



Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

CC: Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime; Diana Luchford, CEO, MOPAC

Monday 9 January 2023

Dear Sadiq

MOPAC: ten years on

I am writing to you in my position as Chair of the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee regarding the Committee's investigation into the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). This follows a meeting held on 2 November 2022, with the following guests:

- Diana Luchford CB, Chief Executive Officer, MOPAC
- Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, MOPAC
- Will Balakrishnan, Director of Commissioning and Partnerships, MOPAC
- Kim Chudley, Head of HR and Organisational Development, MOPAC.¹

Our investigation sought to take stock of how MOPAC is faring ten years on from its creation and how effectively it delivers its functions. In this letter I share the key findings of our investigation and make several recommendations for action.

¹ PCC meeting, 2 November 2022 – [transcript](#)

Oversight of the Metropolitan Police Service

In September 2022, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) published a highly critical report following its most recent police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspection of the Met.² The Met was deemed to be performing so badly that HMICFRS placed it into the Engage process, which allows for additional support to be drafted in from the College of Policing and the National Police Chief's Council to address areas of concern.

In the Police and Crime Committee meeting on 16 November 2022, Sir Tom Winsor – the former HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary – suggested that HMICFRS decided to move the Met into the Engage process after it had lost confidence in MOPAC's ability to provide the necessary level of scrutiny. He said the decision was taken, 'not only because the MPS was failing, it is also because MOPAC was failing'.³

Engage is only enacted in situations where 'a force is not responding to a cause of concern, or if it is not succeeding in managing, mitigating or eradicating the cause of concern'.⁴ This represents another hugely damaging moment in the Met's recent history, following a series of scandals that has brought trust in the Met to a low. The Committee heard from MOPAC officials on 2 November 2022 that HMICFRS' decision to enact Engage was 'quite helpful'. This mirrors previous comments made to the Committee by Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor of Policing and Crime (DMPC) who said she 'welcomed the Met being put into Engage because with that Engage process comes challenge, but it also comes with offers of support'.^{5,6}

The Committee agrees that HMICFRS' decision to place the Met into Engage is necessary to resolving the serious issues the Met faces. The decision also indicates that MOPAC needs to review how it provides oversight and engages with the Met; this should be a learning opportunity for MOPAC as well.

Recommendation: MOPAC should provide quarterly updates to the Committee on how it is supporting the Met to address the failings identified by HMICFRS and to exit the Engage process.

MOPAC told the Committee that the reasons behind HMICFRS' decision 'have not come as a surprise'. The DMPC also previously told Members that she was 'disappointed but not surprised' about HMICFRS' decision, as 'many, if not all, of the issues' identified in the inspection 'are ones of which we are already aware of and we already had oversight of and scrutiny of, and also ones in which we have also been driving actions within the Met'.⁷

On 2 November 2022, MOPAC accepted it needed to provide more 'proactive oversight' of the Met rather than 'reactive oversight'. The Committee believes that oversight should always be a proactive exercise. It is again an indication of a failure of oversight that MOPAC is aware of issues but not able to effectively confront them before they reach crisis point. The Committee would find it useful to be kept abreast of issues that MOPAC has identified and are working to address in the Met, in order to understand better where these challenges in its oversight function lie.

² HMICFRS, [2021/22 PEEL report Metropolitan Police](#), 22 September 2022

³ PCC meeting, 16 November 2022 – transcript

⁴ HMICFRS – [Our approach to monitoring forces](#)

⁵ PCC Q&A meeting, 6 July 2022 – [transcript](#)

⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee webcast recording](#), 12 October 2022

⁷ PCC Q&A meeting, 6 July 2022 – [transcript](#)

Recommendation: MOPAC should provide quarterly briefings to the Police and Crime Committee detailing current issues it has flagged as part of its proactive oversight of the Met, and what action is underway to address them.

Local oversight structures

The Committee has also assessed the progress of commitments made in your transparency, accountability and trust in policing action plan to review existing community engagement mechanisms, including Safer Neighbourhood Boards (SNBs).⁸ Black Thrive – a community interest company that works to address racial disparities – was commissioned in June 2022 to gather insight from Londoners on how community scrutiny of policing could be more effective.⁹ Black Thrive was expected to deliver final recommendations to MOPAC in November 2022, but the Committee were told by MOPAC that only an ‘interim report with some early findings’ is now expected in November.

Black Thrive is significantly behind its planned schedule to engage with Londoners, suggesting MOPAC has not been effectively monitoring this programme of work. For example, Kenny Bowie confirmed to Unmesh Desai AM that there had been no engagement so far with residents in Barking and Dagenham, City of London, Newham and Tower Hamlets. These areas represent over 890,000 residents who will no doubt have valuable experiences and insight that can inform any redesign of community engagement structures. MOPAC told the Committee that it is currently reviewing this programme of work. It has promised to provide the Committee with an updated plan for delivery, alongside the original terms of reference agreed with Black Thrive. MOPAC must work with Black Thrive to ensure that this programme of work is being delivered to a high standard before engaging in future work.

The Committee is supportive of work to ensure SNBs are fit for purpose and that they, and wider community engagement structures, fully represent the voice of all Londoners. However, while work is underway to rethink structures for the future, there is a significant risk that local oversight of policing is not happening in the meantime. Several SNBs are now dormant. Others are likely awaiting with interest the outcome of the review. This gap in local community oversight is at odds with your own ambitions to improve trust and accountability of policing and must be addressed as a priority.

Recommendation: MOPAC should write to the Committee within four weeks with details of how it plans to ensure local oversight of policing is maintained in every London borough while it waits for the findings of the Mayor’s delayed review of community engagement structures.

Transparency of MOPAC partnership boards

MOPAC delivers pan-London collaboration and cooperation with different criminal justice agencies through its various partnership boards. However, MOPAC does not routinely publish minutes and papers from these meetings. The last published notes of the London CONTEST board are from June 2021; the London Crime Reduction Board (LCRB) webpage has not been updated since December 2020; and the webpage for the London Serious and Organised Crime Board has never been updated since it was created. At a time of low trust and confidence in policing, the publication of minutes and papers is a simple way to provide accountability and transparency on what MOPAC is doing to improve policing in London.

⁸ GLA, [Action Plan – Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing](#), November 2020

⁹ MOPAC, [Mayor’s Action Plan for Improving Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing – update](#), June 2022

This is not a new issue. In its thematic meeting with MOPAC in 2018, the Committee criticised MOPAC for not keeping its website up to date with minutes and agendas.¹⁰ The Committee noted that the Violence against women and girls (VAWG) board webpage had not been updated since June 2016. MOPAC acknowledged the Committee's challenge and committed to uploading minutes and papers. Over four years later, we are disappointed to find the VAWG board page has still not been updated. At the meeting on 2 November 2022, Diana Luchford said that webpages had not been kept up to date due to the 'significant programme of work underway on the London.gov.uk website'. This is an inadequate response and does not explain why some webpages have been updated while others have not.

Recommendation: Within the next four weeks, MOPAC should: (a) ensure all its webpages are brought fully up to date, including uploading all outstanding papers and minutes for each partnership board; (b) provide details to the Committee on how it will properly maintain its website going forward, including timely publication of all partnership board papers and minutes; (c) ensure its dashboards are up to date and that those that are being archived are replaced.

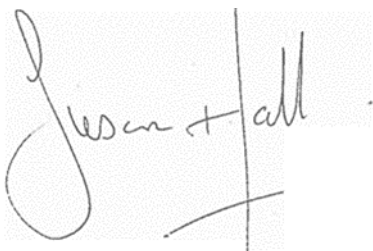
The Committee was also surprised to find that neither the LCRB nor the London Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) are mentioned in the Police and Crime Plan 2022-25. These are the two flagship boards through which MOPAC coordinates its work with partners across London. The Committee was told by Diana Luchford that the LCRB and LCJB were not mentioned, as Londoners 'would be less interested in our governance structures than they would be in being reassured that we are working with a whole range of partners'.

The Committee believes that specificity is essential to transparency. We do not agree that broad commitments from MOPAC that they will work with 'partners' provides any reassurance for Londoners. Many concerned residents, community groups, and people working across criminal justice, care, education, youth services and health settings will be very interested in who MOPAC is specifically working with and how.

Recommendation: By the end of February 2023, MOPAC should upload an overview of its various partnership boards on its website to support to the Police and Crime Plan 2022-25. This should include links to separate webpages where full terms of reference, minutes and meeting papers for each board are published.

The Committee would welcome a response to this letter by Friday 3 February 2023. Please send your response by email to the Committee's clerk, Lauren Harvey (lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lauren Harvey', is written over a light grey grid background. The signature is cursive and includes a vertical line extending downwards from the end of the name.

¹⁰ London Assembly, [Transcript- The Functions and Impact of MOPAC](#), 11 January 2018

Susan Hall AM

Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee