

London VAWG Board meeting minutes - 6 June 2022

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Board and advisors

Present

Diana Luchford - Chair – MOPAC

Jain Lemom – MOPAC

Michael Taylor – MOPAC

Andrea Simon – EVAW

Baljit Banga - Imkaan

Carol London-Baptiste - VRU

Chloe Collins – NHS

Chris Thorne – HMCTS

Diane Egan - London Heads of Community Safety

Jane Connors – MPS

Jane Garvan – MPS

Katie Nash – HMPPS

Kevin Southworth - MPS

Kris Venkatasami - CPS

Niki Scordi - Advance

Rachel Buttrick – London Councils

Viv Hayes - WRC

Apologies

Clive Grimshaw - London Councils

Joanne Towens - HMCTS

1. Welcome

The Board was welcomed to the meeting.

2. Minutes and actions from previous meeting, 7 March 2022

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed; all actions are completed or are being covered in this meeting.

3. Update on MPS VAWG Action Plan

The Board received updates on recent activities and successes of the MPS VAWG Action Plan. Operation Rainier reviewed allegations of MPS officers/staff committing sexual misconduct and domestic abuse; the report will be published shortly, and findings will be shared in due course. This included a review of the vetting history of alleged perpetrators, which found that the MPS is meeting the national policy. However, the MPS is also amending its own vetting processes.

A dip sample of 99 cases over the last 10 years found that 75 per cent were of a good standard, in the thoroughness of the investigation and support for the alleged victims. There was only 1 case where additional risk management was required and remedial action is being taken. The benchmark was based upon national police policy and advice from the DPS.

The DPS has a new Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences (DASO) unit to review arising complains and identify best practice for investigations, and also rapidly develops case evidence packages to process the cases to court and conclude them efficiently. Operation Sigma, for internally reporting cases of VAWG, is now mandatory training for all MPS staff.

4. MOPAC VAWG Strategy

The Board received an overview of the new VAWG Strategy, which will be published in June. MOPAC thanked all partners whose feedback contributed to its development.

Partnership working will be vital to the delivery of the Strategy, and the VAWG Board will play a key role in overseeing this.

The Strategy has a public health approach and focuses on four areas: prevention, tackling perpetrators, trust and confidence and supporting victims and survivors.

The Strategy will also reflect other policy areas: the Istanbul Convention, Health Sector, migrant survivors and Operation Soteria. The Strategy will be supported by a Delivery Plan, which is in development.

5. Any other business

The MOPAC VAWG Team circulated a report providing an update on MOPAC programmes.

MOPAC recognises the seriousness of the Child Q case, and the DMPC has urged the MPS to conduct a review of all strip search cases. The MPS has updated its street search policy, to increase the authorisation level required to approve a search. A Gold Group is also considering longer term changes that can be made to the policy.

The Board discussed the Home Office plan to implement the Rwanda asylum plan and the impact this will have on migrant victims of VAWG. MOPAC is reviewing this development and is considering options for appropriately lobbying the Home Office about this.

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