

# Overview & Scrutiny

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4th July 2023

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To:

**James Conway**, Community Safety Partnership Statutory Officer Group Co-Chair & Borough Commander Central East BCU, Metropolitan Police Service

**Mark Carroll**, Community Safety Partnership Statutory Officer Group Co-Chair & Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

**Kenny Bowie**, Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Police and Crime

## **Policing of Drug Use Scrutiny Session - 23rd January 2023 (Recommendations)**

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission held a discussion on the policing of drug use in Hackney on 23rd January 2023. This was a helpful meeting which enabled members to further understand the local partnership approach to the policing of drug use, and the arrangements in place to ensure effective partnership working and accountability.

The [video recording](#) of the meeting, alongside the [agenda papers](#) and [minutes](#) provide a public record of the meeting.

The Commission would firstly like to place on record its thanks to the representatives of the Metropolitan Police Central East BCU, City & Hackney Public Health, Turning Point and Support When It Matters for their valuable contributions to the meeting.

The Commission would also like to thank Councillor Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services and Councillor Chris Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture for their ongoing engagement with the scrutiny process.

The Commission saw the discussion as timely given that Hackney has been involved in Project ADDER over the last few years, which has impacted on the policing of drug use and the pathways that exist between the criminal justice system and community substance use treatment.

It was also seen as timely given the Government's white paper on tougher consequences for the possession of drugs, which if successful and becomes law

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carries the risk of further marginalising vulnerable residents and the over policing of vulnerable communities.

On the evidence provided and through consultation with officers, members of the Commission have made five recommendations. It is hoped that these will contribute further to the positive work that is already taking place across the partnership.

Yours sincerely

**Councillor Soraya Adejare**  
Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny  
Commission

**Councillor Clare Joseph**  
Vice Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny  
Commission

Cc:

- Councillor Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services
- Councillor Chris Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture
- Aled Richards, Strategic Director Sustainability and Public Realm
- Dr Sandra Husbands, Director City & Hackney Public Health
- Gerry McCarthy, Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulations
- Jason Davis, Strategic Lead Cohesion and Resilience
- Ben Bradley, Head of Mayor and Cabinet Office
- Lucy Cobb, Head of the Chief Executive's Office

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## Recommendations of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

The Commission were pleased to hear about the encouraging work being undertaken locally through Project ADDER, which has provided additional resources for the local police to tackle the supply of drugs, whilst also working in partnership with treatment and recovery services to reduce the harms of drug use.

The Commission strongly supports an approach that provides coordinated support alongside enforcement action to ensure that individuals presenting with support needs arising from drug use are directed into treatment rather than further or disproportionate criminalisation.

The Commission heard about the new approach to local scrutiny and engagement which is currently being developed locally through the Hackney Local Policing Scrutiny Panel Pilot. Ongoing work alongside the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) to build a more inclusive, representative and effective system of community oversight in Hackney is both encouraging and welcomed.

Although not the primary focus of the meeting, the Commission also heard about the positive work being undertaken in partnership across Hackney since the Child Q incident to address concerns around safeguarding policies and practices, organisational cultures, adultification, trust and confidence and community engagement. Progress across the partnership response will continue to be followed up separately through the [Child Q Special Joint Scrutiny Commission](#).

Having said this, there are some areas that the Commission would like to seek further reassurance from the Community Safety Partnership and MOPAC on, namely around the formal partnership, governance and monitoring arrangements in place in Hackney and the progress made against the key strategic priorities identified within the 2019-22 Community Safety Plan.

The Commission feels a clear and visible strategic and coordinated approach to tackling the supply of drugs and ensuring appropriate support for those that need it, coupled with greater transparency and accountability for the delivery of strategic priorities, is fundamental to the local approach and restoring trust and confidence in local policing.

The Commission would welcome a response to the recommendations by **Friday 11th August 2023**.

- 1) The Community Safety Partnership publicly commits to an approach to the policing of drug use which seeks to prioritise diversion and timely access to drug

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treatment and support rather than criminalisation beyond the lifespan of Project ADDER.

- 2) The Community Safety Partnership gives assurance, through relevant outcomes and key performance indicators, that clear progress has been made against its On Street Drug Markets and Substance Misuse strategic priority for 2019-22.
- 3) The Community Safety Partnership develops and shares an updated Governance Map and Terms of Reference, which outlines its membership, key responsibilities and relationships with newly formed community safety structures such as the Local Policing Scrutiny Panel and Combating Drugs Partnership.
- 4) MOPAC outlines the roles, responsibilities and membership of Hackney's Local Policing Scrutiny Panel Pilot, as well as how it will be funded, how success will be monitored and how it will differ from previous engagement structures such as the Safer Neighbourhoods Board.
- 5) MOPAC gives assurance that Hackney's Local Policing Scrutiny Panel Pilot:
  - a) is well resourced and supported across the local partnership;
  - b) prioritises the representation of Hackney's diverse communities, particularly those who are disproportionately affected by the use of police powers;
  - c) ensures that young people in particular are supported to engage with its work and that their insight is fed in consistently.