

Police and Crime Committee – actions from 3 June Q&A

- 1) On the 3 June 2020, the Met Police published data on COVID-19 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued by the Met between 27 March 2020 and 15 May 2020. The data showed that the breakdown of FPNs for Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners was almost 50 per cent higher than white Londoners when compared to the share of London's population. The Committee did not have the chance to review this data before the scheduled Police and Crime Committee meeting on 3 June 2020. We are therefore writing to you now to ask for some further information. On the data for FPNs, the Met included a breakdown of the areas where FPNs were issued but did not publish the same breakdown for where arrests were made. Please can you send the Committee an update on arrests and where those took place?**

Answer:

Due to overall FPN and arrest numbers being so low this was the first detailed analysis that we have been able to undertake, looking at data over an almost two month period to understand the trends. The volume of arrests for the period covered by the report, 27 March 2020 – 15 May 2020 was very low (36 arrests in total for breaches of Covid legislation where no other criminality was a factor).

The way in which arrest data is recorded means that it is difficult to differentiate consistently the location of arrest from the Custody suite to which the arrested person was taken. This, along with the same sample size, means that we will not publish arrest location data.

In total, from 27 March, there were 89 arrests relating purely to Covid legislation breaches (the last occurring on 1 June) and 838 arrests where an individual has been arrested for a criminal offence and then also arrested for a breach of Covid-19 legislation.

The MPS has adopted a proportionate approach to the enforcement of breaches of the Covid-19 legislation from the outset. Our officers have set out to Engage, Explain and then Encourage people to adhere to the regulations. It is only when this approach has been unsuccessful that Enforcement has been necessary. This approach explains why such a low number of FPNs, and an even lower number of arrests for a breach of the regulations alone, have been seen in comparison to the approximate nine million population of London. Alongside this approach, the MPS has implemented a rigorous quality assurance process to monitor the use of FPNs and to ensure they were issued appropriately and correctly.

Whilst the volume of FPNs and arrests across London has varied from area to area, we have seen a general correlation against the locations which were priority areas for policing, such as high violence areas. It is of note that during this period we have undertaken significant proactive policing activity targeting violence, drugs, robbery, domestic abuse, speeding and other offences to keep communities safe. In the early part of lockdown, when the regulations were new and coincided with high temperatures, more enforcement was necessary. For both FPNs and arrests, young men make up the biggest offending group. In total, more white people received FPNs or were arrested than other individual ethnic groups. However, when compared with the composition of the resident population, higher proportions of those in black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups were overall issued with FPNs or arrested across London as a whole.

The reasons for this are likely to be complex and reflect a range of factors. This includes interactions between the areas subject to significant proactive policing activity targeting

crime hot-spots and both the variation in the age-profile and geographical distribution of ethnic groups in London.

A further detailed report will be released in the next financial year.

2) In March 2019, it was confirmed that 17,000 Met police officers had received training in unconscious bias. Given the news that there are now 32,000 police officers in the Met, can you please send the Committee a breakdown of the percentage of the Met's workforce who are yet to receive this training, details of the plan in place to roll out unconscious bias training for all officers and Met employees on the frontline and how frequently officers are required to undertake refresher training on unconscious bias.

Answer:

The Metropolitan Police Service is committed to ensuring that unconscious bias training is an integral part of officer and staff development.

Since March 2019, a further 7,000 more officers and staff received training on unconscious bias.

The subject is taught to officers at various stages of their career: as part of recruitment training, during mandatory professional development and as a requisite for some specific roles.

The training of officers and staff is a continuous process and does not have an anticipated completion date. Furthermore, the workforce itself is not static - unconscious bias training is delivered to all newly recruited Police Constables, Detective Constables, Special Constables, Police Community Support Officers, Dedicated Detention Officers, Public Access Officers and volunteers.

The frequency of refresher or additional training is dependent on the role that officers perform and their career path. Those in detective training, safeguarding, Senior Investigating Officers or those on the Leadership and Promotion programme receive additional input.

All officers and staff also have access to LinkedIn Learning which includes content on Race and Law Enforcement.