

Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Hackney Council
Room 118
Town Hall
Mare St E8 1EA

Reply to: tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk

16th April 2021

Dear Sal Naseem

Thank you for attending the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission (LiH) meeting on 9th November 2020 and for your engagement with the scrutiny commission.

Our engagement with the MPS commenced following concerns about community tensions between the police and local residents in relation to the use of force and stop and search activity by the police. When we commenced discussions with the local BCU the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission raised the following:

1. Impact of stop and search on community relations with the police service.
2. The increasing use of handcuffs and use of handcuffs on young people aged 10-14
3. The training police officers receive in relation to carrying out a stop and search
4. The threshold for a police officer's record of complaint to trigger an investigation of any trend or reoccurring inappropriate behaviour
5. The use of TSG officers in the borough and the impact of their work on community relations locally
6. Explanation about the intelligence used to inform a stop and search
7. How links are made between different crime types
8. An explanation about why stop and account is not used first instead of stop and search
9. An explanation about police officer accountability and the complaints system in the MPS
10. An overview about how the stop and search monitoring data and insight is used by the MPS.

Following our discussions the key themes that emerged for follow up were:

1. **MPS complaint system** - The system is not trusted and seldom used by the community groups most impacted by stop and search activity.
2. **Accountability of police officers for behaviour and appropriate use of police tools.** The wider public perception is that the MPS does not have robust systems in place for police officers to be held to account.

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3. **No set monitoring targets for stop and search and outcome success rates.** Having on average a 20-25% success rate from the volume of stops and searches conducted is not a good demonstration of success or a good use of resources.
4. **Reducing the disproportionality among ethnic minority groups being stopped and searched.** There were no reports of current work to address this or reassurance given on how the MPS plan to address this wider than the BCU review work.
5. **Representation of Hackney's diverse community in MPS / MOPAC community engagement and scrutiny structures.** We learned the MPS are working to improve dialogue and engagement with the public but this is not widely known by the local community.

MPS complaints system

An organisation's complaints system can provide valuable insight to support operational improvements and enhance the customer experience. We were made aware that the MPS complaints system was recently changed to include a right of appeal to MOPAC or the IOPC. Although we note IOPC have been doing engagement work. We strongly believe there is a need for the public to understand the changes to the MPS complaints system at a local level. It is the Commission's view that extensive community engagement and promotion of these changes are needed at a local level.

In our assessment to have confidence in using the complaints system and seeing it as an effective tool to address public concern with the MPS; local communities need to have confidence the new part of the process will be effective. The Hackney Account Group was very clear that the investigation and outcome of complaints by the MPS themselves was a barrier to getting young people engaging with the complaint structures and mechanisms in place. The Commission is of the view it is important to promote the secondary part of the complaints process so that people are aware this has changed and that there is an independent review incorporated in this process.

In our discussion the IOPC also talked about their work to strengthen their engagement with communities. We also learned about the importance of the MPS complaints system as a source of information and that it can be drawn as evidence when the IOPC conducts an investigation or review. Therefore it appears that promoting the importance of the public using the complaints system is critical. We want to see more local residents (who feel their experience has been negative) use the complaints system to express their views about their experience. This could help to break down the barrier for community groups currently reluctant to use the complaints system.

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The scrutiny commission Chair looked at the IOPC's website to review information about the work of the IOPC in relation to the MPS complaints system. The Chair found limited information about the role of the IOPC in the review or appeal processes. To build confidence within communities about the process and procedures for complaints, the Commission is of the view there should be more detailed information about the process and what to expect available to the public. In our view it is likely that adding examples of complaints investigated would help to give the public confidence and reassurance about the process.

Our request

- 1. Is there scope for the IOPC to work with Hackney Council to better promote the changes to the MPS complaints system to facilitate better community engagement by residents with the MPS complaint system?***
- 2. We would like more information about the outcomes of reviews or appeals the IOPC has conducted since the new process and procedures were introduced?***
- 3. We would like more information about the difference in the role of the IOPC and MOPAC in the right of review/appeal process for MPS complaints.***

Culture Change

The IOPC acknowledged the positive response from the MPS to their recommendations following the stop and search review. We welcomed the IOPC's review and recommendations notably the recommendation of ride along supervision to support the review of a police officer's conduct operationally. In our discussions we noted the blunt truth that out of 33,000 complaints against the MPS only 4% were from the black communities and 1% from young people. Our local MPS informed us they plan to use the complaints data in their local review of stop and search and handcuffing. We noted the IOPC's comments that your stop and search review confirmed the concerns that have been raised by black and ethnicity minority community groups and these conclusions were not solely drawn from the MPS complaints data. We are concerned that if the MPS rely heavily on their complaints data they will not get a true reflection of the voices and experiences of the local community in Hackney.

There have also been calls for culture change within the MPS. We note the public wants to see the MPS demonstrate it is responding to the public and addressing the concerns raised about the disproportionality of stop and search activity and the bias or unconscious bias behaviour of serving police officers. We are keen to find out more about the monitoring and follow up work of the IOPC's following the recommendations made from your review looking at stop and search.

Our request

- 1. How will the IOPC monitor the progress of the recommendations from this review and is there any statutory support to enforce the recommendations or the monitoring process?***
- 2. Is there further work the IOPC can do to encourage the MPS to look at culture change within their organisation?***

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Youth Engagement

We also learned that the IOPC had commenced a programme of engagement work with young people. The IOPC shared with us a link to their resources to give to local networks in Hackney to build awareness and provide guidance for young people about the police complaints system. Our desire is to see the dissemination of this information locally and a connection between the young people in Hackney and the IOPC. We believe the promotion of the complaints system could be carried out as a joint piece of work with the Council, key local stakeholders and the IOPC. This could help to build community confidence in using the MPS complaints process and the work and knowledge of the IOPC.

Our request

Is there scope for the Hackney Account Group to feed into the IOPC's youth engagement programme of work?

To help manage the meeting we are asking for a written response to the requests outlined in this letter. The Commission is proposing to discuss the written responses from attendees at the LiH meeting on 9th November 2020 at the next LiH meeting on 22nd June 2021. Please can you confirm your attendance by 30th April 2021.

Yours faithfully



Cllr Sharon Patrick

Chair of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission at London Borough of Hackney

CC Natasha Plummer, Head of Engagement (MOPAC)
Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cabinet Member for Community Safety (London Borough of Hackney)
Commander Catherine Roper, Crime Prevention, Inclusion & Engagement (Metropolitan Police Service)
Commander Jane Connors QPM, Front Line Policing. Violence lead (Metropolitan Police Service)
Borough Commander Marcus Barnett, CE BCU Commander (Metropolitan Police Service)
Detective Superintendent Mike Hamer, CE BCU Lead for Violence & Criminal Investigation (Metropolitan Police Service)