

### **Response to MOPAC consultation**

The London Borough of Newham (LBN) welcomes the opportunity to contribute its views to the Mayor of London's draft Policing and Crime Plan. We have also responded to the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee investigation into these plans.

Our views are on the main elements being consulted on, the draft Police and Crime Plan incorporating the 20.20.20 challenge to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) as well as the MOPAC's Estate Strategy are stated below.

#### ***Draft Police and Crime Plan:***

Although the overall requirement for the plan is set out in law, it is unclear what form of strategic assessment has been undertaken to justify the measures it contains.

When local authorities produce a local crime reduction plan, it must be informed by a strategic assessment and public consultation. It would therefore seem logical that a pan-London plan should make similar use of intelligence to identify key areas of need within the capital. In the introduction to the draft plan we are told "The content of the Police & Crime Plan is informed by the best evidence around effective crime reduction and the strategy is built upon clear objectives to be achieved" but no mention is made of the analytical process undertaken to arrive at the priority areas outlined. This is the first time in a number of years the capital has had a crime reduction plan and the level and type of crime has changed significantly; LBN is of the view that this is an ideal opportunity to take stock of the changing crime and disorder landscape in London and address the issues accordingly.

The 20:20:20 Challenge appears to be at the core of the draft strategy. The 20% improvements in crime, confidence and costs form a challenging mandate in an extremely challenging public sector environment. LBN welcomes an aspirational focus on tackling crime which, despite effective partnership work between LBN and the Metropolitan Police remains a core priority for local people. However, it is our view that if the Mayor and Metropolitan Police make a commitment of this kind it must be deliverable. Promising undeliverable reductions in crime may in itself destabilise public confidence further.

London wide analysis would reveal crime patterns over the last 3-5 years and give a far better indication of what is realistically achievable. The subsequent 20:20:20 relating to criminal justice agencies is of significant concern, particularly in relation to the ability to deliver the outlined improved compliance with community sentences and reducing youth re-offending post custody. Whilst LBN is supportive of these goals, the current proposals to overhaul the probation system are, due to implementation timescales, likely to make any significant impact on compliance very difficult should they come to fruition in the short to medium term. Newham's Youth Offending Team works extremely hard to ensure that, despite having one of the largest caseloads in London, we maintain a re-offending average on a par with the

London average. A further 20% reduction on re-offending for those leaving custody would be an unrealistic expectation in our view, without increased resourcing, although we maintain a commitment to continually reduce re-offending.

With regard to simple packaging, we feel the use of the '20:20:20' strap line is conspicuously homogeneous, and naturally invites scrutiny of how the targets were arrived at.

In general, the draft plan remains silent on how the target driven approach sits with other government agencies - in particular the Youth Justice Board, HM Courts & Tribunals Service and National Probation Trust. LBN would ask that we receive confirmation that local areas will not be held to different sets of targets by different government agencies.

In terms of the priorities outlined, LBN feels the specific themed areas set out in the plan fit well with our local priorities, and those of a number of other East London boroughs. The recognition that gangs, terrorism, violence against women and girls, tackling the consequences of substance misuse, and improving sentencing outcomes, all require a specific and tailored local focus is welcome. However, it is important that the core MOPAC strategies are developed in line with local authorities to ensure the central approach is harmonised with wider community approaches. Any centrally imposed approach to gangs or the PREVENT programme will not be welcome or effective.

The strategy appears to put the previously familiar issues of volume crime on the same footing as the less well understood crime types and drivers. The prevalence of young people and women in Newham's violent crime figures provide more than sufficient evidence that greater emphasis, and greater resources are needed to continue to tackle the issues effectively. We have made an excellent start in restructuring how we provide support to women experiencing domestic violence but require further investment, such as a better resourced drop in facilities, to drive further improvements.

Through the Home Office's Ending Gang and Youth Violence funding stream we have built a strong programme of support for vulnerable young people but urgently require continuation funding, with fewer constraints, to ensure we can deliver the required approach. We look forward to working with MOPAC more closely on these, and other areas, once confirmation is received on funding criteria.

A significant area overlooked by the draft plan is the role of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This is particularly significant given the Community Safety Fund will be merged with the main policing grant in 2014/15. The plan states that MOPAC will 'gain more responsibility for crime reduction in the capital and to control more of the funding provided for public safety in London'. It is not clear what the impact on CSPs will be as a result and how this fits into the localism agenda.

The draft Plan will also present difficulties for CSPs to make proposals/bids to reduce crime and disorder for their boroughs as it is very vague. Additionally, a number of specific strategies are yet to be written by MOPAC in the forthcoming year, e.g. Violence Against Women and Girls, Alcohol and Drugs, which would enable boroughs to have a greater understanding of the Mayor's intentions and aspirations to address these issues. Whilst we welcome these s priorities, the publication dates for these will be later in the year and so without this detail, it is difficult for boroughs to provide informed bids or prioritise their own resources in the meantime without knowing the direction MOPAC plan to take on each issue. MOPAC state intentions of pan-London work such as commissioning a Domestic Violence Service, Director of Integrated Offender Management, Female Genital Mutilation taskforce and strategic licensing function. We would reiterate that details need to be publicised in good time to ensure boroughs can adequately prepare their bids for Community Safety Funding the next four years.

### ***Mayor's Estate Strategy***

LBN is very disappointed that MOPAC have earmarked two out five of our police stations for closure. Alongside the separately earmarked closure of Silvertown Fire Station, the closure of North Woolwich and Stratford Police Stations leaves Newham with a reduced emergency services offer and the borough has written to the Mayor of London direct to seek assurances on these issues.

Whilst we fully understand the reasoning behind "bobbies before buildings" we have not received sufficient reassurance that the proposals will not have a negative impact on local policing overall. There has been no assessment of the impact of these closures on emergency response rates or police presence within those areas, although we have requested this information from local partners.

Both the Royal Docks and Stratford are earmarked as significant growth areas and this must be factored into any decisions. For example in Stratford, where population is already dense and where we are expecting a significant growth in both business and population as a result of the opening of the Athletes Village for residents, the full operation of the Olympic Park and development of the wider E20 area. Also in the Royal Docks, which is one of the largest regeneration locations in London with over 250 hectares of developable brownfield land and more than 10,000 consented new homes, it is vital that this landmark new community for London has appropriate policing resources and in this context, the closure of a police station in such a key area is deeply concerning.

LBN is aware that the borough is set to receive 71 new police officers by 2015 and we welcome this. However, it is important to note that we have already lost 46 police officers since 2010 as result of cuts so the number of additional officers does not seem as significant as might first appear. During a community event in Newham in August 2012, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner said that resources would be allocated across London according to evidential formula taking into account the population and actual crime figures in an area. We would greatly welcome this

method of calculation as we know this is not the way resources are currently being allocated.

For example, if resources are to be based on actual crime figures and population, then a place like Newham, where the population is 308,000 (Census 2011) and just under 33,000 crimes reported last year alone (Met Police, 2012), should have significantly more resources compared to a borough like Richmond who have a population of just 187,000 and a total of just under 12,000 reported crimes in 2012. However, Newham are facing 2 closures in comparison to Richmond who face no closures.

We would therefore urge the Mayor to assess how resources are allocated and to ask him to carry out assessments of the impact on police presence in local communities and emergency response rates to inform decisions about the total policing resources.