

# **London Criminal Justice Board meeting minutes - 27 September 2022**

## **Key information**

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## **Board and advisors**

### **Present**

- Sophie Linden - Deputy Mayor, MOPAC
  - Debbie Weekes-Bernard - Deputy Mayor
  - Diana Luchford - Chief Executive, MOPAC
  - Will Balakrishnan - Director, C&P, MOPAC
  - Nick John - MPS
  - Louisa Rolfe - MPS
  - Barry Hughes - Chief Crown Prosecutor London North, CPS
  - Sinead Dervin - NHS
  - Lionel Idan - Chief Crown Prosecutor London South, CPS
  - Shobnam Islam - Officer, MOPAC
  - Kilvinder Vigurs - Director, NPS
  - Claudia Sturt - CEO, YJB
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- Jo Towens - Head of Crime, HMCTS
  - Tamara Barnett - Head of Partnerships, MOPAC
  - Hesham Puri - President, London Crim Courts Assoc.

- Claire Ansturt
- Paul Furnell - BTP
- Alix Newbold - Director, City of London Police Authority
- Henry Smithers - YJB
- Mat Pickering - MOPAC
- Petroc James - NHS
- Roger Hadwen - MOPAC
- Max Lawson - MOPAC

## **Welcome**

The Deputy Mayor, Sophie Linden opened the meeting. Head of Partnerships TB provided updates on the actions from the previous LCJB, indicating that the action regarding NHS data collection is outstanding. TB summarised the intended outcome for today's LCJB for all partners to agree to have data leads working with E&I at MOPAC on a new LCJB data sub-board.

## **1. The Impact of Court Delays**

MP presented data as well as an overview of the court backlog. Backlogs of cases are at an all-time high, 1.8 times higher than before the pandemic, and are expected to remain so. The board recognised the importance of anchoring our perspectives and ideas in the victim experience and prioritising the victim's voice. NJ also raised the issue of data delays, which are causing an inaccurate or outdated picture of London, as well as the court backlog, and the board acknowledged that there is currently no short-term solution.

SL emphasised that it is impossible to generate a current forecast using current data sources because they are delayed, incomplete, and out of date. NJ stated that the Gold group is compiling a list of data gaps to be sent to HMCTS for approval. ML provided an update on the Gold Group. Victims are only learning of trial delays and cancellations at the last minute. Some of the causes investigated concerned the flow of information to victims/witnesses.

LR emphasised the CJS's current state of disarray and the need for a collaborative effort with the Mayor to improve systems and services. The board members agreed that a dramatic shift was required. It was agreed that LCJB partners would work with HMCTS to create a recovery plan and bring back to the LCJB.

## **2. Compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice**

WB summarised that VCOP will be enshrined in the Victims Law, and that compliance must be demonstrated using data that includes the victim voice, such as the MPS User Satisfaction Survey and the VCOP Dashboard. WB went on to say that MOPAC has considered creating a broader CJS satisfaction survey. In response, LR discussed data and VCOP compliance, including enforcing use of the VCOP dashboard; however, automated

processes are also in place, such as online reports generating a leaflet versus officers forgetting to hand over in person.

LR expressed concerns about MPS's lack of a customer service ethos and emphasised the new Commissioner's emphasis on better data, timely feedback from communities, and how to work with data collected from victims. Overall, the MPS commended the new Commissioner, CW, and DAC Gray for their approach to improving victim support. NJ also collaborated on the Witness Care Unit Review ToR with CW and ML.

### **3. Duty to Collaborate**

The draft Victims Bill, WB explained, includes a mandate for PCCs, Local Authorities, and Integrated Health Boards to collaborate on the development, publication, and implementation of a strategy for commissioning support services to victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, and serious violence. SL emphasised the importance of ensuring that disproportionality and hate crime are taken into account.

### **4. Increasing Public Trust and Confidence in the CJS**

MP provided data insight into trust in the CJS. The survey covered several topics, including police, CPS, courts, prison, and probation. The CJS process appears to erode trust and confidence. Members were encouraged to consider the LCJB's goals for trust and confidence. The public's perception of the CJS is also addressed in the survey. Age, ethnicity, and gender were among the groups polled. The drivers of trust and confidence overlap but differ.

The board inquires about the publication of broader perspectives. CL emphasised the importance of tailoring our survey response based on where communication and service explanations are provided. CS suggested that we should make it easier for the public to understand services that aren't visible to the public. SL clarified that we need a baseline of trust and confidence in organisations before we can innovate and improve.

### **5. Any other business**

There was no other business to report.

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