

MDA No.: 1296

Title: PCC Annual Report 2020/21

1. Executive Summary

1.1 At the Police and Crime Committee (PCC) meeting on 9 June 2021, the Committee resolved that:

Authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with the Deputy Chairman and party Group Lead Members, to agree an Annual Report summarising the work of the Committee over the past year.

1.2 Following consultation with the Deputy Chairman and party Group Lead Members, the Chairman is asked to agree the PCC's Annual Report for the 2020/21 Assembly year, as attached at **Appendix 1.**

2. Decision

3.1 **That the Police and Crime Committee's Annual Report for the 2020/21 Assembly year, be agreed.**

Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature: 

Printed Name: Shaun Bailey AM, Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

Date: 7/7/2021

3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 This Annual Report covers the Police and Crime Committee's work over the 2020/21 Assembly year when Unmesh Desai AM was Chair of the Committee.
- 3.2 The exercise of delegated authority agreeing the Committee's Annual Report will be formally noted at the Committee's next appropriate meeting.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): L. Harvey

Printed Name: Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer

Date: 01/07/2021

Telephone Number: 020 7983 4383

Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

Signature (Finance): Not Required


Printed Name:

Date:

Telephone Number:

Legal Implications:

The Chair of the London Assembly has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer

Date: 05/07/2021

Telephone Number: 020 7983 6550

Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman)
- Unmesh Desai AM
- Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
- Caroline Russell AM

4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.
- 4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If yes, until what date:

Part 2 – Sensitive Information:

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

Lead Officer / Author

Signature: J Roker

Printed Name: Janette Roker

Job Title: Senior Policy Adviser

Date: 01/07/2021

Telephone Number: 020 7983 6562

Countersigned by Executive Director:

Signature: *Joanna Davidson*

Printed Name: Joanna Davidson, Interim Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 6 July 2021

Telephone Number: 07813 796175

LONDON ASSEMBLY

Work of the Police and Crime Committee in 2020-21



July 2021

Holding the Mayor to
account and investigating
issues that matter to
Londoners

LONDONASSEMBLY

The London Assembly

The London Assembly is a crucial check on the powers of the Mayor of London. As the most powerful directly-elected politician in the UK, it is important the Mayor is held publicly and democratically accountable.

The Assembly examines the decisions and actions of the Mayor to ensure promises to Londoners are delivered and the money he spends, collected from Londoners, is wisely spent.

The 25 London **Assembly Members** are elected every four years at the same time as the Mayor of London. The Assembly holds the Mayor and Mayoral advisers to account by publicly examining policies and programmes. In addition, the Assembly questions the Mayor ten times a year at Mayor's Question Time.

Assembly meetings are open to the public, so Londoners can stay informed about the activities of the Mayor and the Assembly can publicly review their performance.

As well as examining the Mayor's actions and decisions, Assembly Members act as champions for Londoners by investigating issues that are important to the capital. The Assembly can advance or press for changes to mayoral or national policy.

The Police and Crime Committee

The **London Assembly Police and Crime Committee** is a cross-party body. In 2020-21 it was chaired by Labour Assembly Member Unmesh Desai.

We examine the work of the Mayor and his Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), to make sure that he is delivering on the promises made to Londoners in his Police and Crime Plan. We also investigate other issues relating to policing and crime in the capital.

Our work usually involves a range of activities, including meetings with MOPAC, the Metropolitan Police and other organisations; site visits; written consultations; and roundtable meetings.

As a result of COVID-19, we have focused our work on monthly Question and Answer (Q&A) sessions. The sessions include a representative from MOPAC—normally the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime—and a representative from the Metropolitan Police looking into current issues and finding out what they are doing to keep Londoners safe.

We routinely publish the findings and recommendations of our scrutiny work, including the responses we receive to our letters and reports from the Mayor and the Met. These can be found on our [publications page](#).

Your Police and Crime Committee

Members this year were



Unmesh Desai AM

Chair of the Police and Crime Committee 2020-21



I am pleased to introduce the 2020-21 Annual Report of the Police and Crime Committee, in what marked my second year as Chair of the Committee.

I would like to start by thanking the outgoing members of the Committee for their diligence and hard work during their time on the Committee. In particular, Jennette Arnold OBE, previously Chair of the Met Police Authority, and Steve O’Connell, who preceded me as Chair of this Committee.

The events of the last year, brought on by COVID-19, have presented unprecedented challenges for London, particularly for policing and crime in the capital. We have seen a range of issues over the last year, from a rise in domestic abuse to the enforcement of emergency pandemic legislation and the policing of major events.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has therefore rightly dominated the work of the Police and Crime Committee. We have examined issues that have emerged, or have been exacerbated by the pandemic, and scrutinised MOPAC and the Met’s response.

Over the last year, the Committee has continued its important scrutiny work through monthly Question and Answer sessions with MOPAC and the Met, where we have held to account senior officials and the Mayor on policing and crime.

This work included a strong focus on investigating the disproportionate policing of London's Black communities, in wake of a significant increase in stop and search activity by the Met at the beginning of the pandemic. Recently, we also questioned the Deputy Commissioner on the Met's policing of a vigil that followed the tragic death of Sarah Everard.

We also continued with important work in scrutinising how MOPAC and the Met are working to help protect the victims of Domestic Abuse and Hate Crimes, issues which have sadly seen significant spikes during the course of the pandemic, whilst we have of course maintained a focus on the Met's work in tackling violence across the capital.

Over a year since the start of the pandemic, COVID-19 is likely to remain a dominant feature of the Committee's work going forward. As London begins to recover from the pandemic, we will be monitoring carefully how MOPAC and the Met continue to grapple with emerging issues over the next year.

I would like to thank everyone that has supported the Committee's work over the last year.

Unmesh Desai AM
Chair, Police and Crime Committee

What we have done this year



Initial response to COVID-19

- In June 2020, we met the Met Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to discuss their initial responses to COVID-19. As part of the meeting, we questioned the guests on relevant issues that had emerged, or had been exacerbated by the pandemic, such as the supply and distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), the appropriateness of bail conditions, the condition and suitability of custody suites and police staffing resources.
- Following the meeting, we [wrote](#) to the Met Commissioner about the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) relating to breaches of COVID-19 emergency legislation. In parallel, we [wrote](#) to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to ask what further action would be taken to reduce the court backlog in London.

Disproportionality

- Following the tragic murder of George Floyd and the growth of the Black Lives Matter movement around the world, in July 2020 we questioned the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the Met's Deputy Commissioner on disproportionality and the policing of protests. We also met with the Met Police Federation and the Met Superintendents Association to discuss policing in London during the pandemic.
- In January 2021, following its publication, we questioned the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the Met's Deputy Commissioner on the Mayor's new transparency, accountability and trust in policing action plan. Specifically, we scrutinised the actions contained within the plan and the membership of the board overseeing the work.

Rape and Sexual Assault

- In September 2020, we held a Question and Answer session with London's Victims Commissioner and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to discuss the multi-agency response to rape and sexual assault incidents.
- As a result of the meeting, we [wrote](#) to the Secretary of State for Justice and called on the Government to take specific actions to reduce court delays, such as rolling out Perspex screens in all courts and mitigating the impact of lost evidence in rape trials.

Custody and Police Protection

- In October 2020, we met the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and one of the Met's Assistant Commissioner to discuss the safety of London's police officers and custody centres following the death of Sergeant Ratana in Croydon and a rise in assaults on emergency workers.



Trust and confidence in policing

- Trust and confidence in the Met Police has been a significant theme of the events of the last year, both for the Committee and for London. In November 2020, we questioned the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the Met Commissioner on the action they were taking to improve public perception of policing in London. Specifically, we explored issues relating to the findings of the Independent Office for Police Complaints (IOPC) on public confidence in the Met's use of stop and search powers. This included the disproportionate impact on Londoners from

Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

- In March 2021, following the policing of the Sarah Everard vigil, we wrote to the Met Commissioner to ask what steps were being taken to the confidence of women in London, as well as plans to increase the number of police officers assigned to the Met's Predatory Offender Units. We also asked the Met what targets were in place for Basic Command Units (BSUs) on the use of Domestic Violence Prevention Orders and Notices.

Vaccinations for Police Officers

- In January 2021, we held a meeting with the Met and MOPAC to discuss the risks posed by the pandemic to the health of serving police officers. The Met's Deputy Commissioner confirmed that, at the time, five serving police officers and staff had died from COVID-19. Following the meeting, we [wrote](#) to the Vaccines Minister to urge the Government to prioritise frontline police officers in its vaccination programme.
- In parallel, we [wrote](#) to the Mayor to urge him to work with the Met to plan for the delivery of vaccinations to frontline officers in anticipation of vaccines being made available to them.



Unmesh Desai AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA
Tel: 020 7983 4000
www.london.gov.uk

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

25 January 2021

Dear Sadiq

Vaccinations for frontline police officers

I am writing to you on behalf of the Police and Crime Committee to highlight our cross-party view that there must be an urgency to get frontline police officers vaccinated. The Commissioner of the Met has called for frontline police officers to be prioritised under the Government's vaccination programme. Our Committee joins the Commissioner in her calls.

The Met is working hard on behalf of Londoners to enforce COVID-19 regulations to help keep Londoners and our city safe. This means that in order to do their jobs, frontline officers are coming into close contact with those who breach COVID-19 regulations. As we have seen from the recent events in Hackney and Knightsbridge, police officers must intervene and break up illegal gatherings, which sometimes means entering properties and putting frontline officers at high risk.

The Met's frontline officers are working tirelessly to keep Londoners safe and they deserve to be protected from COVID-19 while they are doing their duty to protect us. The Commissioner has said that she is "baffled" as to why frontline police officers are not being prioritised and has been

- In her [response](#), the Met Commissioner thanked the Committee for making representations to the Government.

Violence Reduction Unit

- In February 2021, we questioned the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Met Commissioner and

Director of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) on the impact of violent crime in London and the performance of the VRU. In particular, we explored how the VRU was responding to the impact of COVID-19, both in terms of its collaboration with other partners and its outcomes over the last year.

Mayor's Policing Priorities

- In March 2021, we reviewed the Mayor's policing priorities, five years on from the publication of the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan. We explored each of the themes (a safer London; a better police service; a better criminal justice system; keeping children and young people safe; tackling violence against women and girls; and standing together against hatred and intolerance) contained within the Plan.

Continuing previous Committee priorities

- We have continued to build on our 2019-20 major investigations by exploring further the issues associated with hate crime in London. In November 2020, we asked the MOPAC and the Met what changes had taken place to the way in which services responded to hate crime in the capital, including the impact of additional funding for the response, announced in 2019-20. The Deputy Mayor [responded](#) in January 2021.

COVID-19 Policing

Policing in London during COVID-19 has been an ongoing area of focus for the Committee during 2020-21, particularly the policing of large gatherings and the enforcement of COVID-19 regulations.

In the aftermath of disturbances across London during summer 2020, we [wrote](#) to the Mayor to urge him to take contingency steps in response to potential widespread public disorder in the capital. We called on the Mayor to undertake a rapid review of his emergency services to ensure they were in a position to be deployed quickly, safely and effectively.

In his [response](#), the Mayor asked the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement to work with the Met and London's communities to develop a renewed plan to build wider trust and confidence in policing. The Mayor also confirmed that there were significant processes in place across all of London's blue light services to test their readiness for future challenges.

In March 2021, we published a [letter](#) to the Met Commissioner which addressed the issues arising from the policing of the Sarah Everard vigil and the subsequent discussion at the Committee's March 2020 meeting.

At the meeting, we expressed our concern about some of the footage that emerged from the vigil that showed Met

officers pulling women out of the crowd as they made arrests. We also identified a key concern regarding the Met's engagement with the vigil organisers and its failure to agree on arrangements for a COVID-19 secure event.

In our letter, we called for:

- The Met Commissioner to take clear, accountable action to rebuild the confidence of women in London so that they can feel protected on the streets, and have the confidence to report abuse or violence to the Met in the knowledge that they receive a positive and supportive response;
- An increase in the number of police officers assigned to the Met's Predatory Offenders Unit and further information on the Met's aspirations for additional officers in these areas by the end of 2021-22;
- Greater consistency in the way in which the Met uses its powers to tackle domestic abuse; and
- Further information on the targets in place for BCUs use of Domestic Violence Prevention Orders and Notices.

Domestic Abuse

The Committee has maintained a focus on domestic abuse in London throughout 2020-21. Our [letter](#) to the Met Commissioner followed a meeting in September 2020, where we questioned the Met and MOPAC on their response to a rise in domestic abuse incidents in 2020.

We found:

- There has been an increase in domestic abuse in London in 2020, with the Met receiving an additional 11,416 reports of domestic abuse incidents in the year to September 2020, representing an eight per cent increase on the same period in 2019;
- Of the 102 homicides in London (as at October 2020), 16 had been flagged as domestic abuse – with 14 since March 2020 and compared to 13 in 2019;
- Domestic abuse incidents in December 2020 had risen by over a third over the past 10 years, with a concerning trend that cases are annually higher in December when compared to November and January; and
- Social media campaigns can be highly effective in targeting victims who do not report domestic abuse and such campaigns can have a positive impact on increasing reports of domestic abuse.



Unmesh Desai AM

Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

Cressida Dick DBE QPM

Commissioner

(Sent by email)

12 December 2020

Domestic Abuse and Christmas

Dear Commissioner,

Thank you for taking the time to appear before the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee on 11 November 2020. Our Committee is keen to pick up on some of the points you made during the meeting on domestic abuse incidents throughout COVID-19 and the rise in cases across the capital.

Our Committee welcomes the work that you, the Mayor and the Government have done in this area so far this year. Support for victims of domestic abuse is in high demand as people are spending more time in their homes than ever before. Reported domestic abuse incidents are at an all-time high this year and our Committee wants to ensure that more work is done to protect victims from suffering as we enter the Christmas period.

Christmas time is special for many people in London, but others worry about spending so much time at home, particularly if they live with an abusive partner or family member. Christmas this year is going to be different to any other year in recent memory, which is why we want to ensure that the Met has a plan in place to respond to a possible increase in domestic abuse incidents over the coming weeks.

With Christmas approaching, we wrote to the Met Commissioner to ask for further information in the following areas:

- The number of Predatory Offender Units (POUs) currently operational, the timescale for rollout of additional POUs and the framework to measure their effectiveness over December and the New Year period;
- The Met's use of social media to encourage victims of domestic abuse to come forward and report, plus the Met's consideration of providing additional resources to use social media to promote support for victims over Christmas; and
- Details of the £3.7 million funding announced to support the Met to protect victims of domestic abuse.

In her [response](#), the Met Commissioner confirmed the resourcing and allocation of POUs across London, including the specific actions they will take to target the most prolific offenders. The Commissioner also confirmed the Met's intention to use additional funding to deliver a training plan, known as 'Domestic Abuse Matters', for 10,000 frontline officers in 2021. In addition, it was indicated that each BCU now has a dedicated Domestic Abuse Tactical Plan in place to adopt a 'whole Met' approach to tackling domestic abuse in the capital.

Rape and Sexual Assault

The Committee has had a long-standing interest in the issues associated with rape and sexual assault in London.

In October 2020, we published a [letter](#) which called on the Government to take a number of steps to improve the way in which rape and sexual assault cases are dealt with in the criminal justice system.

The letter was informed by the Committee's September 2020 meeting with the Met Police, CPS, MOPAC and the Victims Commissioner for London. At the meeting, we found:

- There had been an increase in the time taken for cases to be charged by the police and CPS;
- Rape prosecutions had fallen to their lowest level since records began, despite rising reports of rape;
- The average time for a report of rape to be charged is the longest of any crime type; and
- A lack of Perspex screens in court is causing further delays to rape trials. For example, one rape survivor, who had waited over two years to get to court, was faced with further delay as the courts had not been equipped with Perspex screens.

It had subsequently been reported that evidence lost by the police is increasing the likelihood of collapsed trials, including rape cases.

We [called](#) on the Justice Secretary to take swift action to address the concerns identified and to provide the Committee with a progress update. In addition, we asked the Government to provide more information on the steps it is taking to work with partners across the criminal justice system to mitigate the impact of lost evidence and prevent the potential for trials to collapse.

In his [response](#), the Justice Secretary confirmed that the Government is carrying out an end-to-end review of the criminal justice system response to rape. It was also confirmed that circa £153 million is being invested in court and tribunal buildings, including plexiglass in over 300 court rooms and the opening of Nightingale courts. Specifically, in response to concerns around lost evidence in rape trials, the Government indicated that work was being accelerated to increase the availability of Section 28 service, which provides the option to pre-record evidence in advance of a trial for vulnerable complainants of a crime, as well as witnesses.

Question and Answer sessions

Throughout 2020-21, we have scrutinised the Met and MOPAC at monthly Question and Answer sessions.



This year, we discussed over 40 different topics at Q&A meetings. These are just some examples:

- Policing response to COVID-19
- Domestic and child abuse
- Policing of protests
- Radicalisation during lockdown
- Rape and sexual offences

- Unlicensed music events
- County lines
- Violent crime and the VRU
- Custody and police protection
- Violence against women and girls
- Stop and search
- Court backlog
- Release Under Investigation (RUI)



Visits and other meetings

- In June 2020, the Committee participated in a virtual briefing with MOPAC on the development of the Mayor's plan to improve trust and confidence in policing.
- In August 2020, the Committee participated in a virtual informal briefing with the Met on policing over the August bank holiday weekend.
- In October 2020, the Met's Roads and Transport Policing Command (RTPC) provided an informal briefing on its work to the Committee.
- In November 2020, the Committee virtually met the Independent Office of Police Conduct to discuss its findings in relation to the Met's use of stop and search.
- In November 2020, the London School of Economics held a virtual briefing with the Committee to provide an overview of its research that explored the changing nature of domestic abuse and how AI and data can be used to identify and prevent incidents.
- In February 2021, jointly with the Housing Committee, the Committee held an informal briefing with Safe Homes for Women Leaving Prison. The session identified issues for women who are discharged from prison without suitable accommodation, which hinders their resettlement.

- In March 2021, the Committee held an informal briefing with Sara Khan, the Lead Commissioner for Countering Hateful Extremism. At the meeting, the Committee discussed the findings of a legal review by Sir Mark Rowley, former head of UK Counter Terrorism policing. The report made recommendations to the Government for new legislation to deal with hateful extremism.
- In March 2021, British Transport Police held an informal briefing on its participation in a joint operation to tackle County Lines gangs.

Our work for 2021-22

2021-22 marks the beginning of a new Assembly term. We will continue to hold the Mayor to account for his commitments, including the development of a new Police and Crime Plan for London, and examining the issues that matter to Londoners.

We will also continue our regular examination of MOPAC and the Met through our Q&A meetings, looking at topics relevant to policing and crime in London.



Elsewhere in the London Assembly

The Assembly has agreed statements put forward by individual Assembly members which relate to policing and crime. These include:

Unconscious Bias Training

The Assembly called on the Mayor to ensure that the all Met employees undertake unconscious bias training and undertake refresher courses at least every two years.

Police Funding

The Assembly called on the Mayor and Chair of the Assembly to write jointly to the Home Secretary to ensure that the Government keeps its promise to do whatever is necessary to support public services to deal with the impact of COVID-19. The motion also committed to requesting a full reimbursement of any lost income arising from lower than expected council tax or business rates intake as a result of the pandemic.

In a subsequent meeting, the Assembly called on the Mayor and Assembly Chair to write to the Home Secretary expressing their support for the Met Commissioner's request for 6,000 additional police officers by 2023 and to seek a timeline for the delivery of this pledge.

Support for Retired Police Officers

The Assembly called on the Mayor and the Met to review the support given to retired police officers and to return to the Assembly with a plan detailing the action being taken.

More generally, the Assembly committed to working towards eradicating the stigma associated with speaking about mental health and wellbeing in London, to ensure that all Londoners are able to discuss their mental health without fear of repercussions.

Attacks on Shop Workers

Following research that showed the volume of threats, abuse and assaults on shop workers had more than doubled since 2019, exacerbated during the pandemic, the Assembly raised concerns with the Government's attempt to block new legislation.

The Assembly called on the Mayor to write to the Home Secretary to urge the Government to introduce legislation that would create a specific offence of threatening, abusing



or assaulting a shop worker.


Police Officer Safety

Following the tragic killing of Sergeant Matt Ratana, the Assembly urged the Mayor to work with the Met Commissioner to ensure that all practical measures are put in place to ensure the safety of police officers.

European Security Cooperation

In response to the Government's ongoing Brexit negotiations, the Assembly noted the importance of security arrangements with EU member states, including the important role of the European Arrest Warrant, ECRIS database, Schengen Information System and other tools. The Assembly asked the Assembly Chair to write to the Home Secretary and call on the Government either to reach an agreement with the EU to maintain the currently level of security cooperation or provide urgent reassurance that adequate contingency measures are in place should an agreement not be reached.

How can I get involved in the Committee's work?

- Contribute to our investigations. Details on our current work can be found on the [Police and Crime Committee webpage](#).
- Get in touch with us via policeandcrimecommittee@london.gov.uk.
- Raise issues of concern with [Assembly Members directly](#).
- Tweet us [@LondonAssembly](#) and follow Committee Twitter conversations with #AssemblyPolice. 
- [Watch our meetings live](#) from your computer, mobile or tablet.



Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA
Enquiries 020 7983 4100
Minicom 020 7983 4458
www.london.gov.uk