

## Strengthening local policing – Progress on BCU Mergers (September)

### Summary

- The BCU Pathfinders in Camden & Islington (Central North) and Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (East) are ongoing, having gone fully live at the end of April 2017.
- The Pathfinders are a genuine test and each of the pathfinders have thrown up different challenges.
- The purpose of this briefing is to update on progress and changes being made to adapt the model locally and overcome the challenges, particularly on response times.
- The Mayor and the Commissioner remain committed to fully evaluate the evidence from the pathfinders and consider the views of stakeholders, before determining the manner of any further roll-out across London.

### Context

Fundamentally the challenge remains to deliver an effective policing service that is better equipped to deal with crime and antisocial behaviour locally, across the city and online, strengthening neighbourhood policing, giving Boroughs a say in local policing and crime priorities and transforming the way the organisation works to ensure it is equipped to deal with 21<sup>st</sup> century policing needs.

The budget pressure is very real - £400m of savings over the next four years - and whilst the Mayor is lobbying Government hard; in order to start realising savings through more effective and efficient working practices – changes must be made. The challenge is the nature of change and how quickly this can be achieved working alongside local authorities and other partners, who are facing their own financial pressures.

### Progress on the Pathfinders

This new model is being trialled in Camden & Islington (Central North) and Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (East). Each pathfinder is overseen by a Board, jointly chaired by the police and the Leader of one of the Boroughs, with the Leaders of the other Boroughs and chief executives as members. The Pathfinders are a genuine test, which both MOPAC and the Met will learn from – and without the engagement and frank feedback from partners involved, particularly Local Authorities' this would not be possible.

As a quick reminder, the model has four functional elements –

- **Neighbourhoods** - including the commitment to have a minimum of two Dedicated Ward Officers and a Dedicated PCSO in every ward; with additional DWOs to cover high demand wards; and increasing the number of schools officers;

- **Emergency Response** – enabling first responding officers in the majority of cases to take responsibility for the end to end management of the case and deploying across Borough boundaries;
- **Investigation** – ensuring experienced detectives are dealing with the more complex crimes
- **Safeguarding** – protecting the most vulnerable by bringing together local services relating to domestic abuse, mental health and missing persons with currently centralised sexual offence investigation and child protection to provide a joined up, accessible and local specialist service;

There was a phased introduction of the changes, with some elements easier to implement and requiring less change to existing working practices, for instance the additional Dedicated Ward Officers have provided a deployable resource to address specific problems and the increased visibility of officers has been welcomed by Boroughs, particularly in Camden and Islington.

### **Areas of challenge – Emergency Response**

In both pathfinder areas the Emergency response function did not work as had been planned and the response times for I (Immediate) & S (Significant Priority) calls were significantly below what was deemed acceptable by the Met and MOPAC. The problems with response times are more marked in the East of which the bigger geographical area is a factor. This is also having a knock on impact on victim satisfaction levels which are lower in some of the Boroughs involved in the Pathfinders.

The Response element of the model has therefore been adapted to respond to this problem and a recovery plan was put in place. The Recovery Plan has been different for the two Pathfinder areas.

- **East Pathfinder (Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge)** - As of 5 September, the East moved to a Borough based response model, each response team led by a Duty Inspector, with its own parade site.
- **Central North (Camden & Islington)** - As of 7 September Central North moved to a Borough based response model, but has maintained the single despatch channel on the radio system for the whole BCU - thus continuing to enable cross Borough deployments.

There have been improvements in both Pathfinders. In the Central North Pathfinder performance has improved consistently and is now at the same level as the Met. In the East there have also been improvements, although not yet to the Met standard, but the Met are confident the changes will rectify the situation. **Appendix A** shows the performance on response for the two Pathfinders compared to the Met average.

In order to help manage demand on response teams, there have been changes in both Pathfinders that will impact on the number of incidents that officers need to respond to, with an increase in the proportion of initial crime investigation dealt with over the telephone or online, from 17 to 32%. For many victims this means a speedy resolution to their situation, but

if the victim needs an officer to attend, for example if they are vulnerable, the Met will arrange a visit to continue with the investigation and provide additional support to the victim. This approach is now being applied across London.

### **Other elements of the model**

The other elements of Neighbourhoods, Investigation and Safeguarding are mostly working as anticipated.

- **Neighbourhoods** - in the East pathfinder, some DWOs were moved into response teams temporarily to manage the high demand. DWOs have now been returned to their normal duties and the ring fencing put back in place. In the Central North pathfinder feedback on the DWOs has been positive, and in both pathfinders there has been strong engagement from the increased youth officers as schools return.
- **Safeguarding** - this has taken some time to integrate its new working practices with local partners and as a result the communication and partnership working needed to be improved, but there are positive signs. For example, on the East pathfinder child safety joint strategy discussions held within 24 hours are well above the Met average, as are detection rates for violence with injury, domestic abuse and sexual offences. On the Central North pathfinder there has been positive feedback from Ofsted on improving relations in the MASHs.
- **Investigation** – Bringing CID teams together has significantly helped resilience for serious investigations, ensuring the right specialist resource is available at all times. The Central North pathfinder is seeing improvements in the joint understanding of gangs and organised crime on the two boroughs.

### **Oversight and Timescales**

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is closely monitoring the Pathfinders, meeting regularly with the Met and scrutinising the Recovery plan and performance. We want to ensure we evaluate how the new structure is working and ensure the recovery plan has got Response times back on track.

Evaluation will include ensuring the original objectives of the BCU Pathfinders are met:

- BCUs must enable more effective and efficient delivery of policing across London in line with agreed programme benefits
- BCUs must enable the MPS to deliver the Police and Crime Plan.
- BCUs must support delivery of strategic objectives through effective partnership engagement and joint working.

Towards the end of 2017 the Mayor and the Commissioner will consider the evidence from the pathfinders and the views of stakeholders, in the context of the budget pressures for the Met, before determining the manner of any further roll-out across London. Both the Met and the Mayor are absolutely clear that we will not implement a model that we are not confident will work effectively.

## Appendix A

Performance on response for the two Pathfinders compared to the Met average, against the Met's own target of 1 calls responded to within 15 mins 90% of the time

Month	Percentage of 'Immediate' (I) calls in target per month		
	BCU Central North	BCU East Area	MPS average
July 16	84%	78%	83%
August 16	85%	76%	84%
September 16	86%	77%	83%
October 16	89%	79%	85%
November 16	87%	79%	86%
December 16	87%	79%	86%
January 17	90%	79%	88%
February 17	85%	75%	87%
March 17	79%	66%	86%
April 17	79%	63%	86%
May 17	70%	52%	83%
June 17	69%	50%	82%
July 17	74%	48%	82%
August 17	78%	63%	83%