

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM**

City Hall  
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More London  
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**Date: 13 OCT 2017**

*Dear Jennette,*

At a discussion with Assembly Member Dismore at September's MQT, under *MQ3830 Transparency and Policing in London* about the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) ongoing 'pathfinders' to test the new model of policing within Basic Command Units (BCUs), Andrew requested an update on the criteria that the MPS was using to evaluate the impact of the pathfinder. I agreed to write to all Assembly Members setting this out in more detail.

I feel it is worth setting out the context of the borough mergers. The reality is that policing in London is under considerable pressure. Demand has increased, including a 10 per cent increase in 999 calls in the last year and crime has increased in both volume and seriousness. As the Office of National Statistics figures demonstrate, overall crime is rising across the country, and although slightly slower in London, these are concerning figures.

The challenge is to deliver an effective police 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.

Unfortunately, the Government has steadily reduced police funding since 2010. The MPS has already made over £600 million in savings over the last few years and is required to make a further £400 million by 2021. I continue to lobby the Government to fund the MPS properly through the police grant and through the National and International Capital City Grant to ensure the police are properly supported to carry out their important role. I am also grateful for the Assembly's recent report echoing my concerns to Government. Indeed, I raised this with the Prime Minister only this week.

Whilst there is ongoing uncertainty from the Government, the MPS must continue to plan for the future and transform itself to meet the needs of Londoners. The MPS' plans to reorganise local policing into fewer, larger BCUs is part of this transformation. This new model is being tested in two 'pathfinders': Camden & Islington (BCU Central North) and Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BCU East).

The BCU model aims to deliver improvements across four fundamental areas:

- Neighbourhoods - including the commitment to have a minimum of two Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) and a Dedicated PCSO in every ward; with additional DWOs to cover high demand wards. The vast majority of these officers are already in place.

# MAYOR OF LONDON

- 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.

These pilots began in April 2017 and are a genuine test from which the MPS will learn and adapt their approach as necessary. It is to be expected that the model will be refined as the pilots' progress.

Assembly Members will be aware there have been significant challenges around response – particularly in the East Area BCU. The MPS have responded to these challenges and I call performance is back at the levels before the pathfinders and 'S' call performance is above pre-pathfinder levels. I will continue to keep a very close eye on the pathfinders and hold the MPS to account for their performance.

The three overall objectives for the BCU pathfinders are:

1. To enable more effective and efficient delivery of policing across London in line with the four fundamental areas outlined above.
2. To enable the MPS to deliver the Police and Crime Plan.
3. To support delivery of MPS strategic objectives through effective partnership engagement and collaboration.

Specific criteria for effective operational delivery include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency response performance being at an acceptable level.
- Borough priorities: the ability to deliver the local agreed borough priorities. In the BCU East Area these are burglary and non-domestic violence with injury (all three boroughs). In BCU Central North these are theft from person (both Camden and Islington); common assault (Camden); and motor vehicle theft (Islington).
- Safeguarding: detection rates for sexual assault, child cruelty and domestic violence being at an acceptable level.

Assessment of how successfully the pathfinders are operating, needs to take into account pressures across London as a whole that may affect operational performance, so that the BCUs performance is not judged differently than that of other boroughs.

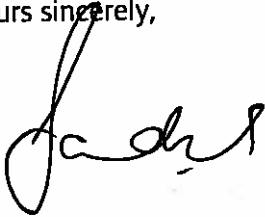
The MPS has learned, and continues to learn, a great deal from these pathfinders. Both the Commissioner and I have been clear that decisions around any further roll out would depend on their satisfactory performance.

# MAYOR OF LONDON

Whilst a final decision has not been taken, the ongoing learning has informed the Commissioner's view that the BCUs are moving in the right direction for local policing in London.

A comprehensive MPS progress and learning report which includes the views of stakeholders, will inform the final decision around this change in December 2017.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', written in a cursive style.

**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London