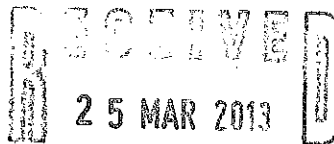


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Joanne McCartney AM

Chair
Police and Crime Committee
London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA

Our ref:

Date: 25 March 2013

Dear Joanne

Police and Crime Plan 2013-17

It gives me great pleasure to enclose a copy of my first Police and Crime Plan. This Plan sets out my ambitious targets for cutting crime, boosting public confidence in the police and bearing down on costs. In addition, it challenges my community safety and criminal justice partners to drive improvement, so that Londoners are kept safe.

The Plan is the result of extensive consultation with Londoners and with partners. You will see from the attached plan that I listened to their views. In arriving at final decisions, I have had to balance a series of competing priorities, as well as respecting the views of my partners and of Londoners and needing to make some difficult strategic choices, in order to deliver the police service that Londoners deserve. The other challenge has been to ensure the balance of priorities is right. As you note in your report, "by definition, a high level strategy will not include details about dealing with every crime type".

I have considered the report of the Police and Crime Committee (PCC). You will see from the attached Plan that I have made some changes as a result of the consultation exercise. I welcome the indication in your letter that you will be using my plan as the foundation for the Police and Crime Committee's work programme. I look forward to some constructive engagement with the Committee over the next three years.

There are a number of issues you raise in your letter that I would like to address:

Setting targets

I believe the targets set in the Plan are stretching but achievable. To cut crime and boost public confidence in the police is exactly what Londoners deserve – it cannot be right that the MPS has some of the worst victim satisfaction figures in the country.

There is consideration in your report of the risks around setting targets and it is for that reason, I have chosen to not to be overly prescriptive about interim targets. I believe it is my role to set the outcome I am seeking, and to challenge the Commissioner and others to deliver by 2016. I will of course be monitoring progress on a regular basis, as set out in the Plan and would be more than happy to provide regular updates to the PCC.

Whilst recognising the challenges of setting targets and the potential to create perverse incentives, you appear to raise concerns that I have not set targets in key areas such as sexual violence and gangs. It goes without saying that these issues remain high priorities for me. I am committed to revising my Violence against Women and Girls Strategy during 2013 and the LCRB, which I chair, has recently published its Anti-Gangs Strategy – the first pan-London strategy of its kind.

Within the Plan I have committed to develop a performance monitoring framework that will allow me to hold the Commissioner to account across all crime types, and to identify emerging issues that may require extra scrutiny.

Neighbourhood policing and borough allocations

There is no doubt that neighbourhood policing must remain the bedrock of local policing. It was clear at the consultation events that Londoners value the neighbourhood model. However, it is also clear that in a climate of scarce resources, the Commissioner and I need to be reassured that the resources available are being used in the most efficient and effective way.

This has resulted in a redesign of local policing and a fundamental review of the allocation of resources across boroughs to ensure resources are sufficient to meet changing demographics and crime trends, whilst making neighbourhood teams more visible, accessible and accountable. Two of the boroughs that have received the largest increases in officers (Croydon and Waltham Forest) are boroughs where demand has changed significantly since the MPA's Resource Allocation Formula was last applied.

In respect of the changes to borough allocations, the MPS used a demand and resource model to set the police officer posts for each of the main service functions within a borough. This drew on learning from other forces, used both quantitative and qualitative data and was tested with independent experts. Current call demand for emergency calls and local factors such as average travelling time, abstraction rates and decisions about single and double crewing at a local level, as well as consideration of the need for additional capacity for patrol and resilience, provided the basis for the modelling of the Emergency Response and Patrol Teams.

Two PCs were provided for every ward (one to be named and dedicated, the other to work more flexibly across the Local Policing Area). Additional officers were allocated to Boroughs for Safer Neighbourhood Teams based on demand and risk factors (for example crime levels, confidence and satisfaction levels and demanding venues). This weighting was used to allocate resources for Borough Tasking Teams and other proactive functions. Investigation resources were based on volume, type, complexity and harm factors of a borough's investigations. Any funded posts are additional to the demand modelling.

In your letter you request that within six months of implementation of the model, I provide you with an update of impact. It is anticipated that implementation will be complete by October 2013, so I suggest that I report back to you in March 2014. You may wish to consider whether six months will be sufficient time to demonstrate the impact you outline in your letter, given the time required to collect and analyse the data required to make sensible enquiries.

Public Access

I would hope that the Committee recognises that the proposals set out in my Plan in respect of public access represent much more than a front counter closure programme. Both the Commissioner and I recognise that in order to boost confidence in the police, the MPS needs to overhaul the way in which it deals with Londoners and particularly with victims of crime.

Any decisions about front counter closures need to be seen in the round – as part of a wider commitment to offer all victims of crime a home visit (or a visit at a place that is convenient to them), to have neighbourhood officers available for longer into the evenings and at weekends, to improve on-line reporting and to create innovative contact points in public buildings e.g. libraries and hospitals.

The decision to close some front counters and to reduce the opening hours at others is recognition of the choices Londoners have already made – footfall at front counters is significantly lower than it was; fewer than 50 crimes are night a reported at a front counter. It is also in recognition that the MPS has an ageing and decaying estate that is no longer fit for purpose. Many stations do not meet basic accessibility requirements. It is my view that reducing the number and reinvesting in the remainder is the right strategic choice for London.

During the consultation, it became clear that one of the concerns associated with the closures I proposed, was the impact this might have on deployment. In the borough maps being published alongside my Plan, deployment bases will be identified as a means of allaying such concerns and to reassure Londoners about police presence in their borough.

Stop and Search

I agree with your comments that Stop and Search is a key issue for Londoners and the final Plan includes more detail on what MOPAC will do to improve confidence that police powers in this area are being used responsibly. Key to this will be oversight of the MPS's STOP IT programme which has a renewed emphasis on professionalism and supervision.

Recruitment, Retention and Promotion

You will note in the final version in the Plan that I remain committed to improving the diversity of the MPS as well as ensuring there is comprehensive oversight of the implementation of the MPS People Strategy as well as the Commissioner's Total Professionalism programme.

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Funding

The London Crime Prevention Fund was launched in February and the bidding process is nearing its conclusion. London Councils have been fully engaged in the process and decisions will be announced before Easter.

As noted above, I am pleased that you will be using my Plan as a basis for your forthcoming work programme. I look forward to engaging with you in a meaningful way that brings about real change to improve public safety in London.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Boris Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

Cc Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, Commissioner of the MPS