

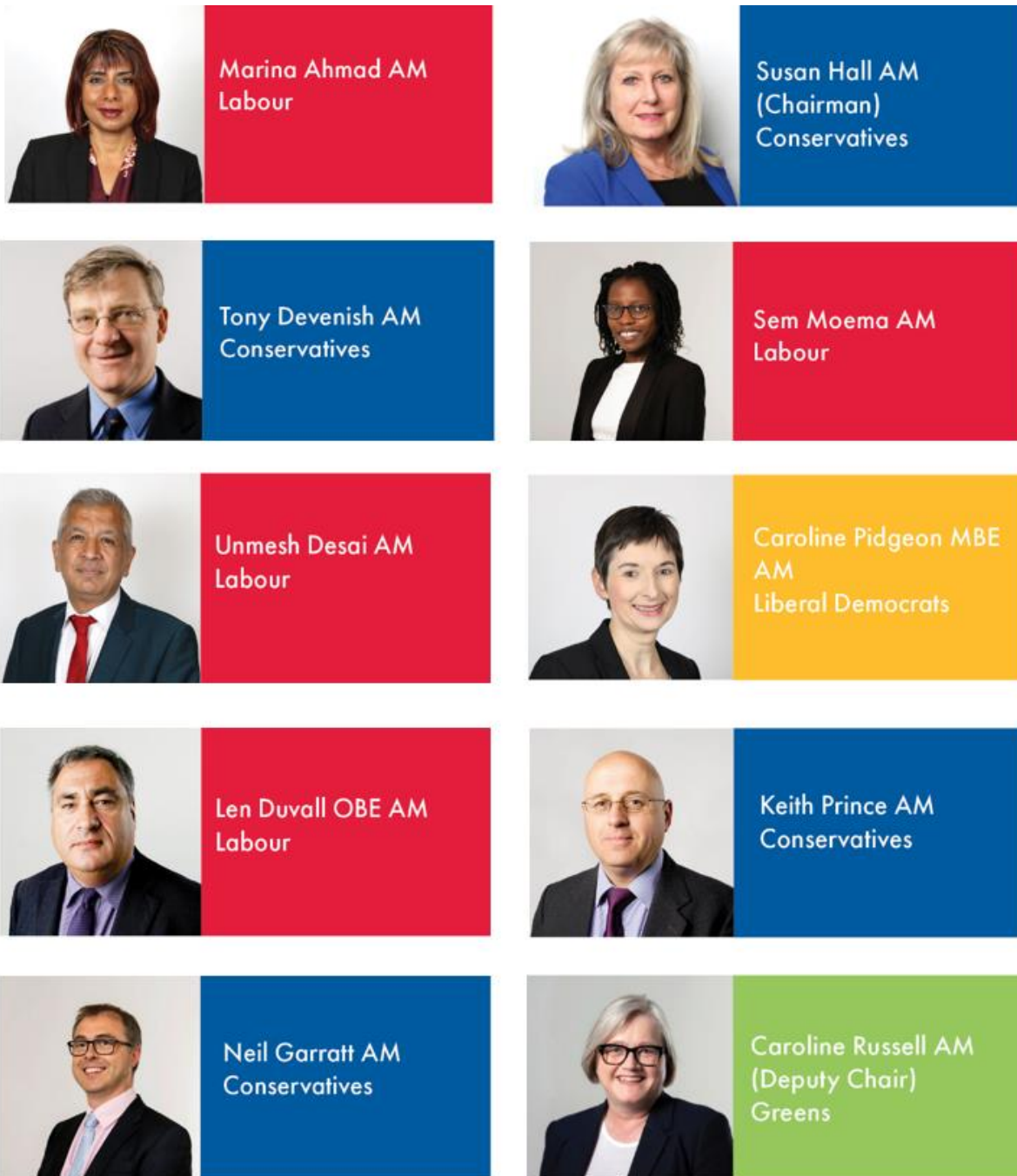


**Response to the Mayor's draft Police  
and Crime Plan 2021-25**

Police and Crime Committee

**LONDON ASSEMBLY**

## Police and Crime Committee



The Police and Crime Committee examines the work of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and investigates issues relating to policing and crime reduction in London.

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## Introduction

Under national legislation, the Mayor, in his capacity as Police and Crime Commissioner for London, must draft, consult on, and issue a Police and Crime Plan (the draft Plan) within the first financial year in which he is elected. The draft Plan is required to set out the MOPAC’s priorities for the Mayor’s term in office, including, for example, police and crime objectives; and financial and other resources to be provided to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (the Met) and performance measures.<sup>1</sup> Earlier this year, the Mayor published his second Plan, 2021–25, for consultation.

The past five years – the term of the current Plan, which was extended from four years due to COVID-19 – have been turbulent for London, particularly since the outbreak of the pandemic. Crime patterns have changed, serious youth violence and homicide rates have spiked, and trust and confidence in the Met have fallen.

The events of the past year have also exacerbated a decline in confidence, as incidents involving the Met have caused great disquiet in London’s communities – most notably in response to the tragic murder of Sarah Everard, and the coroner’s report highlighting the failings in the Met’s initial investigation into the murders committed by Stephen Port. The development of the draft Plan is a key opportunity to set a framework under which the Mayor and the Met can rebuild trust over the next four years. It also provides an opportunity for the Mayor and the Met to embody greater transparency at a time when policing matters have never been more scrutinised.

This report sets out the Police and Crime Committee’s response to the Mayor’s draft Plan. It is informed by the Committee’s engagement with relevant stakeholders from the policing, community and criminal justice sectors.

The Committee appreciates that it is a difficult balance to strike in developing a Plan that both explores London’s policing and crime issues in sufficient detail and with sufficient sophistication; and ensures that it makes sense to Londoners. The overarching themes of the draft Plan are the right ones, but, beneath this surface, the Committee is concerned about the way in which the Mayor and MOPAC will monitor its delivery. Moreover, the Committee shares the concerns expressed by some individuals and organisations during our consultation: that the draft Plan does not address the difficult decisions that need to be taken when prioritising issues in the context of constrained resources. For example, at our recent Committee meeting, a number of stakeholders gave their views on the draft Plan. Matt Parr CB, HM Inspector, told the Committee that while, in comparison to other plans, it is “probably one of the better ones [...] and not far off the money”. He added:

*“What it [the draft Plan] does not confront is the hard choices that the [Met] Commissioner, under the guidance of the Mayor, is obliged to make. It does not talk about the things that they [MOPAC and the Met] are going to do less of. It does not talk about the things that are going to pay the price for the concentration on other priorities. I understand why that is difficult to put*

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<sup>1</sup> The National Archives, [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)

*in the Plan, but it is one of the weaknesses of the Plan that it is difficult to find anything you disagree with within it.”<sup>2</sup>*

Similarly, David Millar, Board Member, London Communities Policing Partnership (LCP2), stated: “When you come to look at this Plan, there are major challenges for the police in terms of the expectations set out in the Plan and the police’s resource and ability to deliver to it.”<sup>3</sup>

We also identified, through our discussions with policing and criminal justice stakeholders, concerns that the draft Plan did not reflect the changes that have taken place over the course of the old Plan. David Millar told the Committee:

*“You will see that virtually everything in the previous Plan, 2017 to 2021, has been brought forward to this Plan. The words have slightly changed and the order has changed, the structure has changed, but it is essentially the same Plan redressed”.*<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, Matt Parr CB stated:

*“If I made the most wounding charge, it is that it feels like a Plan written ten or 15 years ago rather than something that reflects the society and the challenges that we have got now. That is probably the most poignant charge.”*<sup>5</sup>

More generally, we heard criticisms of the draft Plan lacking sufficient innovation to respond to the challenges of 2021 and beyond. Patrick Green, CEO, Ben Kinsella Trust, stated:

*“The strategy does not recognise the scale of complexity or, if it does, it does not recognise it in that level of detail. It feels like there is a lack of innovation. I would say this does not feel a document written for the 2020s. It feels written in the last decade, if you like. Therefore, going forward, I come back to online, what is happening in society generally is not reflected in the strategy.”*<sup>6</sup>

Since the draft Plan was published for consultation, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime have committed to ensure that there will be meaningful engagement with stakeholders and Londoners, which will inform the final Plan. The Committee hopes that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor consider carefully the Committee’s report as constructive feedback on the draft Plan, as the Mayor and the Assembly share the same objective: to make London a safer city for all. The Committee’s report seeks to strengthen the draft Plan so that policing and crime outcomes are improved in London.

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<sup>2</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>3</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>4</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>5</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>6</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

## Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

The final Plan should include commitments to:

- review the Met's ability to tackle the online drivers of crime and violence, in particular amongst young people
- work closely with social media companies to prevent and reduce violent crime.

### Recommendation 2

The final Plan should make specific commitments to address domestic abuse, including:

- rolling out domestic abuse perpetrator programmes across London so that there is a high and consistent level of intervention in every London borough
- introducing LGBT+ domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- rolling out Domestic Abuse Matters training to all Met Police staff
- adopting a whole-school approach to tackle domestic abuse, and violence against women and girls (VAWG).

### Recommendation 3

The final Plan should identify the specific action needed to tackle drug harm, use and supply in London, incorporating the key findings and lessons from the government's drugs strategy.

### Recommendation 4

The final Plan should include specific commitments to increase Londoners' awareness of, and opportunities to contribute to, counterterrorism efforts.

### Recommendation 5

MOPAC should publish two versions of the final Plan: a high-level summary that is written for Londoners, and a more detailed Plan that is aimed at those practitioners working in the policing and criminal justice sectors.

### Recommendation 6

The final Plan should commit to working with Londoners, through community representatives and groups, to set the targets for its measures to increase trust and confidence in policing by 30 September 2022.

### Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes:

- a specific date in 2022 when the new Community Monitoring Groups model will be implemented
- a commitment to set a target for the time in which communities and organisations should expect to receive their funding from MOPAC.

## **Recommendation 8**

The final Plan should include commitments to promote and support the strategic oversight of training needs for practitioners supporting survivors of VAWG, including awareness of cultural sensitivities. As a minimum, this should include the development of a live training needs strategy for all practitioners funded by the Mayor.

## **Recommendation 9**

The final Plan should include commitments to work with the National Crime Agency (NCA) to improve reporting and support services to fraud victims in London. This should include specific references to efforts to tackle cybercrime, and increase Londoners' awareness of this type of crime.

## **Recommendation 10**

The final Plan should include an action plan with new interventions to prevent and reduce fraud in London, and improve outcomes for fraud victims.

## **Recommendation 11**

The final Plan should identify the specific devolved criminal justice powers the Mayor will lobby for.

## **Recommendation 12**

MOPAC should identify specific targets for growth in rape detection rates in London for each of the years during the final Plan.

## **Recommendation 13**

The final Plan should include a specific commitment for MOPAC to establish a working group to identify what measures can be taken to improve the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) process in London and how it will work with national partners on the issue.

## **Recommendation 14**

MOPAC should publish accessible data on the local crime prevention priorities for each area. The updates should form part of MOPAC's overall quarterly performance updates.

## **Recommendation 15**

The final Plan should include a commitment to commission an independent review of the additional qualitative indicators developed to measure progress against the Plan's *Young people in the justice system are safe and supported* theme by June 2022. MOPAC should use the findings of such a review to inform further qualitative measures for other areas of the final Plan.

## **Recommendation 16**

The final Plan should include a commitment for MOPAC to publish a comprehensive and easily accessible data dashboard, detailing all performance information that pertains to the Plan.



## Chapter One: Reducing and preventing violence

### Serious youth violence

The Committee welcomes the focus that is placed in the draft Plan on reducing and preventing violence in London, especially serious youth violence, which has particularly devastating impacts for those Londoners affected. It is also a commensurate response to the scale of the challenge facing London. This is reflected in the record number of teenage homicides (30) in 2021 (the previous high was 29, in 2008). The vast majority of homicides in 2021 were young Black men, with the youngest being just 14 years old. This represents a quarter of the year's total of 122 homicides in London, despite teenagers making up only 8 per cent of London's population.<sup>7</sup>

The importance of taking a laser-like focus on serious youth violence was shared by stakeholders who gave evidence to the Committee in December 2021. In particular, Matt Parr CB, HM Inspector, said:

*"It is right that serious youth violence is the top priority of the Police and Crime Plan, given the nature of the policing and crime challenges facing London."*<sup>8</sup>

Online drivers of crime, in particular in relation to violence and youth violence were highlighted to the Committee. Patrick Green stated: "'Online' would be the top of the list for young people."

Similarly, Matt Parr CB said:

*"The biggest change that we have seen in the way that crime has evolved is a move to digital crime over the last ten or 15 years. I do not just mean crimes conducted online or crimes conducted with the aid of electronic devices, I mean particularly the fact that the amount of digital evidence and the complexity of the investigation has changed the demand on policing probably more than anything else in London and elsewhere."*<sup>9</sup>

The Committee also heard that social media companies could do more to help prevent violent crime among young people. For example, Patrick Green highlighted that:

*"In terms of what we can do, the social media companies can do an awful lot more. The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport who is responsible for the [Online Safety] Bill said this just recently. There is much within their gift and much within how they construct their product that can help us address some of the algorithm issues, some of the artificial intelligence issues and some of the educational issues that we need to get across to young people. I really do not know why they have not engaged with this more, but the Mayor has the opportunity to hold feet to the fire here and try to get social media companies involved*

<sup>7</sup> BBC News, [London teenage homicides: How killings broke 2008 record](#), 31 December 2021

<sup>8</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>9</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

*because, if they do, they have the credibility among the young people for them to make a significant difference. That is where I feel MOPAC can really play a part. [...] We should be reaching out to the social media companies, many of which are based in this city, about coming to help us with our problems and they just have not stepped forward. I do not know why that is.”<sup>10</sup>*

## **Recommendation 1:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan should include commitments to:**

- **review the Met’s ability to tackle the online drivers of crime and violence, in particular amongst young people**
- **work closely with social media companies to prevent and reduce violence.**

## **Domestic abuse**

In addition to serious youth violence, domestic abuse is rightly highlighted as a strategically critical area of focus in the draft Plan. However, we share concerns expressed by Solace Women’s Aid, whose Interim Chief Executive, Judith Banjoko, stated that the draft Plan “does not really go to the scale or the complexity of the problems that women are facing”.<sup>11</sup> In particular, we heard evidence about the importance of improving interventions at a regional level by taking a “whole-school (primary and secondary) approach” to tackle violence against women. For example, we heard that London needs:

*“funding to support schools to facilitate prevention work to take place within educational settings and to work with all students and teachers and other professionals to learn the signs and impact of abuse, and how to address them”.*<sup>12</sup>

We also heard that improving the provision of perpetrator programmes across the capital is “imperative” to “reducing and preventing violence”.<sup>13</sup> At present, domestic abuse perpetrator programmes are being piloted in five London boroughs, but the Committee believes the ambition for the period of the draft Plan, if the pilots prove to be effective in changing perpetrator behaviour, should be to roll this out across London. Judith Banjoko said:

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*“The Mayor [has] announced new funding for a pilot programme in five boroughs, which again we welcome, but we need these programmes to be rolled out more widely across London and to be run by specialist by-and-for organisations. That is crucial. There should be, in parallel, link support to the survivors, so the survivor and the perpetrator get support at the same time.”<sup>14</sup>*

**Judith Banjoko, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Solace Women’s Aid**

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<sup>10</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>11</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>12</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>13</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>14</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

In addition, we heard that the final Plan should commit to rolling out the Domestic Abuse Matters training programme, which is currently run for frontline Met Police officers. The Committee agrees. At the Committee's meeting in November 2021, which focused on VAWG, we heard first-hand from women's organisations that there needed to be greater knowledge and understanding of VAWG issues among a larger pool of practitioners. In the Met's case, this means ensuring domestic abuse training is guaranteed for all staff, including call handlers, rather than just its frontline officers.

We take seriously the contributions of Solace Women's Aid, and other women's charities, in the debate about London's response to domestic abuse. We know that the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and MOPAC will similarly heed the advice and reflections of those organisations.

Although smaller in scale when compared with heterosexual domestic abuse, it is concerning that LGBT+ domestic abuse is not mentioned once in the draft Plan. The issue requires a tailored response from professionals who have specialist training and knowledge to support victims and work with offenders. We believe the final Plan should include commitments and objectives that relate specifically to LGBT+ domestic abuse if it is to garner the support from London's LGBT+ community.

## **Recommendation 2:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes specific commitments to address domestic abuse, including:**

- **rolling out domestic abuse perpetrator programmes across London so that there is a high and consistent level of intervention in every London borough**
- **introducing LGBT+ domestic abuse perpetrator programmes.**
- **rolling out Domestic Abuse Matters training to all Met Police staff**
- **adopting a whole-school approach to tackle domestic abuse and VAWG.**

## **Tackling drug harm**

We know that many perpetrators of crime, including violent crime, may use drugs in a problematic way. The Committee is clear that tackling the root causes of criminal activity is vital to reducing the scale and impact of drug harm in London. In that context, it is disappointing that addressing drug use is scantily covered in the draft Plan.

The final Plan should be much more explicit about the action MOPAC, the Met and partners can take to address drug harm in London, through both the Met's enforcement and our health partners' prevention and support methods. Specifically, the final Plan should set out how those partners will work together to coordinate their efforts. We acknowledge that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime has already conceded that consultation feedback to date has already highlighted the need to be clearer about drugs. In addition, we expect MOPAC to incorporate any of the relevant findings from the government's drugs strategy in the final plan.

### Recommendation 3:

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan identifies the specific action needed to tackle drug harm, use and supply in London, incorporating the key findings and lessons from the government's drugs strategy.**

#### Counterterrorism

During the course of the previous Plan, there have been a number of terror-related incidents in the capital, with at least six attacks in 2017 – most notably the Westminster and London Bridge attacks – and more recently the 2019 Fishmongers' Hall and 2020 Streattham incidents. The incidents highlight the importance of a robust approach to counterterrorism in the nation's capital, and the need for sufficient policy and resource prioritisation to give it the focus it needs.

In that context, we welcome the commitments made in the draft Plan to continue to focus efforts on counterterrorism in London. However, we do not think that the draft Plan, in its current draft form, reflects the scale of the terror threat in London. Specifically, we think there needs to be greater emphasis in the draft Plan on the role of both statutory partners in this area and the general public. Raising awareness among and better equipping Londoners to support London's counterterrorism efforts is vital to its success. During our consultation on the draft Plan, we heard from Hannah Baldock, Henry Jackson Society, who stated:

*"On the whole, given that 40,000 individuals, we understand, are subjects of interest of the security services, and some of them are more urgently monitored than others, a whole-society approach is needed to try to reduce the numbers of people who are having to be tackled. It seems unsustainable to be monitoring that number of people on an ongoing basis. We need a more robust response from the Mayor's Office and the Shared Endeavour Fund.<sup>15</sup> Those initiatives are all pointing in the right direction, but greater funding and greater emphasis needs to be placed on the terror threat."<sup>16</sup>*

### Recommendation 4:

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes specific commitments to increase Londoners' awareness of, and opportunities to contribute to, counterterrorism efforts.**

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<sup>15</sup> The Shared Endeavour Fund, which was launched in January 2020, provides grants of up to £50,000 for projects which address hate crime, intolerance and extremism. The total fund is worth £800,000.

<sup>16</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

## Chapter Two: Increasing trust and confidence

Increasing trust and confidence in London's response to policing and criminal justice matters is fundamental to the success of the final Plan. The issue has always been central to the effective delivery of MOPAC and Met services, but the events of the last year have shone a light on and exposed the current inequities that exist under current arrangements. In particular, the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Met Police officer in March 2021, and the inquests into the murders committed by Stephen Port, brought international attention to and focus on the integrity of the Met. Loss of trust has also been impacted by the findings of the Daniel Morgan Inquiry, which raised concerns about the Met's handling of serious cases; and by the incident in which serving Met Police officers shared images of murder victims Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman. In addition, concerns about disproportionality in the use of certain police powers affecting Black Londoners and the toxic culture of instant messaging between Met Police officers, including the alleged incidents of inappropriate behaviour at Charing Cross Police Station, have all exacerbated the public's lack of trust in policing.

In addition, high-volume crimes, such as theft, antisocial behaviour and burglary, have gone unresolved. In the period from January to December 2021, London had a sanction detection rate of just 3.8 per cent for residential burglaries.<sup>17</sup> This is not good enough. During our evidence-gathering sessions, the Committee heard from London's Safer Neighbourhood Board representatives, who described the impact of high-volume crimes, such as burglary and antisocial behaviour, and the devastating consequences for Londoners across the capital. The Committee is clear that investigating these types of crimes and apprehending the criminals responsible for them is vital to increase trust and confidence in the Met Police.

The data speaks for itself: in each of the past four years – the period of the last Police and Crime Plan – confidence in the Met Police has fallen consistently, from 68 per cent in March 2017 to 52 per cent in September 2021.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the Committee strongly welcomes the ambition to increase trust and confidence over the period of the new Plan.

At our recent Committee meeting, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime identified low trust and confidence in the Met as a key risk to policing and crime in London. She said:

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*"If we do not manage to collectively improve that trust and confidence, there will be a risk there for London and Londoners. We have very good plans in place to do that but, clearly, we all have a job of work to do around that."*<sup>19</sup>

**Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime**

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However, in order to rebuild trust and confidence, the Mayor must start by ensuring that his Plan – the key document through which he articulates his policing and crime priorities to Londoners – is accessible and understandable to the general public. We accept that there is a

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<sup>17</sup> *The Times*, [Burglars go unpunished with only 5% of cases solved](#), 30 January 2022

<sup>18</sup> MOPAC, [Public Voice Dashboard](#)

<sup>19</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [15 December 2021 meeting](#)

balance to strike given the nature of the document but it is, above all, imperative that Londoners understand the Mayor's priorities in this area. As David Millar told us:

*"At the end of the day, the Londoner wants to know, 'What is in it for me?', and I am afraid I cannot give an answer to an individual in the street to say, 'From this Plan, this is clearly what is in it for you.'"*<sup>20</sup>

### **Recommendation 5:**

**The Committee recommends that MOPAC publishes two versions of the final Plan: a high-level summary that is written for Londoners, and a more detailed Plan that is aimed at those practitioners working in the policing and criminal justice sectors.**

When it comes to confidence and trust in the Met Police, the Committee acknowledges the work that is under way to examine the vetting, wider behaviour and culture of the Met. The Committee explored these issues at length in its 2021 meetings with the Met and MOPAC and raised serious concerns about the failures of the Met's approach to vetting. The findings and recommendations from some of the Met's work may not be published until after the launch of the final Plan, so the Committee is keen for the Mayor to revisit the draft Plan as and when such investigations reach a conclusion. In the meantime, the Committee seeks assurance that the robustness of the tracking and monitoring of these commitments matches the ambition and determination with which they were made. We know that confidence in the Met is at a considerable low point. However, it is equally concerning that significant stakeholders share the scepticism held by many Londoners. In particular, when asked for views on the quality and strength of the draft Plan's commitments to increase confidence and trust in policing, Matt Parr CB stated:

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*"All the things that are in there and all the things that are in the Commissioner's current plan about restoring confidence following Couzens are all good things. As to whether they will have the effect that we would all hope, I am not particularly optimistic."*<sup>21</sup>

**Matt Parr CB, Inspector, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**

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The final Plan needs to be more explicit in setting out the role that community policing can play in gathering intelligence and building trust in the community. This will help to ensure that Londoners have faith and trust in reporting crimes to the Met. For example, Tayo Prince, Chair of LCP2, told the Committee:

*"The local policing is very important as a neighbourhood. That is the bedrock of policing. If this can be gotten right, it will go a long way to resolve a lot of problems."*<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>21</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>22</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

Representatives of London's Safer Neighbourhood Boards told the Committee that there was room for improvement in the Met's use of community impact assessments in monitoring tension and feeling in the community.

More generally, representatives expressed concerns that there was no system in place to review, assess and learn from community engagement so that improvements could be made where appropriate and needed.

### **Recommendation 6:**

**To address this concern, the Committee recommends that the final Plan commits to working with Londoners, through community representatives and groups, to set the targets for its measures to increase trust and confidence in policing by 30 September 2022.**

MOPAC has committed to review and redesign community engagement mechanisms, which allow community representatives to scrutinise decisions made by Met Police officers. The review has taken a considerable length of time, something that David Millar raised at the Committee's meeting, stating:

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*"Since the publication of the Mayor's Action Plan in November 2020, part of that was that MOPAC would undertake an overhaul of community engagement mechanisms. As part of this Police and Crime Plan, again, we have seen they are going to review community engagement mechanisms. Bear in mind that this started in November 2020. We are now in December 2021. MOPAC has put out a tender to investigate community engagement, which will only finally report in July next year, 2022. That is a huge amount of time on what I would argue is a core element of what should be part of the Police and Crime Plan."*<sup>23</sup>

**David Millar, Board Member, LCP2**

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A revised approach is an integral part of MOPAC and the Met's improved approach to community engagement, which is why it is concerning that it has taken so long to implement changes in this area.

### **Recommendation 7:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes:**

- **a specific date in 2022 when the new community engagement mechanisms model will be implemented**
- **a commitment to set a target for the time in which communities and organisations should expect to receive their funding from MOPAC.**

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<sup>23</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

## Chapter Three: Better supporting victims

The Committee welcomes the draft Plan's commitment to take a child-first approach, which focuses on their experiences of the criminal justice system, including as victims of crime. This is a key shift in emphasis from the current Plan and is one that reflects the change in attitudes to a child's experience of the criminal justice world. Many of the stakeholders we engaged with during the draft Plan's consultation agreed. Patrick Green stated:

*"It is the right approach, from my point of view, about looking at this from the child's perspective and rather than the incident."*<sup>24</sup>

Judith Banjoko, CEO, Solace Women's Aid added:

*"A lot of the emphasis of the support at the moment does go to the parent as opposed to the child and they are almost like the forgotten group of people in the household. A wraparound service for the whole family needs to be included when you think about support in the home. Children definitely do need that support. It needs not just to be in the home, but in schools as well."*<sup>25</sup>

More generally, there is good work taking place in areas of London to support victims and complainants of crime, but it is patchy and inconsistent across the capital. The draft Plan provides a unique opportunity to ensure there is a more joined-up, strategic approach to victim and complainant support across London. In particular, the service available to women and girls across London is integral to the Mayor, MOPAC and the Met's service to Londoners. We have seen, regionally and nationally, the failings of statutory services to properly support victims and complainants of serious sexual assault and rape. This will have, in part, contributed to the significant under-reporting of such allegations, which has left many complainants disenfranchised with the system as a whole.

In addition, the scale of the court backlog, particularly in the Crown Court, has led to significant delays for complainants, witnesses and defendants. The Committee has continually raised concerns with the government about the impact of the backlog over the last year. The draft Plan will inevitably need to deal with the consequences of this situation.

The draft Plan references multiple different initiatives to support women and girls who are victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault; and commits to reducing the number of repeat victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Given the nature of, and sensitivity involved in, VAWG cases, it is vital that those practitioners supporting victims have the very best specialist training. In particular, the introduction and expansion of Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) to support women and girls who are victims of abuse is welcomed by the Committee. The Mayor, through his final Plan, has an opportunity to set the strategic design, implementation and oversight of training needs across VAWG practitioners. At our recent meeting to discuss the draft Plan, Solace Women's Aid told the Committee that more support to increase the learning and knowledge of

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<sup>24</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>25</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)



VAWG issues among IDVAs and ISVAs was needed.<sup>26</sup> In addition, the final Plan must recognise the importance of practitioners working with survivors of VAWG being fully aware of cultural sensitivities.

### Recommendation 8:

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes commitments to promote and support the strategic oversight of training needs for practitioners supporting survivors of VAWG, including awareness of cultural sensitivities. As a minimum, this should include the development of a live training needs strategy for all practitioners funded by the Mayor.**

### Tackling fraud

Fraud accounts for over one third of all crime in England and Wales, a point that was raised by Matt Parr CB, who told the Committee:<sup>27</sup>

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*“At least one-third, if not slightly more, of all crime is fraud, but it is about 1 per cent of police resourcing. Some of it is trivial, but a lot of it is not and you hear some absolute horror stories about the dreadful things that happen to people.”<sup>28,29</sup>*

**Matt Parr CB, Inspector, HMICFRS**

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The figure could be even higher. MOPAC's Head of Strategy, Kenny Bowie, told the Committee that online fraud accounted for 44 per cent of all crime nationally.<sup>30</sup>

Since the pandemic, agencies have seen a rise in the number of cyber-related fraud incidents as criminals seize new opportunities to exploit vulnerabilities online. It is encouraging to see commitments in the draft Plan to “continue to target those engaged in fraud, cyber-related fraud and criminal finance” and to strengthen the response to crime on the “dark web”.<sup>31</sup> However, we do not believe that the draft Plan goes far enough in tackling this issue.

Just a few months prior to the draft Plan's publication, HMICFRS found that many fraud victims still receive a “poor service” from police services across the country.<sup>32</sup> We are acutely aware that, in parallel, Action Fraud will be replaced with “an improved national fraud and cybercrime reporting system”, which is welcome, but it is not clear when this will happen or how it will

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<sup>26</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#)

<sup>27</sup> Office for National Statistics, [Nature of fraud and computer misuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2019](#), 19 March 2020

<sup>28</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#), 1 December 2021

<sup>29</sup> Office for National Statistics, [Nature of fraud and computer misuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2019](#), 19 March 2020

<sup>30</sup> London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, [1 December 2021 meeting](#), 1 December 2021

<sup>31</sup> Mayor of London, [Police and Crime Plan 2021-25](#)

<sup>32</sup> *Evening Standard*, [No justice for fraud victims who receive poor service from police, says watchdog](#), 5 August 2021

improve outcomes for fraud victims.<sup>33</sup> Whilst we accept that the new system will be owned and operated within the NCA, there is an urgent need to work closely with the NCA in both the creation and ongoing development of the new arrangements.

In evidence to the Committee, representatives of London's Safer Neighbourhood Boards stated that the draft Plan did not provide sufficient focus on online crimes and, in particular, online fraud. They also stated that online fraud, and online crime more generally, have devastating impacts on older Londoners, who are equally as vulnerable as young Londoners, but received less attention in the draft Plan.

### **Recommendation 9:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes a commitment to work with the NCA to improve reporting and support services to fraud victims in London. This should make specific references to efforts to tackle cybercrime and improve Londoners' awareness of this type of crime.**

More generally, it is concerning that fraud is mentioned just five times in the draft Plan. Not only is this not a commensurate response to the scale of fraud in London and its effect on Londoners, for many offenders, fraud is a gateway crime to other criminal activity.

Since the publication of the draft Plan, the Assembly has raised concerns about the lack of detailed action to address fraud in London. In response, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime have said that it is not their priority. More recently, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime told the Committee:

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*"Our priority is not fraud. Our priority is reducing violent crime."*

**Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime**

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We acknowledge that the draft Plan should be a document through which the Mayor expresses his policing and crime priorities for London. We agree that reducing violent crime is a top priority for London, given the devastating impacts on victims and the wider community. However, given the scale of fraud in London, we do not think that setting out more detailed action to tackle the issue is in conflict with other priorities in the draft Plan.

### **Recommendation 10:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes an action plan with new interventions to prevent and reduce fraud in London, and improve outcomes for fraud victims.**

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<sup>33</sup> The Times, [Action Fraud scrapped after Times expose](#), 28 July 2021

## **Devolving more powers to London**

The draft Plan acknowledges that the Mayor and MOPAC have limited criminal justice powers and we note the reference to the Mayor continuing to “press for further devolution to London of victims’ services”.<sup>34</sup> However, the Mayor should go further by being explicit about what this means for London.

### **Recommendation 11:**

**Therefore, the Committee recommends that the final Plan identifies the specific devolved criminal justice powers the Mayor will lobby for.**

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<sup>34</sup> Mayor of London, [Police and Crime Plan 2021-25](#)

## Chapter Four: Protecting people from being exploited or harmed

### Detection rates for rape

London is not alone in England and Wales in having a considerably low detection rate for rape cases, and the factors influencing this trend have been well discussed in the public arena. It is right that the draft Plan refers to this issue, and it is encouraging that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime told the Committee: "I am optimistic that during the course of the Police and Crime Plan we will begin to see a real improvement in detection rates for rape". However, in order to fully commit to this ambition, we believe the Mayor and MOPAC should set a target for the growth in detection rate in each year of the final Plan. That way, Londoners can best hold the Mayor to account on a topic that is of such significance to the capital.

In addition, representatives of London's Safer Neighbourhood Boards shared concerns that, generally, detection rates were poor, and that the final Plan needed to better reflect the role and responsibilities of the Crown Prosecution Service in combating this issue.

### Recommendation 12:

**The Committee recommends that MOPAC identifies specific targets for growth in rape detection rates in London for each of the years during the final Plan.**

### County lines and the National Referral Mechanism

The exploitation of Londoners, in particular young Londoners, is pernicious and far-reaching. Not only do victims of exploitation and harm suffer at the hands of their abusers, but the wider community is also impacted. Criminal exploitation, through the targeting of vulnerable young people by organised criminals in county lines, has devastating consequences for those involved.

Several years ago, the government established the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), a framework to identify and refer potential victims of modern slavery. Over recent years, the proportion of individuals identified through the NRM who are children has grown significantly.<sup>35</sup> In parallel, the time in which NRM decisions are made concerning children has grown, with some cases taking over a year.<sup>36</sup> This is a concern.

To respond to these issues, earlier this year the government launched a pilot to devolve the NRM decision-making power to Youth Offending Services (YOSs). The pilot covers several London boroughs. This decision is welcome as YOSs are better placed to decide NRM cases, which are often complex and nuanced, rather than the Home Office.

<sup>35</sup> Home Office, [National Referral Mechanism statistics](#), 29 August 2019 (updated 27 January 2022)

<sup>36</sup> Free Movement, [Home Office policy on leave to remain for potential trafficking victims found unlawful](#), 4 December 2020

We are pleased that the draft Plan recognises the impact of this particular type of exploitation and commits to working with the Home Office to reform the NRM. However, further action is required to tackle this little known but important issue.

**Recommendation 13:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan should include a specific commitment for MOPAC to establish a working group to identify what measures can be taken to improve the NRM process in London and it will work with national partners on the issue.**

## Chapter Five: Delivering and monitoring the Plan

### Changing the approach to set local crime prevention priorities

The Committee is clear that the draft Plan is only as good as its delivery. Without a robust framework through which the Assembly and, crucially, Londoners can hold the Mayor, MOPAC and the Met to account, the draft Plan risks becoming a document that has no teeth.

The draft Plan refers to both the methods it intends to deploy to measure progress against individual commitments and outcomes, and the way in which all activity will be delivered and monitored.

One of the more significant changes in the approach to the delivery of the draft Plan is the movement away from setting annual local crime prevention priorities to a process where partners are encouraged to identify and address local priorities. Whilst acknowledging the benefits cited with this change, such as increased “flexibility to adjust and amend those priorities when things change”, we remain concerned that the new approach risks losing its grip on the delivery of local crime priorities.

#### **Recommendation 14:**

**The Committee recommends that MOPAC publishes accessible data on the local crime prevention priorities for each area. The updates should form part of MOPAC's overall quarterly performance updates.**

### Use of qualitative and quantitative intelligence

The draft Plan also refers to the use of both qualitative and quantitative intelligence to inform its priorities and activities over the next four years. This approach enables the Mayor, MOPAC and the Met to best understand to what extent the draft Plan is delivering against its expected outcomes. The issues contained in the draft Plan are complex and nuanced, and therefore it is appropriate to develop measures that explore the experiences, feelings and perceptions of Londoners involved in policing and criminal justice matters.

The Committee agrees that further development of qualitative research methods is integral to the richness of the draft Plan's intelligence base. However, it should not be given greater weight than quantitative measures, where the development of qualitative measures is at an embryonic stage. During the draft Plan's consultation, Professor Marian FitzGerald raised one concern about the approach, stating:

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*“One of the problems with surveys is that the questions that are asked in the surveys come off the top of the heads of people who have not talked to the sorts of people that they want to engage with.”*

**Marian FitzGerald, Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent**

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In particular, under the draft Plan's *Young people in the justice system are safe and supported* theme, MOPAC has proposed to develop additional questions in its Public Attitudes Survey to understand the views of young Londoners. We welcome MOPAC's intention to increase the survey size by 50 per cent to make it more statistically robust, and the indication that it is speaking to the Office for National Statistics to maximise the robustness of the new questions.

MOPAC has already hinted that a blended approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative measures, will be explored in other areas of the draft Plan. However, we believe MOPAC should sufficiently interrogate and test the analytical robustness of the additional survey questions before it expands this approach across the draft Plan. This will ensure MOPAC considers all of the Committee's issues in this area, and will ensure any learning from the pilot approach can be incorporated in future work.

### **Recommendation 15:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes a commitment to commission an independent review of the additional qualitative indicators developed to measure progress against the Plan's *Young people in the justice system are safe and supported* theme by June 2022. MOPAC should use the findings of such a review to inform further qualitative measures for other areas of the final Plan.**

Safer Neighbourhood Boards are a key example of local partnership working to improve policing and crime outcomes for Londoners. However, we are concerned that they are not mentioned in the draft Plan. The concern was shared by Tayo Prince, LCP2, who told the Committee:

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*"The whole Plan talks about engagement, yet nowhere did it mention Safer Neighbourhood Boards. We do not know if they [the Met] plan to work with us in the first place. It is not just in writing. We are seeing it on the ground. Sometimes we are doing a public meeting and you cannot find [Met Police] officers to attend."*

**Tayo Prince, Chair, LCP2**

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On 20 January 2022, the Committee held an informal meeting with representatives of London's Safer Neighbourhood Boards. The representatives shared concerns expressed by other guests that MOPAC was not using the opportunities from the new Plan to strengthen the role of Safer Neighbourhood Boards.

We hope that the final Plan will include a specific commitment to continue to support and strengthen the role of Safer Neighbourhood Boards over the next three years.

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## **Communicating and publishing progress in an accessible way**

Many of MOPAC and the Met's key performance indicators are published through publicly available data dashboards. During the course of the previous Plan, the scale and depth of information available has grown, increasing transparency and scrutiny of both organisations, for the benefit of Londoners.

Equivalent dashboards should be developed to provide an overview of the progress made against the delivery of the final Plan, incorporating the lessons learned from the experience of developing previous crime dashboards.

### **Recommendation 16:**

**The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes a commitment for MOPAC to publish a comprehensive and easily accessible data dashboard, detailing all performance information that pertains to the Plan.**



## Other formats and languages

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### Vietnamese

Nếu ông (bà) muốn nội dung văn bản này được dịch sang tiếng Việt, xin vui lòng liên hệ với chúng tôi bằng điện thoại, thư hoặc thư điện tử theo địa chỉ ở trên.

### Greek

*Εάν επιθυμείτε περίληψη αυτού του κειμένου στην γλώσσα σας, παρακαλώ καλέστε τον αριθμό ή επικοινωνήστε μαζί μας στην ανωτέρω ταχυδρομική ή την ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση.*

### Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinize çevrilmiş bir özetini okumak isterseniz, lütfen yukarıdaki telefon numarasını arayın, veya posta ya da e-posta adresi aracılığıyla bizimle temasa geçin.

### Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਡਾਕ ਜਾਂ ਈਮੇਲ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

### Hindi

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज का सारांश अपनी भाषा में चाहिए तो उपर दिये हुए नंबर पर फोन करें या उपर दिये गये डाक पते या ई मेल पते पर हम से संपर्क करें।

### Bengali

আপনি যদি এই দলিলের একটা সারাংশ নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে ফো করবেন অথবা উল্লেখিত ডাক ঠিকানায় বা ই-মেইল ঠিকানায় আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

### Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کا خلاصہ اپنی زبان میں درکار ہو تو، براہ کرم نمبر پر فون کریں یا مذکورہ بالا ڈاک کے پتے یا ای میل پتے پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

### Arabic

الوصول على ملخص لهذا المستند بلغتك،  
فرجاء الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو الاتصال على  
العنوان البريدي أو عنوان البريدي  
الإلكتروني أعلاه.

### Gujarati

જો તમારે આ દસ્તાવેજનો સાર તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતો હોય તો ઉપર આપેલ નંબર પર ફોન કરો અથવા ઉપર આપેલ ટપાલ અથવા ઈ-મેઇલ સરનામા પર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

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