

Review of Metropolitan Police Service Gangs Matrix

Terms of Reference

The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) are committed to conducting a review of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Gangs Matrix. The review follows the Mayor's Manifesto pledge in 2016 and commitments in London's Police and Crime Plan¹ and Knife Crime Strategy in 2017. Keeping young people safe in London is a key priority and to that end we want to ensure that any tool being used to manage young people involved in group violence responds appropriately to harm and risk.

The Gangs Matrix is an operational tool that was developed by the Metropolitan Police Service and has been used since 2012. The intended audience for the outcome of the review is the MPS and we expect to make our recommendations public by publishing them in Autumn 2018. The review will be conducted by MOPAC, with the support of the MPS. No previous review of the Gangs Matrix has taken place.

Background information

The overarching aim of the MPS' Gangs Matrix is to reduce gang related violence and prevent young lives being lost. The Gangs Matrix is an intelligence tool used to identify and risk assess gang members in every London borough informed by intelligence, and based on violence and weapons offences. It provides the police with a way of prioritising the most harmful individuals for enforcement and partners for support and intervention. The Matrix scores individuals who are in a gang - it is not the gangs that are scored. Scores are based on an individual's involvement in violence only - drugs intelligence or drugs offences are not scored. Individuals are also scored and ranked as victims of violence to reflect the vulnerability and victimisation of this cohort. Every borough has their own Matrix and every day these are combined to produce an MPS Matrix. Matrices are owned by boroughs with local single points of contact (SPOCs) who update the Matrix and make decisions about who is added and removed. Trident and Met Intel may make recommendations where necessary for people to be added or removed to any borough Matrix.

Following 2011 there was a greater focus on gangs work, both from the Home Office and the Met, which resulted in a standardised method of quantifying and prioritising those involved in serious youth violence. In many areas of London, using the Matrix has meant a more joined-up discussion and targeted response from local police and partners about those involved in gangs and youth violence, co-ordinating not just enforcement to reduce identified risk, but offer diversion, support and intervention too. However, the Matrix has proved to be a controversial tool and is perceived negatively by some communities. Given these concerns it is important to set out the criteria for assessment with the aim of addressing issues of consistency, disproportionality², scope and impact.

¹ The Police and Crime Plan states we will *Review the MPS approach to gang crime, including the Gangs Matrix, supporting the MPS to tackle gang crime, gun crime and knife crime more effectively in London.* The London Knife Crime Strategy says we will target lawbreakers by *Reviewing the MPS Gangs Matrix which identifies the most violent gang members in London, and strengthen the identification of young people who are involved in serious youth violence, whether perpetrators or victims.*

² The meaning of disproportionality for the purposes of this review is the overrepresentation of a particular race or cultural group in a program or system compared to their representation in the general population.

The police and partner response to gangs and youth violence has evolved significantly with a better understanding of the drivers and needs of those involved as victims or perpetrators. There have been improvements in enforcement tactics, use of legislative tools and services for young people, such as funding for Integrated Gangs Units, London Gang Exit and support for young victims of violence in London's Major Trauma Centres.

The Mayor's Police and Crime Plan focuses on 'gang' violence, vulnerability and exploitation; the specific behaviours that are impacting negatively on our communities – violence and weapon enabled offending – and the exploitation of children and vulnerable adults linked to this – child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and trafficking of young people through 'county lines'³ drugs activity.

David Lammy's review into the treatment of BAME Londoners in the criminal justice system⁴ supported the Mayor's commitment to review the Matrix and asked MOPAC to '*examine the way information is gathered, verified, stored and shared, with specific reference to BAME disproportionality*' and to consider community perspectives. This review is part of MOPAC's response to this.

Scope of the review

In recognition of these changes, and within the context of increasing knife crime in London, it is therefore timely to review the Matrix to better understand whether the targeted approach taken by the Gangs Matrix is a proportionate and effective tool in reducing youth violence.

The review will focus on the following issues:

1. Impact of the Gangs Matrix

- How the Gangs Matrix impacts on levels of gang related offending and youth violence
- How being on the Gangs Matrix impacts an individual's involvement in violence and offending
- How the Gangs Matrix has evolved to be able manage risk and vulnerability
- How being on the Gangs Matrix impacts an individual who features on it; from both an enforcement and a support perspective
- How the demographics of those on the Gangs Matrix compare with our understanding of victims and perpetrators of youth and weapon-enabled violence in London to identify any disproportionate impact

2. Gangs Matrix processes

- Assurance that the collection, use, sharing and storage of personal information in the context of the Gangs Matrix is compliant with human rights and data protection legislation.
- How individuals are added to and removed from the Gangs Matrix

³ County lines is a term used to describe gangs and criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs in to one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

⁴ published September 2017

- Understand which partners have access to Gangs Matrix information and how it is used.
- What data sources the Gangs Matrix uses
- How the Gangs Matrix is used locally by the London boroughs
- How the Gangs Matrix is reviewed and overseen; to assess consistency of use and prevention of disproportionate impact.

3. Perceptions and understanding of the Gangs Matrix

- How information about the purpose and use of the Gangs Matrix has been shared and understood by partners, community members and the public.
- Assessing whether the Gangs Matrix is understood within the wider context of the other operational tools that inform the threat, harm and risk profile for London.
- Consider what steps can be taken to provide better information to the public about how the MPS tackle youth violence.

Guiding principles

The recommendations of the review will be guided by the need to:

- Be evidence-led through in-depth analysis of available data
- Recognise the operational independence of the MPS
- Ensure legality and data compliance
- Address any unfairly disproportionate impact
- Be informed by community and partner views
- Increase transparency
- Be informed by an understanding of the operational challenges faced by police officers responding to youth violence.

This review will not make recommendations related to police intelligence systems as a whole.

The review will be carried out by MOPAC's Criminal Justice & Commissioning and Evidence & Insight teams. MOPAC will facilitate the collection and analysis of professional and community views in relation to the matrix and use these to formulate recommendations. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is responsible for the completion of this review. The MPS is responsible for deciding what changes are necessary and how to take recommendations forward operationally. Recommendations will be published in Autumn 2018.