

# Overview & Scrutiny

## Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Hackney Council  
Room 118  
Town Hall  
Mare St E8 1EA

Reply to: [tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk)

23rd April 2021

Dear Natasha Plummer

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.

## **Representation of Hackney's diverse community in the MPS and MOPAC community engagement structures**

We learned that MOPAC has a key role in supporting the community to scrutinise the police at a local level. In our discussions you (MOPAC) emphasised the importance of hearing the voice of the community at a local level but acknowledged SNB's were not provided with support to do community development and engagement work and that this was a gap. We would like to see local community scrutiny structures for the MPS better reflect the voice, experience and concerns of the local community.

MOPAC talked about supporting the network of local community MPS stop and search monitoring groups. The Hackney Account Group provided valuable insight ([Account Group Report](#)) bringing the voice of young people to the MPS stop and search scrutiny and community engagement structures. However we recognise the Hackney Account Group's relationship with the local MPS has been challenging and that this group is no longer funded by CE BCU. Following the scrutiny commission's dialogue with the Account Group and notwithstanding the challenges with their working relationship between the Hackney Account Group and CE BCU. We believe there is a role for their work in the MPS community scrutiny structures. In our dialogue with the MPS and despite assurances that the community would be consulted, it was still unclear how the MPS would engage with young people. The Commission is seeking assurance about the future of local MPS engagement with young people.

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We would encourage MOPAC to work with the MET HQ, Central East BCU and Hackney Council to help find a way for constructive engagement so that the concerns raised by Hackney's young people in the Account Group Report can be addressed. The diversity and representation of voices and experiences from the local community is important if the MPS scrutiny structures are to offer the opportunity for the local community to scrutinise local police activity.

In our discussions we did not clarify the level of MOPAC's responsibility for ensuring the local community's scrutiny and engagement structures are reflective and representative of the local community. Also we were not assured the current mechanism or groups are inclusive and capture the breadth of local community voices and experiences to effectively feed into MOPAC's work of holding the MPS to account. From understanding how important hearing the voice of the local community is to MOPAC's work. We would encourage MOPAC to engage with the Central East BCU, the local SNB and Hackney Council to help identify and implement a more representative local community engagement structure for scrutiny of the local MPS.

## ***Our request***

- 1. Does MOPAC have a role in engaging with the local BCU, SNB and Hackney Council to ensure the community scrutiny and engagement structure locally are representative?***
- 2. If MOPAC has a role in ensuring the community scrutiny and engagement structures for the MPS are representative. We would like information about any work MOPAC has done to support the local MPS community scrutiny structures to be a better representation of the local community's voices and experience.***
- 3. We would like to know if Hackney's community insight (the Hackney Account Group report) has fed into MOPAC's work of holding the MPS to account?***
- 4. We would like to know if the Hackney Account Group will continue to be involved in MPS / MOPAC community engagement structures and their role?***

## **Trust and confidence**

Trust and confidence from the community the MPS serves is important and so is understanding the perceptions, feelings and experiences of the communities. In our discussion MOPAC recognised there is a lot of work to do in this area but emphasized they are building on a good foundation. In our discussions we noted MOPAC conducts a police attitudes survey with Londoners to track levels of confidence in the police. In our discussion we noted the recent survey shows 58% for London and 56% for Hackney and that Hackney has consistently tracked below the London average. It was also acknowledged there has been a fall in confidence in recent years. The Commission is of the view that a targeted campaign to increase the response rate of people from black and ethnic minority communities could increase feedback to better reflect the diversity of voices and experiences in relation to MPS operations in London.

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We heard that the current Mayor of London has committed to implementing an action plan to address 4 key areas (*Better use of police powers; How we work together with black communities to keep them safer; Building a police service that better represents and serves black Londoners and Holding the police to account*). The key areas of the action plan cover some of the topics the Commission has raised locally with the MPS. Taking into consideration MOPAC's role in overseeing the work of the MPS in its entirety. We are of the view there may be some scope for MOPAC to consider exploring how to create opportunities for the local community to hold MOPAC to account for the oversight work they do of the MPS in delivering the action plan.

As an organisation Hackney Council has recently reviewed and reflected on the culture of its organisation and implemented a programme of inclusive leadership to drive a culture of change across the organisation. We have noted various public calls for culture change within the MPS. The Commission is of the view that if the MPS can make a commitment to culture change it will demonstrate the MPS is listening and responding to the public; in addition to being open to addressing the concerns that have been raised about the disproportionality of stop and search activity and the bias or unconscious bias behaviour of serving police officers. If the MPS were to consider embarking on a journey of culture change we believe this would reflect in a better relationship with communities not just in Hackney but across London. Although the MPS and Hackney Council are different types of organisations, we are of the view there is scope for Hackney Council to share the information it has to date on good practices and the lessons learned from its work.

## **Our request**

- 1. We would like to see MOPAC launch a targeted campaign for the police attitudes survey to encourage more responses from black and ethnic minority communities and relevant representative groups.**
- 2. We would like MOPAC to update on the progress of their action plan (the 4 areas outlined at the [meeting on 9th November 2021](#)).**
- 3. We would encourage MOPAC to consider Hackney for any pilots for new community engagement structures in relation to MOPAC / MPS scrutiny structures that could help build trust and confidence.**
- 4. We would like to understand how MOPAC's work of scrutiny and holding to account can support and encourage the MPS organisation to embark on a journey of culture change.**

## **Accessibility and transparency of MPS data**

We agree with the aims of MOPAC in relation to wanting to see the monitoring indicators reflecting progress and change; in addition to seeing positive changes from communities about their feelings and experiences. At the meeting there was acknowledgement that the monitoring data for the MPS could be more transparent and easier to find. We also heard about MOPAC's plans to develop a suite of MPS data that is more accessible and user friendly to the public. We welcome and encourage this.

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## **Our request**

- 1. We would like an update on MOPAC's work to develop a suite of data that is more accessible and user friendly. Outlining timescales and the communication plans for promotion.**
- 2. We would like to clarify MOPAC's role in ensuring:**
  - a. the MPS has adequate monitoring targets in place to ensure MPS officers are using appropriate levels of forces for young people and adults in relation to use of force**
  - b. there is monitoring in place that tracks and reviews the deployment of police tools and police officer conduct.**

Thank you for agreeing to return to the next LiH meeting on 22nd June 2021. 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.

Yours faithfully



**Cllr Sharon Patrick**

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

CC Sal Naseem, Regional Director London (IOPC)  
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)