groups to scrutinise the use of stop and search powers by the police. However, this Commission will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

- 2.48. Looking more broadly than stop and search, data for Hackney highlights that trust and confidence in the police needs to be a key area of focus. We found the BCU to share the Commission’s concern in this area.
- 2.49. Evidence shows that effective community engagement is one of the ways through which public confidence in policing activity can be increased. We heard and were impressed by the range of work in this area. We were left with a view that the level of engagement of the community by the police was very positive, at the point of our review.
- 2.50. We pay tribute to the reinvigorated community engagement which the BCU Commander Sue Williams put in place under her leadership. We also thank community groups whose work has been crucial in enabling this. These groups clearly have the capacity to challenge the police on behalf of the community, and to be an effective bridge between them.
- 2.51. The challenge now is to ensure that this reinvigorated engagement is maintained and built upon.

We make 16 recommendations

**Recommendation 1 – Development of Outcome measures for the Integrated Gangs Unit**

We ask that the next update to the Commission on the on the Community Safety Partnership Plan includes detail on the revised outcome measures for the IGU, the reasoning for them, and progress against these at that point.

**Recommendation 2 – Improved information management of ‘non-live’ cases**

Full information did not appear to be at hand on what we would define as ‘non-live’ cases’ – those individuals which the IGU had previously worked with but no longer did so.

Further to our questions, we heard that the issues would be addressed, including via a review of the referral process which would enable the IGU to provide a greater insight into the sources of referrals, and the results delivered following these. We ask that an update on this work is provided.

**Recommendation 3 – Greater transparency on the approach of the IGU, the cohort it works with, and how partners can support the work to achieve better outcomes**

We suggest that a starting point for this would be the creation of a dedicated page for the Integrated Gangs Unit, on the Council’s website. This appears to be a gap currently, compared with some other boroughs with Integrated Gangs Units – for example [Westminster](#) and [Islington](#).

We feel this should provide details on its work and approaches, non-identifying information on the broad profile of the cohort, any common challenges faced, and the roles which other services and partners can play in helping to address these.

**Recommendation 4 – Greater representation of Children and Families Services in the IGU**

Children aged under 18 make up a significant and increasing share of the IGU cohort. We have heard about the practical benefits of a co-located model, with a range of services based in the same office.

We feel that fuller involvement of Children and Families inside the IGU could enable more effective utilisation of the preventative resources in both areas. We saw the positive impacts achieved from part of the (Children and Families') Youth Justice service being collocated in the unit.

We heard about successful join up between the IGU and Children and Families generally; for example in the Contextual Safeguarding Project. However, we feel there is room for a greater co-location of services inside the IGU.

**We ask that the potential for this is explored by the Executive Members with responsibility for Community Safety and the Children and Families Service.**

**Recommendation 5 – For the IGU to report back on mental health services referral pathway for young adults in the IGU cohort**

With no dedicated mental health resource currently based within the IGU, we see the need for assurance around the referral pathways in place setting out the scenarios in which the IGU will seek mental health support for young adults in its cohort, and the routes that it will take to doing so. This assurance should be provided in the form of a formal referral pathway being shared with us.

The East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) provides community and inpatient mental health services to children, young people and adults in Hackney. We feel that the referral pathway should be developed in partnership with ELFT, and that regular reviews should be carried out to monitor its effectiveness in brokering mental health support for those within the cohort.

**Recommendation 6 – ELFT as partner in IGU**

In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> If enacted, one of our recommendations would see greater involvement of the Children and Families Service within the IGU which we would hope would include the Clinical Service offering specialist psychological support to children aged up to 19 and their families.



We have seen the benefits of a co-located, IGU model. We have also heard about the prevalence of mental health issues among those in the cohort, both among those aged up to 19 and those above this.

**We ask that the Council seeks to explore with ELFT the feasibility of their becoming a partner agency of the IGU, and for them to provide a dedicated mental health specialist resource.**

**Recommendation 7 – For the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to explore mental health provision for 19-25s compared to young people aged under 18**

We feel that an item at the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission might explore the differences in mental health provision for those aged up to 18, and those aged 19 to 25.

We suggest that to give best focus to the item, that it might explore typical mental health provision and arrangements for 15 to 18s compared to 19 to 25s. This is due to Hackney's Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment findings around the peak (starting) age ranges for involvement in gang flagged crimes and knife flagged crimes.

**Recommendation 8 – Applying learning from pilot delivery of mental health provision in community settings, to the IGU**

Mental ill health is a common issue among both children and adults being worked with by the IGU. A significant share of the cohort is made up of black boys and young men. Evidence shows that tailored approaches can provide more effective pathways to mental health care for this community group, in cases where it is needed. This is due to cultural and structural barriers which can make traditional routes less accessible.

We note the pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust which delivered support in community settings. This was found to better enable young black men with mental health needs, to engage, compared to traditional primary care routes.

We ask for an assessment – led by the Executive Members with responsibility for Health, Community Safety, and the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme – to be carried out exploring whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.

**Recommendation 9 – For any future pre-apprenticeship programmes to include the IGU cohort in any ring-fencing arrangement**

We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement, and also that the IGU and the Hackney Works Service explore how the IGU cohort can be best supported to accessing these opportunities.

**Recommendation 10 – For the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission to explore employment and skills support for ex-offenders**

We note the well-known difficulties ex-offenders face in securing work – both those within the IGU cohort and ex-offenders more broadly. We recommend that the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission explores how the Council and its partners (including the private sector) are working to provide employment and skills support to this group generally, and the feasibility of a dedicated support offer by the Hackney Works Service.

**Recommendation 11 – For the IGU to consult the community on a possible name change**

On a local level we ask the Council considers changing the name of the Integrated Gangs Unit, in consultation with the community. We feel that a name change could give some assurance to those suffering stigmatisation from the careless way in which the term gang is sometimes used.

**Recommendation 12 – To report back on how the findings of mapping exercise are being taken forward**

We welcome the significant work by the Council, partners and the wider community which has enabled the production of the provision mapping resource. We see the challenge now as ensuring continued focus on this area by all partners, and achieving a joined up response to those aspects where improvement / greater focus was needed. For our part, we would suggest that they might be translated into a mutually agreed action plan.

We ask that the Council – further to discussions with its partners – reports back to the Commission on how these challenges can be best met.

**Recommendation 13 – Ongoing engagement between Chief Executive and Inspirational Leaders**

Inspirational leaders of the YBM Programme made a number of points around barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points.

This included a commitment to continued engagement from the Council with Inspirational Leaders.

One of the specific barriers mentioned was a lack of facilities and spaces to develop businesses within. On this point, the Chief Executive spoke on the Council seeking to provide more workspaces through utilisation of unused spaces. He felt that shares of these might be made available for young people wanting to start-up businesses.

Another barrier mentioned was a lack of advice and guidance for those interested in setting up businesses. In response the Chief Executive said that he would reflect on how the Landing Pad which the Council was seeking to provide for new

businesses to the borough (to better enable access to business planning, financial and other advice) could be made available more widely.

**We ask that the Chief Executive meets Inspirational Leaders to explore how these aspects and any others can be taken forward.**

**Recommendation 14 – For the Council to continue to make the case for a reversal of local Police Officer reductions**

We call for the Mayor of London to continue to make the case for a fair settlement for the MPS, and for the Council to lobby towards ensuring that any more realistic London wide funding is translated into a greater local police presence in Hackney.

**Recommendation 15 – For the Police and Monitoring Groups to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney Scrutiny on stop and search activity, and the engagement between them**

Living in Hackney Scrutiny will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

In reflection of our [findings from the discussion with the police and monitoring groups](#), we will include consideration of the points below, within the next item:

- Extent of body worn camera dip sampling exercises (we heard that these had started only recently)
- Engagement of the community in training
- Section 60 communications and consultation (both monitoring groups reported that the engagement of the police prior to enacting Section 60 notices fell immediately after the move to the BCU model, and the BCU themselves acknowledged they were working on addressing this issue)

**Recommendation 16 – For Community Safety Partnership to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney on its Trust and Confidence Action Plan**

The Commission will seek annual updates against the Action Plan regarding Trust and Confidence, from the Community Safety Partnership.

In line with our review findings in this area, as part of the first item we will seek updates on:

- The status and activities of the BCU-wide Confidence and Satisfaction Board
- The BCU's engagement with the Young People's Independent Advisory Group

- The BCU's work to maintain active engagement with the community and to improve communication of engagement events
- Any action by the BCU to facilitate greater engagement between the community and central MPS units.

### **3. FINANCIAL COMMENTS**

- 3.1. This report recommends the Council's and Partnership's response to an escalation in serious violence. These recommendations have no immediate financial implication, and the future impact of any plans and strategies proposed in this report will be managed within the available service revenue budgets.

### **4. LEGAL COMMENTS**

- 4.1. There are no legal implications arising from the report at this stage. However, any future action to be taken in respect of Recommendation 9 will need to be considered in line with the Local Authority's duties under the Equalities Act 2010.

### **5. FINDINGS**

#### **How is the Integrated Gangs Unit working to tackle serious violence and what are the benefits and disbenefits of tools used?**

##### **What is a gang**

The MPS uses the definition of 'gang' developed by the Centre for Social Justice's 2009 report 'Dying to Belong':

*A 'gang' is defined as a: 'relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:*

- (1) See themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, and*
- (2) Engage in a range of criminal activity and violence.*

*They may also have any or all of the following features:*

- identify with or lay claim over territory*
- have some form of identifying structure feature*
- are in conflict with other, similar gangs'*

- 5.1 The IGU work with those on the Gangs Violence Matrix (for Hackney), who are on the Matrix due to having been identified as being in a gang<sup>12</sup> (as per the definition used by the MPS).
- 5.2 Some of those the IGU work with are not on the Gangs Matrix. However, we heard that the unit's overall focus is on street gangs, and on preventing and reducing serious violence associated with them. We see this fitting broadly with the definition above.

### **Hackney lead local authority in establishing Integrated Gangs Unit, principles, and Hackney model**

- 5.3 The principle of IGUs is to provide a tailored response to an individual young person who has been highlighted as being involved in youth violence or who is being exploited by a group or gang.
- 5.4 Hackney's IGU was established in 2010. It was the first such model in the UK. Some other Councils – including a number of London boroughs - have since followed suit.
- 5.5 The arrangements of IGUs can differ.
- 5.6 Hackney's IGU is made up of part of the Council's Youth Offending Team, Police, Probation and DWP Officers dedicated to the unit, a number of commissioned partners (St Giles Trust, Empower London, and Mentivation) providing targeted and broader work with a focus on young people aged under 18, and a community co-ordinator working to build trust and confidence with the community and the awareness of the service.
- 5.7 These are supported by an Intelligence Team based in the unit.
- 5.8 In addition to these co-located partners, we explored the join up between the IGU and a number of other services.

### **A focus on prevention and diversion, but enforcement where necessary**

- 5.9 The IGU's significant focus is on preventing or diverting young people away from involvement in criminal, gang-related activity, and exploitation by gangs.
- 5.10 We have heard and seen first-hand many examples of this work. They have included work supporting young people to close the speech and language gaps acting as barriers to accessing education or employment, mentoring and brokering contact with wider support services, and supporting the rehabilitation of ex-offenders.
- 5.11 As was stated to us a number of times during the review, serious violence is not an issue which can be arrested the way out of.

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<sup>12</sup> Operating Model and Guidance for the Matrix states that the threshold for being included on the Matrix is 'someone who has been identified as being a member of a gang and this is corroborated by reliable intelligence from more than one source (e.g. police, partner agencies such as local authorities)

5.12 However, we were also supportive of the police element of the IGU having helped deliver robust enforcement action, where it was needed to keep communities safe. Operations against a relatively very small number of people following the spike in violence led to a number of custodial sentences. This action had correlated with the start of reductions against a number of indicators of serious violence.

### **Benefits of a co-located model**

5.13 We have been convinced that an integrated model better enables a joined up approach to addressing gang-related violence. It was made clear that having a wide range of agencies inside the unit allows multiple factors to be addressed and dealt with in sensitive, appropriate and holistic ways.

5.14 As stated in a paper to London Councils by Hackney's then Head of Safer Communities in 2017, co-location in a single suite enables real-time communication and information sharing, speed of action and intervention, within a multi-agency approach that looks at all preventative, diversion and enforcement opportunities<sup>13</sup>. A number of Councils have followed Hackney's lead in installing this model.

5.15 We were very grateful to St Giles Trust Youth Workers based in the IGU who spoke on their personal journeys from involvement with criminal behaviour and the youth and adult Criminal Justice system, to becoming mentors and advisors for young people. They both also powerfully articulated the benefits of colocation. For example, one spoke about his ability to build trusting relationships with and 'reach' young people, which enabled joint work by different specialists within the unit to help address a wide range of issues.

5.16 Another example was the work by the DWP Officer within the unit to support people to move away from harmful behaviour. This included through assisting them into jobs and apprenticeships, and in accessing benefits.

5.17 Being grounded within the function allowed a full appreciation of the complex issues being faced by some of those within the cohort. This better enabled cases to be handled appropriately, for example considerations around the locations for appointments.

### **Value of dedicated intelligence resource, and of social media monitoring as one of its tools**

5.18 We explored the role of the IGU Intelligence Team. We have grasped the value and benefits of this resource in helping inform activities of services within the unit and outside of it.

5.19 We received a detailed presentation from the Intelligence Team. Amongst other aspects, this highlighted the intelligence gathered on geographical areas of

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/31170>

criminal gang activity, any conflicts and affiliations between groups, and analysis aimed at improving the identification of early signifiers that a young person may be at risk of engaging in harmful activity. We heard how this ongoing intelligence gathering played a crucial part in partnership meetings identifying courses of action.

- 5.20 At the outset of our review, particular attention was being applied to the use of social media monitoring in the response to serious violence. Social media monitoring is one of the tools used by the IGU Intelligence Team.
- 5.21 We gave detailed consideration to this. We have a clear view that people should be able to express themselves freely – including on social media - without risk of repercussion. However, we have also seen that monitoring is an important tool for the IGU to use to help keep young people and the wider community safe.
- 5.22 We saw that social media was playing a more prevalent role in the recruitment of young people into gangs, and that content often provided the first indication that an individual might be at risk of becoming involved with a gang, or putting themselves at risk of gang-related harm. We saw how monitoring had enabled early interventions aiming to steer young people away from involvement or to otherwise keep them safe.
- 5.23 In terms of prevention, we also appreciate the need for young people to be supported to use social media safely. We welcome Young Hackney including this in the menu of options for schools as part of Young Hackney's PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) education offer.
- 5.24 Going back to the IGU, we also saw how social media content can sometimes evidence more direct involvement in violent street gang activity. We saw examples of footage containing criminal, seriously violent behaviour. In these cases, we saw how monitoring does play a role in helping to target enforcement activity. This included in operations following the escalation of violence in Hackney.
- 5.25 In addition to helping to target IGU resources, the insight gathered by the Intelligence Team is used to help inform the work of other areas.
- 5.26 We heard that the geographical areas initially prioritised for intervention by the Contextual Safeguarding project had been identified as areas for concern by the IGU in the first instance. The research gathered by the Intelligence Team was also being used to deliver training to Social Work Practitioners and Schools.

### **Impact**

- 5.27 When we set out on this review, the historical impact of Hackney's Integrated Gangs Unit was already quite clear. Further to its opening in 2010 this, gang-flagged violence fell for a number of years.

- 5.28 However - given the more recent increase in serious violence - which we were advised was explained by gang related activity - we wished to explore the measures and indicators used to gauge the impact of its work.
- 5.29 Papers and points made in meetings highlighted the central role that quantitative police-reported crime indicators had in measuring the impact of the IGU. Papers stated that reductions against a range of measures (Serious Youth Violence, Gun Crime, Gun Discharge, Knife Crime 1 to 19 years old and Violence with Injury) incorporated the key aims of the IGU. With the exception of gun discharges, these had shown recent reductions (on a 12 months rolling basis to July 2018).
- 5.30 In meetings we heard how reductions seen in serious youth violence, in knife crime offences by people aged under 25, and in violence with injury went against the trends seen in many other boroughs.
- 5.31 We heard that the IGU's intelligence based prevention, diversion and enforcement work, alongside joined up work with Children and Families enabling young people at risk to be identified and supported, was playing an important role in this bucking of the trends seen in London.
- 5.32 Looking more broadly than quantitative indicators, we were encouraged that the service was working to getting a broader range of outcome measures in place against which to formally measure its impact.
- 5.33 We should note that papers to the Commission did highlight a number of quantifiable outcome measures delivered by commissioned services within the IGU.
- 5.34 This included (amongst others) St Giles Trust achieving 20 reported gang exits and Empower London's work increasing the understanding of healthy relationships among 81% of those it worked with. We also appreciate the challenges around developing measures. The IGU is focused on preventing harmful episodes from happening, both now and in the longer term. Positively identifying when specific work has led to incidents not occurring, is difficult.
- 5.35 However, given the IGU's recognition that this was an area for improvement, and that the service was seeking to develop a wider set of specific outcome measures which would be incorporated into the new Community Safety Partnership Plan, we ask for an update on this.

**Recommendation 1 – Development of Outcome measures for the Integrated Gangs Unit**

We ask that the next update to the Commission on the on the Community Safety Partnership Plan includes detail on the revised outcome measures for the IGU, the reasoning for them, and progress against these at that point.



## **Case Management**

- 5.36 We also heard acknowledgement of the need to improve the recording of information on the cases managed by the IGU. For the cohort worked with currently, data was available on the sources of the referral of the individual into the IGU (Children’s Social Care, Criminal Justice System Probation or Schools, for example).
- 5.37 However, it was not clear that full information was available on the impact of interventions delivered for those previously worked with by the IGU.
- 5.38 For these ‘non-live’ cases, it was not clear that information was available on the sources and reasoning for referrals, the lengths of time individuals were worked with, the interventions which were delivered, and the reasoning for contact with them ending.
- 5.39 There is much coverage around using a public health approach to tackling serious violence, including serious youth violence. We understand principles within this approach include identifying and seeking to address wider factors which increase risk of engagement in or risk from violence, and ongoing evaluations of the impact of interventions so that effective ones can be repeated and non-effective ones not.
- 5.40 Maintaining full records of the circumstances of those being referred into the IGU, the interventions delivered and the impact of them, will better enable this. Further to our questions, we heard that the issues would be addressed, including via a review of the referral process. We ask that an update on this work is provided.

### **Recommendation 2 – Improved information management of ‘non-live’ cases**

Full information did not appear to be at hand on what we would define as ‘non-live’ cases’ – those individuals which the IGU had previously worked with but no longer did so.

Further to our questions, we heard that the issues would be addressed, including via a review of the referral process which would enable the IGU to provide a greater insight into the sources of referrals and the results delivered following these. We ask that an update on this work is provided.

## **Transparency**

- 5.41 The importance of ensuring effective join up between the IGU and services within Council specifically supporting children became clearer, as the review progressed.
- 5.42 The terms of reference for our review stated that 90% of the IGU cohort were aged 18 or over. However, over the course of the review we found that our initial understanding was not correct.

- 5.43 It became clearer that whilst the majority of those on Gangs Violence Matrix and being worked with by the IGU were aged 18 and over, those that the IGU worked with who were not on Matrix, were largely accounted for by under 18s.
- 5.44 We found that the IGU (as at March 2019) was working with 118 individuals who were on the Gangs Violence Matrix. We were not provided with a detailed age breakdown allowing us to determine the exact number of those aged under 18 and those aged 18 and above. Based on what was provided, the number of those under 18 was between 1 and 50<sup>14</sup>.
- 5.45 In addition, they were working with 76 individuals who were not on the Gangs Violence Matrix. 51 of these individuals were aged under 18. The remaining 25 were aged 18.
- 5.46 Based on the information provided the IGU (in March this year) was working with between 52 and 101 young people aged under 18. This is a small fraction of the borough's young people. However, it still accounts for a significant share of the IGU cohort – between 27% and 52%.
- 5.47 The considerable focus on under 18s was also highlighted by us finding that the commissioned services within the IGU are predominantly focused on this group. This was in line with the unit reaching a view that this is where greatest impact could be had with what were limited resources.
- 5.48 To be clear, we see it as positive that the IGU works with individuals who are not on the Gangs Violence Matrix, including people aged under 18. We support the IGU in using their specialist experience to deliver prevention and diversion for some under 18s, alongside the services in the Children and Families Service. We have identified what we feel to be excellent and effective practice by the IGU.
- 5.49 This said, we have been left concerned at what we feel to have been a lack of transparency and openness with the Commission by the IGU, around its cohort.
- 5.50 Our understanding that the predominant focus of the IGU's resources was on young adults - aged 18 and over - was based on background research, papers provided to the Commission, and points made in meetings. We feel that it was a reasonable view to reach based on the evidence provided.
- 5.51 If what we saw as a lack of transparency was replicated elsewhere, we see a risk that other services and partners would be unclear around the characteristics of the IGU cohort. This could hinder a joined up understanding and response to issues by both the services operating within the IGU, and those outside of it. It is important that all areas and partners with roles in helping and diverting people away from harmful behaviour, have clear information to enable this.

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<sup>14</sup> Of Gangs matrix individuals worked with by the IGU, we were advised that 1 was aged between 11 and 15, 49 were aged 16 – 20. 68 were aged between 21 and 30.

- 5.52 Evidence suggests that the misconception we had around the cohort, does go wider than this Commission. This includes in areas of work which are relevant to helping to improve outcomes for those in the cohort. The Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) Programme is one of these areas, given that it seeks to plan and deliver a response to young black men faring worse in a range of factors, including gang-flagged crime. The evidence base to help inform its work states that only 9% of the IGU cohort are under 19.
- 5.53 We feel there should be a broad understanding across the partnership of the profile of the IGU cohort, to better allow full contributions to enabling better outcomes. We also see room for greater public information on the IGU.

**Recommendation 3 – Greater transparency on the approach of the IGU, the cohort it works with, and how partners can support the work to achieve better outcomes for them**

We suggest that a starting point for this would be the creation of a dedicated page for the Integrated Gangs Unit, on the Council's website. This appears to be a gap currently, compared with some other boroughs with Integrated Gangs Units – for example [Westminster](#) and [Islington](#).

We feel this should provide details on its work and approaches, and non-identifying information on the broad profile of the cohort, any common challenges faced, and the roles which other services and partners can play in helping to address these.

**Join up with wider areas - Children and Families Service.**

- 5.54 We explored the links between the IGU, and the Council's Children and Families Service. We reached a view that this link up is effective, and improving.
- 5.55 Join up is achieved through both the IGU and Children and Families services both being present at a wide range of forums in which cross partnership approaches to cases are defined and agreed. We heard about the work of the Intelligence Team helping to inform Children Social Care's management of cases and training. We heard practical examples of where Children's Social Care and Commissioned services within the IGU worked together to aid young people. IGU staff spoke about improvements having been made in the interchange between the areas.
- 5.56 This said, we see room for further join up through greater representation of Children and Families service, in the IGU.
- 5.57 The embedded section of the Council's Youth Justice Service works to support those in the IGU cohort who are aged 10-17 and on Youth Justice Orders. The central role of this area within the unit is highlighted by the Service Manager for Youth Justice co-chairing the IGU's fortnightly Gangs Panel meetings.

- 5.58 However, other than this service, all elements of the Children and Families Service are based in separate areas of the Council from the IGU. This includes Young Hackney (aside from the Youth Justice function which is part of the wider Early Help and Prevention Service), and Children’s Social Care.
- 5.59 We do note the strong and improved linkages between Children and Families Service and the IGU. However, we have also been convinced of the practical benefits of a co-located model. We feel that the greater involvement of Children and Families inside the IGU could enable more effective use of preventative resources in both areas.

**Recommendation 4 – Greater representation of Children and Families Services in the IGU**

Children aged under 18 make up a significant and increasing share of the IGU cohort. We have heard about the practical benefits of a co-located model, with a range of services based in the same office.

We feel that fuller involvement of Children and Families inside the IGU could enable more effective utilisation of the preventative resources in both areas. We saw the positive impacts achieved from part of the (Children and Families’) Youth Justice service being colocated in the unit.

We heard about successful join up between the IGU and Children and Families generally; for example in the Contextual Safeguarding Project. However, we feel there is room for a greater co-location of services inside the IGU.

**We ask that the potential for this is explored by the Executive Members with responsibility for Community Safety and the Children and Families Service.**

**Housing Needs Service and other housing providers**

- 5.60 We did not hear from the Council’s Housing Needs Service nor wider housing partners in this review. However, IGU staff themselves felt the links between Housing Needs and the IGU might be an area for improvement.
- 5.61 This was in particular relation to the challenges IGU partners faced in securing settled accommodation for individuals being released from custody. We heard that this issue could impact on the scope for successful rehabilitation.
- 5.62 The issue of those leaving custody being at high and increasing risk of homelessness, is a national one. There is wide evidence on the impact of homelessness on prospects for rehabilitation. It is a long term issue; the availability of suitable housing for ex-offenders was one of the major themes emerging from a previous Hackney Scrutiny Review into gun and knife crime in 2011.
- 5.63 We cannot recommend that increased priority for settled accommodation is given to any particular group without considering this in the wider context of all

of those groups in housing need. The shortage of housing for ex-offenders is replicated with shortages for all groups, in what is a housing crisis.

- 5.64 The Council is embarking on a review of its lettings policy. During our scrutiny of this, we will explore the housing support provided to ex-offenders. This is in relation to any specific regard given to ex-offenders within the Council's allocations of social housing. We will also consider any wider housing related support provided by the Council which is specific for ex-offenders or which this group can access, and the pathways through which this can be secured.
- 5.65 Other providers of housing in the borough have roles here also, and we will intend on asking the same questions of Housing Associations.

### **Mental health services**

- 5.66 Mental ill health is more prevalent amongst individuals involved in violence and gangs. We heard from a number of practitioners within the IGU that mental health conditions were common among both children and adults in the cohort.
- 5.67 We did not explore in detail the level and nature of mental health support in the borough.
- 5.68 However, we did hear about the breadth of the services in place for those aged up to 18, and the way that Children's Social Care is able to broker and provide support directly. We were left with a view that arrangements to best ensure that support is given to those aged up to 18 in need of it, appeared very sound.
- 5.69 For mental health services for IGU cohort individuals aged 19 and above – again – we did not explore the extent and nature of provision in detail. However, we did hear that referral arrangements were different for adults.
- 5.70 We heard how the work of Probation Officers – who along with the police are generally the lead IGU partner for those in the IGU cohort aged over 18 - included brokering mental health support, and working to enable undiagnosed mental health conditions to be identified and addressed. This said, we heard there were issues in accessing mental health services<sup>15</sup>.
- 5.71 We note the work of Probation Officers in securing support for young adults in the cohort. However – with no dedicated mental health resource currently based within the IGU - we also see need for assurance around referral pathways being in place which set out when IGU will seek mental health support for young adults, and the routes that it will take to doing so.

<p><b><u>Recommendation 5 – For the IGU to report back on mental health services referral pathway for young adults in the IGU cohort</u></b></p>
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<sup>15</sup> We understand that this point (made by the Community Safety Partnership Manager) was made in reference to adults.

With no dedicated mental health resource currently based within the IGU, we see some need for assurance around referral pathways being in place which set out the scenarios in which the IGU will seek mental health support for young adults in its cohort, and the routes that it will take to doing so. This assurance should be provided in the form of a formal referral pathway being shared with us.

The East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) provides community and inpatient mental health services to children, young people and adults in Hackney. We feel that the referral pathway should be developed in partnership with ELFT, and that regular reviews should be carried out to monitor its effectiveness in brokering mental health support for those within the cohort.

- 5.72 In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU. We ask that the Council seeks to explore with East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) the feasibility of their becoming a partner agency of the IGU, and for them to provide a dedicated mental health resource.
- 5.73 This would better enable needs and provision to be identified and provided at the earliest possible stages. We also feel that a formal partnership arrangement would better allow our NHS partners to take a full role in tackling some of the drivers of serious violence.

#### **Recommendation 6 – ELFT as partner in IGU**

In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU<sup>16</sup>.

We have seen the benefits of a co-located, IGU model. We have also heard about the prevalence of mental health issues among those in the cohort, both among those aged up to 19 and those above this.

**We ask that the Council seeks to explore with ELFT the feasibility of their becoming a partner agency of the IGU, and for them to provide a dedicated mental health specialist resource.**

- 5.74 Our partners also have a crucial role in ensuring that care meets the needs of any young adults – both for the relatively very few within the IGU cohort and more widely. In terms of provision, there is a current distinction in mental health services and support for those aged under 19, and for those aged 19 and above.
- 5.75 We have reached a fuller understanding of the need for the Council and its partners – and national policy - to direct services in a way which recognises that turning 19 does not automatically bring an end to one life development stage,

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<sup>16</sup> If enacted, one of our recommendations would see greater involvement of the Children and Families Service within the IGU which we would hope would include the Clinical Service offering specialist psychological support to children aged up to 19 and their families.

and the start of another. This brings a need to review models of service and care which typically change at this time<sup>17</sup>, and which can make it difficult for young people aged 19 and above to access the services they need.

- 5.76 The Council has taken action here, within the very significant budget constraints it is working within. This has had strong impacts. The extension of the Substance Misuse Service in 2015 from serving only those up to 18 to supporting young people aged up to 25 has already resulted in increases in the numbers of people in treatment for alcohol and drug misuse, and in successful completion of treatment.
- 5.77 However, there is room for action by our partners in other areas. Mental health care provision is a central one.
- 5.78 We have not spoken to NHS partners during this review. However, we feel that an item at the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission might explore the differences in mental health provision for those aged up to 18, and those aged 19 to 25.
- 5.79 We suggest that to give focus this might explore provision as it relates to those aged 15 to 25. The latest Hackney Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment showed the peak age ranges for both victims and suspects of gang flagged crimes to start at 16 years of age, and for the peak age range for suspects of knife flagged crime to start at 15. Exploring typical mental health provision and arrangements for 15 to 18s compared to 19 to 25s might therefore add best value.

**Recommendation 7 – For the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to explore mental health provision for 19-25s compared to young people aged under 18**

We feel that an item at the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission might explore the differences in mental health provision for those aged up to 18, and those aged 19 to 25.

We suggest that to give best focus to the item, that it might explore typical mental health provision and arrangements for 15 to 18s compared to 19 to 25s. This is due to Hackney's Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment findings around the peak (starting) age ranges for involvement in gang flagged crimes and knife flagged crimes.

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<sup>17</sup> There are complexities to this. In some cases, young adults are entitled to higher levels of support, beyond age 18. This includes care leavers (the definition of which has been extended to cover young people having spent a 13 weeks or more in custody), and those with learning disabilities. On this point, we heard that IGU played an active advocacy role in encouraging eligible young people to utilise this support.

- 5.80 Alongside the need to extend and improve access to mental health services, we gained insight into the need for service provision and design to respond to particular inequalities in levels of mental ill health (and other areas), by delivering services in a way which can help close them.
- 5.81 Only 1% of young black Londoners are involved in serious youth violence<sup>18</sup>.
- 5.82 However, it is also the case that black boys and young men group are overrepresented amongst both victims and suspects, and within the IGU cohort.
- 5.83 We have seen how identifying and addressing barriers preventing black children and adults from accessing mental health services at earlier points and how improving experiences of service provision, can play a part in the response to serious violence, in addition to delivering wider change.
- 5.84 Formed in 2015, the YBM programme recognises and seeks to respond to the fact that young black men tend to fare worse than their peers across a wide range of areas, including education, involvement in the criminal justice system, and health. It is focused both on the current cohort of young black men aged 18 - 25 and also embedding change which see greater life chances of future generations.
- 5.85 The Mental Health strand of programme highlights how - through tailored approaches - there is the prospect of better enabling mental ill health to be addressed at an early stage. This was through a pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust and involving a group of Inspirational Leaders; young black men trained to deliver peer work and take leadership roles in the YBM Programme.
- 5.86 This found that when engaged differently – through group work within community settings rather than through traditional primary care (GP) routes and in ways that allowed them to feel greater agency during the process - young black men in need of support were more likely to put themselves forward for it. Inspirational Leaders themselves spoke about the impact of this pilot in breaking down barriers.
- 5.87 We ask for an assessment exploring whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.

**Recommendation 8 – Applying learning from pilot delivery of mental health provision in community settings, to the IGU**

Mental ill health is a common issue among both children and adults being worked with by the IGU. A significant share of the cohort is made up of black boys and young men. Evidence shows that tailored approaches can provide more effective

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<sup>18</sup> GLA Strategic Crime Analysis Team, City Intelligence Unit, July 2019



pathways to mental health care for this community group, in cases where it is needed. This is due to cultural and structural barriers which can make traditional routes less accessible.

We note the pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust which delivered support in community settings. This was found to better enable young black men with mental health needs, to engage, compared to traditional primary care routes.

We ask for an assessment – led by the Executive Members with responsibility for Health, Community Safety, and the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme – to be carried out exploring whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.

### **Hackney Works / Employment and Skills**

- 5.88 Engagement and re-engagement in education, training and employment can act as protective factors and support people out of serious offending. For example, during the review we heard how educational exclusion was a common experience amongst those within the IGU cohort.
- 5.89 The Children and Families Service – alongside its universal provision – targets support at young people to enable re-engagement. However, there was broad agreement on the need for all partners to improve the level and breadth of opportunities for young people (including young adults) to best ensure there are accessible options for all.
- 5.90 We heard about a number of the challenges which some of the IGU cohort face in seeking to turn their lives around.
- 5.91 On young adults specifically, we heard how Probation Officers in the IGU worked to broker contact between individuals and employment opportunities. However, Probation staff spoke about the lack of readiness of many in this cohort to access the types of opportunities which were sometimes on offer. This barrier meant the cohort was less likely to believe that legitimate and legal lifestyles were possible for them.
- 5.92 The lack of accessible work opportunities for often vulnerable, ex-offenders, is a well-known barrier to rehabilitation. This review will not solve this issue.
- 5.93 We are also aware that the Council is playing a very active role in increasing employment opportunities and pathways to them, including for more vulnerable groups. This includes its Apprenticeship Programme which won national awards in both 2018 and 2019 and the work experience opportunities delivered through its Hackney 100 Programme. Both are targeted at 16 to 24 year olds. This is alongside a wide range of support to help provide residents with a pathway to employment, and engagement with businesses and growth sectors to open more opportunities.
- 5.94 Items at another Scrutiny Commission have highlighted the Council's recognition of the need to provide accessible opportunities for more vulnerable

residents, and its work to do so. This includes the delivery of a pilot pre-apprenticeship programme aimed at bridging the gap between those furthest away from the labour market and the Council's main Apprenticeship Programme. The Commission heard that the pilot had been ring fenced to care leavers and to those interacting with particular services including Children's Social Care<sup>19</sup>.

- 5.95 We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement, and also that the IGU and the Hackney Works Service explore how the cohort can be best supported to access these opportunities.

**Recommendation 9 – For any future pre-apprenticeship programmes to include the IGU cohort in any ring-fencing arrangement**

We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement, and also that the IGU and the Hackney Works Service explore how the IGU cohort can be best supported to accessing these opportunities.

- 5.96 We note the well-known difficulties ex-offenders face in securing work – both those within the IGU cohort and ex-offenders more broadly. We suggest that the relevant Scrutiny Commission explores how the Council and its partners are working to provide employment and skills support to this group generally, and the feasibility of a dedicated support offer by the Hackney Works Service.

**Recommendation 10 – For the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission to explore employment and skills support for ex-offenders**

We note the well-known difficulties ex-offenders face in securing work – both those within the IGU cohort and ex-offenders more broadly. We recommend that the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission explores how the Council and its partners are working to provide and employment and skills support to this group generally, and the feasibility of a dedicated support offer by the Hackney Works Service.

**Gangs Violence Matrix - context**

- 5.1. The overall Gangs Violence Matrix is a tool which is owned and managed by the central MPS.
- 5.2. There is a local Gangs Matrix for each borough. On a daily basis, these local matrices / databases are combined to produce the current, London-wide MPS Gangs Matrix.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=31800>

- 5.97 The responsibility for the management of local Matrices falls with the local police. Decisions on who is added and who is removed are made at borough level. Each individual added to the Matrix is given a 'harm score', and coded red, amber or green according to this score. This traffic lighting system is designed to help to inform the response and management of cases, by both the police and partners.<sup>20</sup>
- 5.98 On a London wide level, there tends to be between 3,000 and 4,000 people on the MPS Gangs Violence Matrix at any given time. There were 118 individuals on the Gangs Violence Matrix for Hackney, at March 2019.
- 5.99 We explored the use of the Matrix through a discussion with Amnesty International, the Detective Superintendent with lead police responsibility for the IGU, and lead Council Officers for the IGU.
- 5.100 Given the MPS-wide response to issues raised with the Gangs Violence Matrix, the Police Commander with lead responsibility for driving improvement in the Matrix on a London level was also in attendance. This enabled us to explore the wider response of the MPS, and to gain insight into the practices in place in Hackney, compared to elsewhere.
- 5.101 We do not have the role of scrutinising the MPS, on a London wide level. However, we heard about a range of work underway, driven from the centre. Our view was that the improvement plans appeared sound. The Amnesty representative we spoke to - whilst reiterating the organisation's serious concerns with the Matrix - explained that their position currently was that the database should be reformed rather than dismantled. This was subject to the MPS working through the improvements required by the ICO (which were made further to the Amnesty investigation) and set out in the recommendations from the MOPAC review.
- 5.102 Our main focus was on the use of the Gangs Violence Matrix on a Hackney level.

### **Matrix in Hackney – information management**

- 5.103 The open sharing of Matrix information in some cases – in its looking at the use of the tool across London – was one of the central concerns raised by Amnesty. This was triangulated by the ICO findings. However, the ICO also found the operation and management of local Matrixes in some boroughs to be good.
- 5.104 Our review has confirmed that this is the case in Hackney. On data management processes, it is not an exaggeration to state that the Commission found the measures in place here to be exemplarily.

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<sup>20</sup> While local matrices are managed by the local police, central police units (Trident and MPS Central Intelligence) can make recommendations to boroughs around people being added and removed.

5.105 This was powerfully confirmed by the Central MPS Commander leading on the improvement of the Matrix London-wide. He confirmed that further to the ICO findings, Matrix data was not (at January 2019) being shared by the police within boroughs, nor with Prisons and Probation. Hackney was the exception to this, given the quality of the arrangements in place here, and its model being one of best practice.

#### **Matrix in Hackney – additions**

5.106 Operational guidance for the Matrix states that someone can only be added based on reliable intelligence from at least two sources. Amnesty raised concerns that in practice, the two corroborated pieces of intelligence ‘safeguard’ did not appear to be effectively in place in boroughs. The MOPAC review also reported a lack of assurance around the adherence to the corroborating evidence aspect in some cases.

5.107 As with the data management, we drew a high level of assurance around the additions process in Hackney. We saw how the partnership approach to this which is in place best results in the two corroborated pieces of intelligence ‘safeguard’ being followed effectively, and in the effective scrutiny of whether – combined - this intelligence warrants an addition.

#### **Matrix in Hackney – reviews and removals**

5.108 Guidance sets out that the Gangs Matrix should be reviewed quarterly and that individuals should remain on the Matrix for no longer than is necessary. The MOPAC review found that in practice there were variations across the boroughs and that guidance around reviews and removals was applied flexibly.

5.109 Within a Hackney context – and as with additions – we heard that decisions around removals are a partnership decision, and also that lists were reviewed on an ongoing basis within a commitment to regularly remove people as appropriate.

#### **Matrix in Hackney – green and zero harm individuals**

5.110 At any one time, high shares of the ‘gang nominals’ on the Matrix will be in the lowest risk group (green). Some of those within the green grouping will be ‘zero harm’ individuals. Zero harm scores are applied to those who have no record of charges or police intelligence linking them to violence in the past two years<sup>21</sup>.

5.111 The Amnesty report raised significant concerns around the scale of the presence of individuals on a violence Matrix who had shown no propensity for violence.

5.112 We explored the approach to green nominals, including zero-harm individuals, in a Hackney context. We heard that a key reason for the inclusion of green nominals was for prevention and diversion purposes. We heard examples of this work in practice.

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<sup>21</sup> Page 7, *Trapped in the Matrix report*

5.113 We did not obtain the numbers of zero harm individuals on the Matrix on a Hackney level. We did hear there were very few. We also heard that the IGU partnership meetings regularly reviewed these individuals and removed them where appropriate.

#### **Matrix in Hackney – overall view**

5.114 The Commission is not claiming that there are not issues with the Gangs Violence Matrix, particularly on a MPS-wide basis. The reviews by Amnesty, the ICO and MOPAC each found significant concerns around the ways that it was managed and used on a London-wide basis.

5.115 There is a clear need to ensure that the stringent data management processes which are in place in Hackney, are in place elsewhere also.

5.116 We are also aware of community concerns on the Matrix. The extent to which communities can feel marginalised and unfairly targeted by the tool was expressed by the representative from Amnesty we spoke to. Part of Amnesty's evidence on this aspect came from speaking to community leaders in this borough. While Amnesty International were not currently calling for the database to be scrapped (subject to fundamental changes being made to it), they were clear that many still wanted it abolished.

5.117 This said – it is important to note that detailed analysis for the MOPAC review found that the Matrix has had positive impacts. This has included falls in levels of offending and victimhood amongst those being added to the Matrix, and these falls continuing after removal; suggesting long term positive impact.

5.118 As a Commission, we share concerns around some individuals in Hackney who have not partaken in violent crime appearing on a 'Gangs Violence Matrix', and the over representation of some community groups. There is clear need for improvement by the Met, on a London wide level.

5.119 However, we have reached a view that an intelligent model is required to identify those at risk so that interventions can be delivered for them. Data does evidence that – despite very significant shortcomings which need to be worked through – the Gangs Violence Matrix does do this. We have found that despite its faults at a London wide level, that it is managed very effectively in Hackney. We ask that the Council keeps abreast of the action plan being worked through by the Central Met, and adapts its processes where appropriate.

#### **Gang term**

5.120 Amnesty International disagree with the reference to the word 'Gangs' within the Gangs Violence Matrix. This is given the often limited understanding of what the term means, and the different use of it by different parties.

5.121 Their research – and wider input by community leaders into this review – has highlighted how the ill-informed ways that the term is sometimes used can marginalise communities. This view appeared to be shared by Council staff in the IGU, and by the police.

- 5.122 IGU staff spoke around the challenges and competing needs of safeguarding those at risk from harmful activity, whilst also not labelling them. One said that the gang term was irrelevant and sometimes unhelpful.
- 5.123 The Police Officer with lead responsibility for violence locally confirmed her own view as being that the term was not conducive to engaging the community. She envisaged a greater movement towards the use of the word violence alone. The Central Officer leading on the improvement of the Matrix was clear on the need to explore terminologies as part of the work, both within the Gangs Violence Matrix and wider strategies to tackle what had been called gang crime.
- 5.124 Members of the Commission agreed with these points. We welcomed hearing the communications being planned by the MPS as one of the responses to the MOPAC Review, which would include clearer information on the purpose and focus of the tool. We made the suggestion that the dropping of the word Gang from the Gangs Violence Matrix would – in our view – really change the way that the community would perceive it.
- 5.125 On a local level we ask the Council considers changing the name of the Integrated Gangs Unit, in consultation with the community. We feel that it would give some assurance to those groups suffering stigmatisation from the careless way in which the term gang is sometimes used.

**Recommendation 11 – For the IGU to consult the community on a possible name change**

On a local level we ask the Council considers changing the name of the Integrated Gangs Unit, in consultation with the community. We feel that a name change could give some assurance to those suffering stigmatisation from the careless way in which the term gang is sometimes used.

**How has the Council responded to the escalation in violence, how is the response developing, and what is it showing?**

- 5.126 Our review found the Council to have responded to a spike in violence in a considered way within an approach of joint reflection with partners and the community. This was in relation to the event in April 2018 bringing the Council and its partners together, and the detailed mapping exercise informed by this which followed. This enabled a fuller understanding of the provision in the borough within the broad areas commonly agreed as being most relevant.
- 5.127 Having reviewed this provision, we saw it equating to very wide ranging preventative work. This was complemented by the support for those very few who were closer to harmful activity. We also welcomed the identification of areas where work across all partners was needed.
- 5.128 We welcome the significant work by the Council, partners and the wider community which has enabled the production of this resource. We see the

challenge now as ensuring continued focus on this area, and achieving a joined up response.

**Recommendation 12 – To report back on how the findings of mapping exercise are being taken forward**

We ask that the Council – further to discussions with its partners – reports back to the Commission on how these challenges can be best met.

- 5.129 While we will not explore all areas covered within the mapping exercise, a number of aspects particularly resonated.
- 5.130 We supported the measures being taken by the Council and partners to address the fear and worry that incidents could cause.
- 5.131 It is clear that all partners – within an effective response to the escalation of serious violence which had been in evidence - need to fully appreciate the fear and potential harm which could come from overstating issues. We know that fear can be a driver of unsafe behaviour in some cases.
- 5.132 This is the responsibility of this Commission also. We must not shy away from an issue which needed to be addressed. However, there is also a need to give context.
- 5.133 Recognising and celebrating the hugely positive contributions which the vast majority of our young residents are making to life in Hackney, helps with this. This is particularly important for those community groups suffering from stigmatisation.
- 5.134 A tiny fraction of young black Londoners are involved in serious youth violence. However, youth leaders in Hackney told us that young black men are commonly associated with harmful behaviour.
- 5.135 It is not an exaggeration to say that the Commission were humbled by the input into the review of some of the Inspirational Leaders within the YBM Programme. Taking the words of our own Chief Executive, we saw how they are creating a movement around setting examples, supporting their community, and working with public bodies to help them identify and deliver the improvements needed.
- 5.136 We heard and saw how they demonstrate and broadcast the successful lives which the majority of boys and young men in the borough are leading, therefore raising hope and aspirations. This provides an effective response to the negative connotations and racist stereotypes sometimes associated with young black men. We met leaders who had set up businesses in the arts, and were enabling the involvement of others.
- 5.137 The discussion also covered barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points, which committed to ongoing engagement. We will seek updates around this.

### **Recommendation 13 – Ongoing engagement between Chief Executive and Inspirational Leaders**

Inspirational leaders of the YBM Programme made a number of points around barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points.

This included a commitment to continued engagement from the Council with Inspirational Leaders.

One of the specific barriers mentioned was a lack of facilities and spaces to develop businesses within. On this, the Chief Executive spoke on the Council seeking to provide more workspaces through utilisation of unused spaces. He felt that shares of these might be made available for young people wanting to start-up businesses.

Another barrier mentioned was around a lack of advice and guidance for those interested in setting up businesses. In response the Chief Executive said that he would reflect on how the Landing Pad which the Council was seeking to provide for new businesses to the borough (better enable access to business planning, financial and other advice) could be made available more widely.

**We ask that the Chief Executive meets Inspirational Leaders to explore how these aspects and any others can be taken forward.**

### **What are the opportunities and risks of changes to local policing in relation to tackling serious violence?**

- 5.138 The reduction in Police Officer numbers (nor the move to the BCU model) – in our view - did not prevent the police from delivering an effective immediate, frontline response to the spike in violence which had been seen in Hackney prior to our review.
- 5.139 This was achieved through continued local investment in and prioritisation of tackling violent crime, and strong support from - and partnership work with – centralised MPS resources.
- 5.140 On a local level, Hackney continued to have a dedicated Gangs Task Force in place, in addition to the police presence within the IGU<sup>22</sup>. This had not been affected via the move to a BCU model<sup>23</sup>. Both of these units had contributed to significant successes, including a reduction in knife crime. There was a

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<sup>22</sup> We note the move to a BCU model has brought changes to operations in some other areas which are contributors to violent offending; including the Night Time Economy (NTE). This is now policed by a single unit across Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Future items might explore this impact on the safety of the NTE.

<sup>23</sup> We understand that this was with the exception of a single Police Officer taking the lead for the Hackney units and their equivalents in Tower Hamlets, and not by 2 Detective Inspectors as previously.



commitment towards keeping both units as fully staffed as possible. There had been no reduction in the police resource based within Hackney's IGU.

- 5.141 We also heard about the contributions of centralised MPS units to operations in Hackney. These included the Violent Crime Taskforce, Trident, and the Territorial Support Group.
- 5.142 The Violent Crime Taskforce was set up in April 2018, to provide support in geographical areas where there was a concern. Its work has been commended by the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee, with the monthly frequencies of knife crimes and homicides across the capital reducing (at December 2018) further to its introduction. We heard Hackney had benefitted significantly from this resource.
- 5.143 Joint work with the central Operation Trident Unit had led to a targeted response to a spike of violence in one area of the borough, with a covert operation resulting in drug seizures, the closures of drug supply lines and a number of convictions.
- 5.144 The Territorial Support Group had roles of responding to disorder and reducing priority crime, and had been deployed in Hackney.
- 5.145 We were impressed at what we heard around the co-operation and team work between the local BCU and central units. This best enabled resources to be secured, for action to be delivered in a joined up way, and also for the central assets to deliver the types of policing needed in a way which best understood any local contexts and sensitivities.
- 5.146 It is positive that the BCU always sought to have an arrangement in place where a Senior Leader provided briefings to any central teams being deployed locally. This was in order to give bespoke briefings on the borough, expectations around approaches and behaviour, and the duties they were being asked to perform.
- 5.147 Despite seeing the overall response by the police to have been an effective one, we have concerns that the reduction in police capacity means that responses such as these are unsustainable in the longer term. We also have concerns about the police's capacity to provide effective reassurance.
- 5.148 There has been wide commentary around the escalation in violence seeing Met's Police Officers having their rest days cancelled. There is a concern about the impact that the intense focus on violent crime may have for other lower profile crime areas; for example the Violent Crime Taskforce has been resourced partly through the transfer of police Officers from other units.
- 5.149 We are also concerned at the reduced police presence locally. We heard that the BCU was working hard to generally achieve the London Mayoral Neighbourhood Policing target around each of the Borough's ward's having two dedicated full time Police Constable and one Police Community Support Officer resources in place.

- 5.150 However, in a context of lower Officer numbers, there was acknowledgment of the need at times to deploy these resources elsewhere in response to specific incidents. Safer Neighbourhood Board Members confirmed that a reduced police visibility was a common concern raised across the forums they were involved with.
- 5.151 We do see the reductions having impacted on the capacity of the police to provide reassurance to the community and to prevent incidents occurring or escalating.
- 5.152 Staff at a youth club spoke about the police previously being visible and actively involved with the club. Now, their lack of visibility had helped foster a perception of reduced safety among young people and parents, and impacted on levels of attendance.
- 5.153 One youth leader pointed to the preventative impact which the presence of police officers could have; 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 more likely.
- 5.154 We see a recovery in police numbers both in London generally and Hackney specifically, as vital. This is in regards to both ensuring that the MPS' ability to respond to incidents is effectively is sustained and – on a local level – that capacity allows for the community to feel assured by a stable, visible presence.

**Recommendation 14 – For the Council to continue to make the case for a reversal of local Police Officer reductions**

**We call for the Mayor of London to continue to make the case for a fair settlement for the MPS, and for the Council to lobby towards ensuring that any more realistic London wide funding is translated into a greater local police presence in Hackney.**

**What role is the use of Stop and Search and Section 60 Orders playing in the response to the escalation in violence, and how are good quality interactions with the public during the deployment of Stop and Search being best achieved?**

- 5.155 In a Hackney context, the Central East Commander spoke about the importance of Stop and Search – when used properly and effectively - to combatting violence and the threat and fear of it.
- 5.156 We saw how the stepping up of stop and search on a MPS wide level has been replicated in Hackney, and how stop and search and the use of section 60 formed an explicit part of the response to the spike in violence seen in the borough.

- 5.157 We heard that the 5794 stop and searches conducted in Hackney in 2018 was an increase on the previous year. There had been 139 section 60 orders in the borough during that time, 12 of which had been borough wide. We heard that 2018 was the first year that they had been used in Hackney, after a gap. 345 searches were conducted using these powers; meaning they accounted for 6% of all searches.
- 5.158 Positive outcome rates data for stop and search can - to some extent - be used to indicate the extent to which stop and searches are effectively targeted. Data for Hackney showed the positive outcome for stops and searches carried out in Hackney - by all units - to be 30.5%, the highest across the Met.
- 5.159 One of the major concerns around stop and search is the disproportionality in terms of those who are being searched. Concerns of those on the ground were given a voice during the review. One Inspirational Leader said that the community had noted rhetoric around increasing stop and search, and were worried that there could be a return to days where young black males felt particularly high levels discrimination through being stopped numerous times. Another said that young people had come to see stop and search as a normal part of being from a black background.
- 5.160 As is the case across the Met, profiled stop and search data for Hackney showed searches to be disproportionately concentrated among black boys and young men, compared to the share that this group accounts for of the population.
- 5.161 Outcome rates amongst different community groups are used by some commentators to indicate whether stop and search activity is proportionate<sup>24</sup>.
- 5.162 In Hackney, the positive outcome rate for people coded as being of white ethnicity was 31.6%. The positive outcome rate for those coded as black matched almost exactly - at 31.5%. This went against the picture on a MPS wide level for the same period, where the positive outcome rate for white people was almost 4% higher for white people compared to black people. We should note that Hackney did see a lower positive outcome rate among people coded as Asian; at 24%.
- 5.163 The concern that greater use of Section 60s and searches without suspicion will worsen racial disparities in stop and search activity, played out in the data provided, both on a Hackney and MPS level.
- 5.164 Among those searched under Section 60 powers across Hackney and the MPS, black people were more over represented than they were within general stop and search. The positive outcome rates fell considerably for these searches.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/stop-search-police-london-met-section-60-race-a8943931.html>, for example.

- 5.165 In terms of the quality of searches in Hackney, we heard the commitment of the police to ensuring that stop and search powers were deployed transparently, with high standards of professionalism and integrity, and with concern for those stopped.
- 5.166 The greater use of body worn cameras appeared central to this, and Hackney was performing well in ensuring the recording of encounters compared to the MPS generally. We were assured that Officers were challenged when cameras were available but encounters were not recorded. The quality of footage was improving as the technology was bedded in.
- 5.167 Formally involving young people in training can help improve Officer's understanding about why quality of stop and search is important, and we were pleased to hear of the Police's engagement with Hackney Crib's Trading Places initiative. This sees practical exercises where young people swap places with representatives of a range of organisations which interact with them.
- 5.168 Helping people understand their rights in regard to stop and search can empower them to challenge poor practice. It is positive that the BCU is delivering 'know your rights' sessions in schools.
- 5.169 We explored the work of the local groups who lead on the scrutiny of stop and search in Hackney. In addition to the Community Stop and Search Monitoring Group, Hackney also has a Young Person's Stop and Search Monitoring Group.
- 5.170 On this point, it is important to recognise the innovative work of Hackney's Safer Neighbourhood Board (which has the overarching role of implementing monitoring arrangements locally) in the establishment of monitoring arrangements which put significant emphasis on enabling scrutiny of stop and search activity by young people directly.
- 5.171 We gained practical insights into the vital and valuable role which local monitoring groups can play in holding the police to account around their deployment of stop and search, on behalf of communities. We heard important examples of successful recent work by the groups. We have seen how the mechanisms exist for this functions to be delivered very effectively in Hackney.
- 5.172 However, it was also made clear that their success in doing so is fully dependent on effective engagement with these mechanisms, by the police. The recent successes were reflective of a refreshed level of engagement by the police. Until recently, this had been an area in need of improvement. We place on record our thanks to Sue Williams for reinvigorating the police's engagement with the monitoring groups during her time as Central East Commander.
- 5.173 We heard clear accounts that the extent of the police's engagement with the monitoring groups had varied according to who had been the lead police officer for the borough.
- 5.174 We agreed with the monitoring groups on the need for the BCU's current levels of engagement with the monitoring groups – and with the community more

widely – to be maintained. This includes through any periods of leadership change. Indeed, this point was illustrated further at a later point where the Central East Commander we heard from during the review was seconded elsewhere.

5.175 It is for the monitoring groups to scrutinise the use of stop and search powers by the police. However, this Commission will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

**Recommendation 15 – For the Police and Monitoring Groups to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney Scrutiny on stop and search activity, and the engagement between them**

Living in Hackney Scrutiny will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

In reflection of our [findings from the discussion with the police and monitoring groups](#), we will include consideration of the points below, within the next item:

- Extent of body worn camera dip sampling exercises (we heard that these had started only recently)
- Engagement of the community in training
- Section 60 communications and consultation (both monitoring groups reported that the engagement of the police prior to enacting Section 60 notices fell immediately after the move to the BCU model, and the BCU themselves acknowledged they were working on addressing this issue)

**How is the Community Safety Partnership working to ensure effective relationships with the community?**

5.176 Looking more broadly than stop and search, data for Hackney highlights trust and confidence in the police needing to be a key area of focus locally.

5.177 We found that the BCU shared the Commission's concern in this area. We drew assurance that – following the move to the BCU model and under the leadership of the then BCU Commander – a range of initiatives had been put in place in response.

5.178 We were impressed with the establishment of a BCU-wide Confidence and Satisfaction Board. We hope will secure an ongoing focus on trust and confidence despite leadership change.

- 5.179 Evidence shows that effective community engagement is one of the ways through which public confidence in policing activity can be increased<sup>25</sup>. We heard about a range of work in this area.
- 5.180 We welcome the BCU's engagement with the formal engagement mechanisms, and its contributions to building the capacity of these.
- 5.181 On this point - during the review the BCU confirmed that funding had been secured for a Youth Independent Advisory Group in Hackney. We understand that this will be formed of the Inspirational Leaders who we heard from at various points of the review.
- 5.182 This is hugely positive. We heard during the review of the huge strength of this group in being able to challenge the police on behalf of young people and to broker dialogue and understanding between the two.
- 5.183 We also heard of and were impressed with other work to build confidence, trust and mutual understanding, outside of the formal mechanisms, and to better ensuring good quality encounters.
- 5.184 We welcome this work, as did the community groups involved in the discussion. We feel that it can only help further ensure that encounters are well managed.
- 5.185 The above leads us to a view that the level of engagement of the Police by the community was very positive, at the point of our review.
- 5.186 This is not to say the arrangements in place could not be further improved. We heard that the great potential which a number of high quality engagement activities had had to help address trust and confidence issues had not been fully realised due a lack of effective communications on them. We heard concern that the police could inadvertently reduce trust and confidence through the release of footage intended to provide reassurance.
- 5.187 We also found a clear need for greater assurance to the community around the approaches and practices of central units deployed to the borough. This was despite measures in place to achieve a localised approach, and the involvement that central units currently took in engagement activity in the borough.
- 5.188 We welcomed the BCU Commander's candour on the need to address and improve in these areas. We pay tribute to the reinvigorated community engagement which she put in place under her leadership. We also thank community groups whose work has enabled this. These groups clearly have the capacity to challenge the police on behalf of the community, and to be an effective bridge between them.

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<sup>25</sup> Royal College of Policing

5.189 The challenge now is to ensure that this reinvigorated engagement is maintained and built upon.

5.190 We see the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission having a role in monitoring this.

**Recommendation 16 – For Community Safety Partnership to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney on its Trust and Confidence Action Plan**

The Commission will seek annual updates against the Action Plan regarding Trust and Confidence, from the Community Safety Partnership.

As part of the first update, we will gauge progress on a number of areas in line with our review findings in this area.

We will seek updates on the status and activities of the BCU-wide Confidence and Satisfaction Board, on the BCU's engagement with the Young People's Independent Advisory Group, its work to maintain active engagement with the community and to improve communication of engagement events, and any actions to seek to facilitate engagement between the community and central units.

**6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1. We have seen excellent work by the IGU to keep young people and the community safe. It has a clear and significant impact. We laud its co-located model. We have explored and gained assurance around its approaches and the tools it uses.
- 6.2. Our recommendations around this area – in terms of improving transparency and better ensuring the involvement of wider partners in work – are intended to help build on this further.
- 6.3. We welcome the considered approach of the Council, its partners and the community to the spike in violence which led to this review. We look forward to exploring what the next steps have been here.
- 6.4. Violent incidents and their causes need to be addressed and not shied away from. However we have seen the importance of placing issues in context. Recognising and celebrating the hugely positive contributions which the vast majority of our young residents are making to life in Hackney is crucial.
- 6.5. We see the police as having delivered an effective immediate, frontline response to the spike in violence. This was despite reductions in officers. However, we are clear that reductions in police capacity means that responses such as these are unsustainable in the longer term.
- 6.6. Evidence we heard also suggests that the reductions in the police's local presence has impacted on the capacity of the police to provide reassurance to the community and to prevent incidents occurring or escalating.

- 6.7. The greater use of stop and search has been one of the responses to the escalation in levels of violence in London. This includes the re-emergence of no suspicion searches. This makes it all the more important for the police to maintain the levels of engagement with the Stop and Search Monitoring Groups which were put in place under the most recent BCU Commander.
- 6.8. Trust and confidence generally must be an area of ongoing focus. Here we also welcome the recent levels of community engagement of the Police. This needs to continue.

## **7. CONTRIBUTORS, MEETINGS AND SITE VISITS**

### **Meetings of the Commission**

**13/09/2018<sup>26</sup>**

#### **Contributors**

- Cllr Caroline Selman, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy, and the Voluntary Sector
- Maurice Mason, Community Safety Manager
- Alice Deacon, Assistant Head of Service - Early Help and Prevention

**13/11/2018<sup>27</sup>**

#### **Contributors**

##### **Inspirational Leaders, YBM Programme**

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- Oluwatosin Adegoke
- David Ogana
- Lamide Olusegun
- Deji Adeosun, Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group
- Tim Shields, Chief Executive
- Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector
- Karen Law, Partnership Strategic Analysis & Performance Manager
- Aled Richards, Director, Public Realm
- Community Safety Manger
- Sonia Khan, Head of Policy and Partnerships, and Programme Manager of Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme
- Cathal Ryan, Cathal Ryan, Service Manager, Children and Families Service and Lead for Reducing Harm Working Group (Young Black Men Programme)
- Jason Davis, Policy Advisor
- Dina Sahmanovic, Senior Operations Manager Victim Support

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<sup>26</sup> <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=32383>

<sup>27</sup> <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=119&MIId=4431&Ver=4>



- Zoe Williams, Senior Operations Manager for Children and Young People, Victim Support

**10/12/2018<sup>28</sup>**

**Contributors**

- Sue Williams, Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service
- Community Safety Partnership Manager
- Jan Stout, Integrated Gangs Unit Manager
- Emma Harradine, Probation Officer, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Brendan Finegan, Service Manager - Youth Justice Service
- Oladele Woye, Community Engagement Officer, DWP, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Samir Khattab, Case Worker, SOS Project, St Giles Trust, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Damion Roberts, Case Worker, SOS Project, St Giles Trust, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Steve Gowan, Researcher, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Nichole McIntosh, Director for Operations, Safer London

**31/01/2019<sup>29</sup>**

**Contributors**

- Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service
- Louise Brewood, Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board
- Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector
- 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

**Site Visits**

The Commission made the following site visits for this review. The records of these are available below.

- [Site visit to the Integrated Gangs Unit, 22nd January 2019](#)
- [Site visit to Site Visit to Young Hackney Concorde, 22nd January 2019](#)
- [Meeting with MPS and Amnesty International re Gangs Violence Matrix, 24th January 2019](#)
- [Meeting with Integrated Gangs Unit and Children and Families Service 14th March 2019](#)

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<sup>28</sup> <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CI=119&MI=4432&Ver=4>

<sup>29</sup> <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CI=119&MI=4433&Ver=4>

## 8. MEMBERS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Councillor Sharon Patrick (Chair)

Councillor Sade Etti (Vice Chair)

Councillor Michelle Gregory

Councillor Anthony McMahon

Councillor M Can Ozsen

Councillor Ian Rathbone

Councillor Penny Wrout

Overview and Scrutiny Officer: Tom Thorn ☎ 020 8356 8186

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Financial Comments: Deirdre Worrell ☎ 020 8356 6196

Lead Director: Ajman Ali ☎ 020 8356 3670

Lead Cabinet Member: Caroline Selman, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector