

# **Police**

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# **authority**

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# **inspection**

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# **report**

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**Metropolitan Police Authority**  
**March 2010**



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# Context

- 1 The Metropolitan Police Service (the MPS) covers an area of 620 square miles and a population of 7.6 million. London attracts 27 million overnight visitors each year. The capital hosts the Monarchy and the Parliament. The MPS is responsible for policing the most ethnically and culturally diverse city in the UK. In January 2005, a survey showed that there were more than 240 languages spoken in London and over 50 diverse communities with a population of more than 10,000. The capital contains some of the most affluent and most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. London carries the greatest threat from terrorism of any city in England and Wales. Counter-terrorism is part of daily policing in the MPS.
- 2 The Metropolitan Police Authority (the Authority) was established in July 2000. Before this the Home Secretary had oversight of the MPS. This marked a fundamental change in the policing of London, creating local democratic scrutiny and accountability. As well as the strategic role for policing in London, the Authority uniquely has responsibilities which cover an entire region together with specified national and international duties and obligations. The Authority holds the Commissioner to account for his responsibilities in the day-to-day delivery of policing. The Authority works closely with the MPS and its partners, including London's 32 borough councils, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs)<sup>1</sup> and other agencies in the criminal justice system.
- 3 In October 2008, the law changed to allow the Mayor of London to become the Chair of the Police Authority, which he duly did. The Mayor appointed the Deputy Mayor for Policing as the Vice Chair, to be responsible for managing the day-to-day business of the Authority. After the on-site inspection, the Mayor relinquished the Chairmanship and appointed the Vice Chair to take over the role. An independent member has been nominated to act as the Vice Chair. In this report, references to the Chairmanship and Vice Chairmanship reflect the previous arrangements.
- 4 The Authority has 23 members. Twelve are London Assembly members, including the Mayor. The Mayor appoints the 11 elected members to the Authority in accordance with the political proportionality of the London Assembly. There are 11 independent members; one is appointed directly by the Home Secretary and the others appointed through an open recruitment process. Members are appointed for a period of four years. Of the 23 members, 12 are male, ten are female and there is currently one vacancy.

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<sup>1</sup> The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act established Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships between the police, local authorities, probation service, health authorities, the voluntary sector and local residents and businesses. Police Authorities work with the CDRPs to reduce crime and disorder, consult with the people in the area and devise strategies to tackle priority problems.

## Context

- 5** The Authority's secretariat, led by the Chief Executive, supports the work of the committees and members. Treasury and internal audit functions are carried out within the secretariat. The secretariat also engages with communities, stakeholders and partners across the capital. The Chief Executive led an organisational restructuring in autumn 2009, and this has resulted in key senior management appointments to help deliver the priorities. As at February 2010, there are 98 staff (headcount) working for the Authority, and approximately 40 per cent of these work in the Directorate of Audit, Risk and Assurance.
- 6** The MPS is the largest police service in the country. It employs more than 33,000 police officers together with about 14,200 police staff, 270 traffic wardens and 4,700 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). There is a borough commander for each of the 32 boroughs and management leads for the 116 Operational Command Units. The MPS has more Association of Chief Police Officer (ACPO) officers than other police forces.
- 7** The budget set for the Authority and the MPS for 2008/09 totalled £2.7 billion (£3.6 billion gross expenditure), of which the Authority received £12.9 million for its own budget. The MPS has around three times more staff than the next largest police force and its budget accounts for around one quarter of the annual cost of police services in England and Wales. It is one of the largest public sector organisations in the country.
- 8** The finances of the Authority and the MPS are complex. The main sources of funding are:

  - Specific Grant allocated by the Home Secretary, including special payments recognising the national and capital city functions together with other specific funding to support areas such as counter-terrorism policing;
  - Revenue Support Grant and Non Domestic Rates allocated by the Department for Communities and Local Government and distributed according to the police funding formula; and
  - Council Tax – unlike other police authorities, the Authority is not a precepting authority and the Mayor decides the level of the precept for the Authority.

In addition, there are other grants allocated for specific purposes, for example counter-terrorism and the Crime Fighting Fund.
- 9** For the first time in 2008/09 there was a three-year grant settlement covering 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- 10** There have been significant changes in MPS leadership over the past months, with the appointment of Sir Paul Stephenson as the Commissioner and appointment of key senior officers who make up the MPS senior management team.

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# Executive summary

- 11** The Authority is performing adequately and has made significant improvements in its governance of the MPS in the past three years. It is well placed to improve further. The Authority is self aware. It recognises strengths and areas for improvement and it has strong political and official leadership to drive change. The Authority is strengthening systems, processes and governance. It has recently restructured the executive office to focus its activities to deliver priorities.
- 12** In spring 2009 the Authority published Met Forward, which is a strategic document that sets out the direction and priorities for policing in London. Met Forward is an aspirational document which has a set clear of priorities – eight work strands for the MPS to develop and perform to improve services, provide better value for money and fight crime to protect the public. However, these priorities are not yet, but need to be, reflected in future policing plans. There are good examples of medium term planning, for example meeting the challenges of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- 13** The Vice Chair and the Chief Executive of the Authority give clear leadership. There are regular informal and formal communication arrangements with the Commissioner and his senior colleagues that have helped improve relationships between the Authority and the MPS. The Authority has robust processes in place to make effective senior appointments, including the appointment of the new Commissioner and the senior management team.
- 14** Members are well supported and have the skills to fulfil their governance role. However, members’ skills are not always matched to fulfil all governance functions and the Authority needs to give more attention to the development and training of members. There are good and effective arrangements to investigate complaints against senior police officers at ACPO level.
- 15** The Authority has a track record on tackling inequality and continues to give this priority. The Authority has set up a Domestic and Sexual Violence Board to monitor, scrutinise and support the MPS in its performance and response to domestic and sexual violence. As a result, it is effectively disseminating best practice and innovation across the 32 boroughs. Progress in addressing race and faith issues in relation to employment and promotion has been slow.
- 16** In the aftermath of the G20 protests, the Authority established the Civil Liberties Panel to hear evidence in public and inform future policing arrangements. The Civil Liberties Panel is also a means of securing public confidence in policing tactics in the capital and ensuring that the MPS maintains and increases public trust. Its role is to develop an understanding of civil liberties and human rights and their consequences for policing.

## Executive summary

- 17** The Authority is good at holding the Commissioner to account and has a wide range of effective scrutiny arrangements to ensure that the MPS is delivering services that matter to Londoners. Scrutiny is conducted in an open and a transparent manner. This is even more impressive given the number of issues and the scale of the challenge that the Authority and the MPS face for policing matters. The Authority has taken a national lead on the scrutiny of counter-terrorism. While scrutiny of MPS performance is focused to deal with issues that matter to people in London, the impact of the Authority's scrutiny and oversight of the MPS' central functions, including human resources (HR), has been limited. The Authority's scrutiny and oversight of the MPS' special units is weak, and this is recognised by the Authority.
- 18** The Authority is working adequately with the MPS to set targets. Its commitment to citizen focus underpins the approach to the Single Confidence Target and the delivery of the Policing Pledge, a national set of promises to the public which every force has signed up to. The recent HMIC Pledge inspection graded the MPS as Fair.
- 19** The Authority and the MPS face significant challenges to secure effective community engagement. The Authority is striving to improve the ways in which it engages with the diverse communities of London. There are good examples of engaging with young people. The Authority needs to work with the MPS to ensure that local community views are reflected in setting priorities for London-wide functions. Further work is needed to ensure that all policing services are accessible to all London communities, including Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and vulnerable groups.
- 20** The Authority knows it needs to strengthen its approach to community engagement and improve its work with the community. This includes building community confidence and skills to better engage with the Authority and the MPS and voice its issues and concerns. Feedback to users and communities on action taken as a result of consultation exercises needs to improve. Further alignment of key strategies, such as the communication strategy, will enhance closer working between the Authority and the MPS.
- 21** The Authority has a good understanding of the partnerships it is involved in and works well at a strategic level with key regional organisations. Governance in London is complicated, with 32 local authorities, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and national government interest. Joint Engagement Meetings (JEMs)<sup>11</sup> are helping the Authority work more effectively at local levels.

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<sup>11</sup> The Joint Engagement Meetings (JEMs) are chaired by the Authority, supported by the Assistant Commissioner for Territorial Policing and the relevant local authority lead, with each London Local Borough Commander attending with other key partners.

**22** The finances of the MPS and the Authority are complex, and effective management is challenging. The budget requirement for the Authority and the MPS for 2008/09 totalled £2.7 billion (£3.6 billion gross expenditure). The Authority's approach to value for money is adequate. It has a sound understanding of the need to meet the substantial challenge of securing value for money. Following a corporate benchmarking exercise, the Authority has identified high spending areas and has plans in place to tackle these and other key service areas. The Authority has a sound understanding of its financial position and has begun the process of dealing with the medium term challenge of budget and financial planning as well as the process of securing sustainable savings. It is also strengthening its risk management framework, which it acknowledges needs to improve.

**Table 1 Summary of inspection scores**

<b>Key questions</b>	<b>Score</b>
How does the police authority ensure that both it and the force have the leadership, capacity and capability needed to deliver good quality service outcomes on behalf of the public?	2
How effective is the police authority in scrutinising and ensuring the force delivers the priority services that matter to local people?	3
How well does the police authority achieve results through community engagement and partnerships to deliver its ambitions and strategic priorities?	2
How effective is the police authority in ensuring a clear and sustained focus on value for money to secure a good deal for the public?	2
<b>Overall score</b>	<b>2</b>

# Setting strategic direction and priorities

**How does the Police Authority ensure that both it and the force have the leadership, capacity and capability needed to deliver good quality service outcomes on behalf of the public?**

- 23** The Authority is performing adequately in this area and has good plans for improvement. It is a relatively new organisation, established in 2000, and replaced the Home Secretary, to whom the MPS was historically accountable. The MPS faces the largest and most complex policing challenge in the UK. The Authority is strengthening the systems, processes and relationships necessary to set strategic direction and priorities for the MPS. This is an improving picture. The Authority is ensuring that its direction and priorities as set out in Met Forward will be reflected in future policing plans.
- 24** The Authority has put in place effective governance arrangements in support of national challenges such as the 2012 Olympics. The Authority has established robust selection processes to support the building of a strong ACPO chief officer team. It is also influencing the roles of other senior officers with the aim of strengthening police leadership and partnership working in London's 32 boroughs. The Authority is committed to tackling inequalities and improving outcomes for people in vulnerable circumstances and knows there is still much to do.
- 25** The Authority has a high calibre of members. It needs to make effective use of their knowledge and skills by ensuring that this is given full weight when appointing members to its committees. Effective professional development processes are needed to enhance members' knowledge so that they are better equipped to undertake their governance roles. Key challenges are to strengthen the Authority's oversight of the MPS HR strategy to achieve alignment with the priorities set out in Met Forward, and to continue to work with the MPS in achieving cultural change in support of equality and diversity.

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### Strengths

- 26** The Authority demonstrates clear ambition through Met Forward, setting out the direction and priorities for policing in London in a style that is accessible to the public. Met Forward contains eight work strands for the MPS to develop and perform to improve services, provide better value for money and fight crime to protect the public. Met Forward highlights Londoners' concerns for policing and sets out the Authority's ambition to provide strong leadership, open and transparent accountability and effective working with partners and the community.
- 27** The Authority was influential in the development of the current Policing Plan, 2008-2011. The plan clearly shows how the MPS will meet and address the Mayor's priorities, which were then articulated in Met Forward. The Authority has begun to ensure better linkages between the Met Forward priorities and budget plans and chief officers' Performance Development Reviews (PDRs). Additionally, the Authority is also reviewing its governance structures to align better with the priorities set out in Met Forward.
- 28** There are examples of the Authority planning for medium term strategic challenges at regional and national levels. As a member of the Olympics Security Board, it is actively engaged in planning how it will meet the resourcing requirements the Olympics will put on the MPS. While this is principally focused on the human resource requirements, it includes significant infrastructure and intelligence resources including the provision of site security between now and when the Olympic Games takes place. Similarly the Authority is working effectively with the MPS on counter-terrorism through the Counter-Terrorism and Protective Services sub-committee, chaired by the Home Office representative on the Authority to ensure accountability for this centrally funded initiative.
- 29** The Vice Chair and the Chief Executive provide strong and visible leadership. As a result, the Authority now has robust processes in place to make effective senior officer appointments and there is evidence of influence over the roles and skills required, not just for the chief police officers but also for other chief officer equivalent staff. There are good informal and formal arrangements for communications between the Authority and the MPS, for example using weekly meetings with the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner to build shared understanding and confidence. The Chief Executive has been instrumental in developing stronger relationships, not only with the MPS senior officers but also with other regional bodies such as the London Councils and the GLA.
- 30** The Authority is listening to partner concerns. For example to support stable leadership at borough level and promote longer term individual development and better partnership working, the Authority has worked with the MPS and agreed that borough commanders will remain in post for a minimum of three years.

## Setting strategic direction and priorities

- 31 There are good examples of the Authority tackling the challenging problems of inequality and improving outcomes for people in vulnerable circumstances in London. It is committed to the process and is aware that there is still much to do. Following the G20 protests the Authority led a public debate and established the Civil Liberties Panel, inviting members of the public to give evidence and hear their concerns in an open meeting which was also webcast. The Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) scheme is well established with 400 volunteers working in 32 boroughs. The Authority has excellent procedures in place for recruitment, training and assessment of the ICVs and there is evidence that the scheme is making a difference to the conditions under which people are detained.
- 32 The Authority has appropriate levels of member and officer skills to adequately discharge its governance responsibilities. The Authority has conducted a review to ensure that staffing resource is aligned to the future direction of the organisation and that member's benefit further from support in their governance and accountability role. The restructuring exercise has been well led with evidence of good engagement with staff.
- 33 Complaints are handled in accordance with statutory provisions and guidance from the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and are reported to the Professional Standards Cases sub-committee. The Authority has a well established process to investigate and address complaints against ACPO officers.

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## Areas for improvement

- 34 The Authority has recognised the need to strengthen the oversight of the MPS Human Resources Plan/strategy. It is aware that it needs to dedicate more resources, undertake a review of costs and benefits to improve productivity and efficiency and improve focus on equality, diversity and cultural change. The Authority's oversight is being strengthened through input into the preparation of the MPS HR Strategy 2010-2013, and plans to implement Met Forward HR initiatives. Also, the chair of the sub-committee has, over recent months, helped to establish effective working, including challenge and scrutiny, with MPS senior HR managers.
- 35 Progress in addressing race and faith issues in relation to employment of MPS staff has been slow. The Authority established an independent Race and Faith Inquiry and it has published an interim report. However, the final report has been delayed and is now not expected until May 2010.
- 36 Member skills are not always effectively directed to support the Authority in discharging its governance responsibilities. The Authority lead member role, in relation to central and specialist units, ceased in 2008 and as a result scrutiny and governance is variable in those areas. The rationale for this change was a lack of formal reporting back to the Authority but since then the committee structure has been strengthened. There is evidence that the current process for allocation of members to committees is inadequate, with too few members putting themselves forward for a number of committees and sub-committees. The Authority is currently embedding PDR processes for members and also recognises that take-up of the wide range of training opportunities needs to improve.

- 37** The Authority has been good at handling complaints against senior officers, but it has been slow in getting member engagement in monitoring and addressing complaints against other police staff and officers. Until recently, monitoring had been undertaken by officers without involvement from members. The Authority has, with the MPS, recently developed a new protocol, involving members, for dip sampling of MPS complaints and misconduct cases. It is yet to be implemented and the Authority will also wish to consider how lessons learnt will be embedded in the MPS.

# Performance scrutiny

## **How effective is the Police Authority in scrutinising and ensuring the force delivers the priority services that matter to local people?**

- 38** The Authority is performing well in this area. The Authority is clear about its role and members do not underestimate the challenge they face in holding to account the Commissioner for the delivery of a complex £3.6 billion organisation of over 50,000 police officers and staff delivering policing responsibilities from the neighbourhood to the national. The Authority has a wide range of scrutiny approaches including effective lead member engagement through to in-depth scrutiny reviews involving the public and stakeholders. The Authority effectively uses the good range of skills and experience of its members, although their more extensive use across all MPS activities would enhance the effectiveness of scrutiny.
- 39** The Authority's business is conducted with appropriate openness and transparency, for example through the webcasting of Authority meetings. Londoners and relevant stakeholder are encouraged to be involved in the Authority meetings with good use of petitions and submission of questions to hold the Commissioner to account. Members are supported well in their role and the recent staffing restructure, taking effect from January 2010, is designed to enhance this support further. The Authority is committed to citizen focus and this underpins its approach to improving public confidence and delivering the Policing Pledge. The Authority works well with the MPS and plays an active role in setting targets. The Authority has a robust approach to scrutiny of counter-terrorism, on which it takes the national lead, and although impact has yet to be proved, the approach could be usefully applied to scrutiny of other protective services.

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**Strengths**

- 40** The Authority is effective at holding the Commissioner to account. There are a number of ways it does this:
- through monthly meetings of the Authority, which are open to the public and are webcast;
  - by probing the Commissioner in open session on his written performance report on policing activities that matter most to Londoners;
  - regular meetings between the Chair of the Authority, the Vice Chair, the Chief Executive and the Commissioner and MPS senior staff to discuss performance;
  - weekly meetings to brief the Vice Chair and to discuss performance and business planning projects to deliver policing priorities; and
  - oversight of the MPS chief officer PDR process.
- 41** The Authority has a wide range and depth of skills within its membership to undertake its governance functions and its scrutiny work. This is enhanced further through the co-option of risk and health and safety specialists onto the Corporate Governance Committee. Members are supported well in their work. This includes provision of training and regular briefings, although the take-up of these is variable. Currently attendance at such training and briefings is not considered a core requirement of membership of the Authority.
- 42** The Authority has a range of good approaches to scrutiny. This includes the structured weekly meetings held between the Vice Chair and the Commissioner with senior staff attending, individual members' links to boroughs, lead member roles in some areas of policing activities, formal sub-committees and committees and thematic scrutiny reviews which involve the public and stakeholders. The establishment of the Business Management Group (BMG), comprising the Vice Chair, Chairs of the four standing committees and the Authority's executive senior management team, has improved effective management of formal business. The workload of some committees, particularly the Strategic and Operational Policing Committee, is substantial. Work is underway to develop project initiation documents for each of the eight strands in Met Forward to assist in the scrutiny of the delivery of its key priorities.
- 43** There is effective challenge through the Authority's meeting structure. Members routinely ask robust questions of senior MPS staff. For example, at the Strategic and Operational Policing Committee members undertake a detailed review of performance and seek in-depth responses on significantly under or over performing areas. In respect of emerging issues, members also seek assurance on the impact of action taken by the MPS and request regular updates. The Authority's use of commissioning briefs, setting out the requirements for reports prepared by the MPS for formal consideration by the Authority, assists in making effective use of the Authority's limited resources. This also helps to ensure that reports directly address the concerns of members. Members are supported well in their scrutiny work by briefings prepared by Authority staff.

## Performance scrutiny

- 44** The Authority has a highly effective audit function. The audit function has concentrated on probity in the use of public resources such as the audit of corporate credit card use and contract compliance. The audit programme is designed to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Authority's and the MPS' internal control framework, including system audits, reviews, advisory work and conduct of investigations as appropriate. The Authority has reviewed the function to ensure that future audit approach is more risk based and focused on high risk/cost areas. The head of Internal Audit will also lead on reviewing and driving improvement to risk management.
- 45** Members are robust in their follow up of the implementation of recommendations. For example, in following up the recommendations made by the Stockwell Panel<sup>III</sup>, members noted progress made and have raised concerns about the pace of action. Members also requested that future reports contained a grid containing a table with key milestones for ease of review. There are regular monthly headline reports of performance against the targets set out in the policing plans. The Authority also conducts more in-depth scrutiny of specific issues, for example meetings at borough level to understand and challenge performance in relation to sexual and domestic violence, with the opportunity also taken to share best practice.
- 46** The Authority makes effective use of scrutiny reviews to examine in-depth issues of concern to Londoners. The reviews are inclusive of stakeholders and the public. For example, the Authority sought views on terrorism and counter-terrorism of a diverse selection of 1,000 people who live and work in London. The resulting report, Counter-Terrorism – The London Debate 2006/07, contained a range of recommendations for the MPS and other police authorities and forces to improve the tackling of terrorism. The Authority has established a standing panel, the Civil Liberties Panel. Following concerns over the policing of public protests at the G20 summit, in April 2009, the panel held open public events to better understand the views of Londoners and protesters. Recommendations from other reviews are already being implemented by the MPS leading to changes in service delivery. For example, the Counter-Terrorism report proposed that the MPS increase its outreach work at grassroots level, in particular with students and teachers in schools, universities and colleges, with small businesses, and with women and young people in Muslim and other communities to build community confidence and intelligence.

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<sup>III</sup> The Metropolitan Police Authority established the Stockwell Panel to undertake the scrutiny of how the Metropolitan Police Service responded to the learning from the tragic death of Mr Jean Charles de Menezes at Stockwell underground station on 22 July 2005.

- 47** The Authority is adequately engaged in the target setting process. Using an agreed planning timetable, the Authority's officers work closely with MPS staff to develop and propose targets for detailed consideration and approval by members. The target setting process includes evaluation of current performance and makes use of comparative borough information and data for most similar forces. The Authority has ensured inclusion of targets of concern to Londoners, for example to address anti-social road use. There are good plans in place to make this planning and target setting process more robust. The Authority has recently gained assurance from the MPS that members and officers will be involved in both the planning and target setting process earlier in the timetable than has been the case in the development of the current plan. This will also allow for further integration of Met Forward priorities into the policing plans and detailed business plans.
- 48** Members have an adequate understanding of the Policing Pledge. Prior to its introduction the Authority had demonstrated its commitment to citizen focused policing through support of the MPS' Policing Promise. The Pledge has effectively been overlaid on the earlier Promise. The Authority receives regular reports on the delivery of the constituent elements of the Pledge together with the outcomes of HMIC inspections of the Pledge. The HMIC Pledge inspection graded the MPS as Fair. Members use these assessments to assure the delivery of the Pledge for Londoners.
- 49** The Authority is committed to increasing confidence in policing. Confidence is one of the three key outcomes identified in Met Forward. The Civil Liberties Panel, which was introduced in Met Forward, acts as a means of securing public confidence in policing tactics in the capital. Most recent public confidence levels, measured by the British Crime Survey, were at 48.2 per cent (rolling average to December 2008). This places the MPS as one of the top performing police forces within the most similar group and is ranked above average when compared to all police forces in England and Wales. The MPS' most similar group comprises Greater Manchester, West Midlands and West Yorkshire. Authority members on CDRPs have had briefings on confidence in policing. Members have also benefited from briefings on the Public Attitude Survey, which provides data on policing, including confidence. The Authority, in discussion with London Councils, has agreed to use JEMs as a tool to help achieve the confidence target set for local authorities and the police.
- 50** The Authority is the national lead for counter-terrorism. It has a robust approach to scrutiny of counter-terrorism activity. There are appropriately vetted members who act as lead members. This has ensured that the Authority has a thorough understanding of this sensitive area of policing, although the impact is not yet proved. There is informed and effective oversight of the significant resources dedicated to this function. In addition, there are formal structures for counter-terrorism oversight, including meetings open to the public. The Authority led the establishment of, and chairs, the national Counter-Terrorism Oversight Group, which is comprised of the police authorities with national counter-terrorism resources. In addition to understanding the use of national resources, police authorities have benefited from the sharing of the Authority's best practice. In other areas of protective services the Authority's oversight is adequately exercised, largely through its formal committee structures.

### Areas for improvement

- 51** The Authority needs to improve its scrutiny of specialist directorates. Recent changes have been made to committee and oversight groups. This has resulted in the work of the Information Services/Information Technology oversight group being absorbed into the work of the Resources sub-committee. This area of activity has a significant capital and revenue spend and is critical to both current policing delivery and future efficiency gains. The Internal Audit reviews all specialist areas of business including counter-terrorism and protection services. Extending the approach taken to counter-terrorism policing to all other protective services would benefit the Authority ensuring a robust and effective scrutiny of all MPS activities.
- 52** The Authority's decision to move away from the use of lead members was because of a lack of clarity in the corporate function performed by individual members. However, existing formal scrutiny structures no longer assure the opportunity to gain a wider understanding of the MPS, in particular the central MPS directorates. This means that members are now less informed to scrutinise these areas. Clarification is needed on:
- the role and purpose of link and lead members and officers when working with the MPS and partner bodies such as CDRPs; and
  - the purpose of JEMs, as it is not universally understood. While the Authority is clear that the core purpose of JEMs is problem solving, the need to clarify with partners is still evident.
- 53** While the revised formal committee structure has coherence, the workload for individual committees, particularly the Strategic and Operational Policing Committee, is substantial. As a result, there is a risk of insufficient time for robust scrutiny or of deferral of matters to future meetings, thus adversely impacting on scheduled scrutiny work plans. A review of the revised structure needs to take this issue into consideration. The use of themed scrutiny reviews has proved effective. The scale of the challenge to deliver policing in the capital makes it inevitable that significant incidents require review, scrutiny and learning for both the MPS and policing more widely. Such incidents will often impact not only on the Authority but also on other agencies such as HMIC and the IPCC. Each body will have statutory duties and responsibilities, and early co-operation and understanding would give greater clarity for the public on the work being undertaken and reduce any risk of duplication of review activity.

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# Engaging with communities

## How well does the Police Authority achieve results through community engagement and partnerships to deliver its ambitions and strategic priorities?

- 54** The Authority is performing adequately in this area. In the context of London's vibrant and diverse community, it is striving to improve the ways in which it engages with the communities of London. The Authority has a good range of approaches for consulting the public; however, it recognises that its processes need to be more tailored to be representative of Londoners. There are examples of bespoke methods of engagement to inform priorities and good use is made of the information gathered from various consultation exercises. Local priorities reflect local concerns, but there is scope to strengthen the link between non borough priorities and local community concerns. Feedback on the outcome of public consultation is weak, in particular informing the public of action taken as a result, and improvements are needed to extend its reach and impact.
- 55** Limited progress has been made in the implementation of the current joint Community Engagement Strategy and the Diversity and Equality Strategy. The Authority has a good understanding of the partnerships it is involved in, with some good examples of strategic partnership working. Member involvement in Community and Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs)<sup>IV</sup> has improved but their roles as statutory members of CDRPs need to be defined and communicated. Local issues are balanced against regional and national concerns through use of a balanced scorecard of variable targets across boroughs and through the priorities set for specialist branches.

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### Strengths

- 56** The Authority has a good range of public consultation sources to inform the setting of priorities. The Authority makes effective use of the MPS Public Attitude Survey through inclusion of additional questions, providing it with information which is representative of the population of London. The Authority also makes good use of its own tailored survey 'Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner' to inform the Policing Plan priorities. There are good mechanisms to contact diverse communities using the contacts database modelled against the six strands of the MPS Diversity and Equality Strategy.
- 57** Consultation exercises are used to inform resource planning. For example, responses to the 'Have Your Say on Policing in London' consultation are fully analysed and presented to the Authority's Strategic and Operational Policing Committee. The timing of this consultation exercise is arranged specifically so that analysis feeds into the business plan.

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<sup>IV</sup> Community and Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs) are local groups to undertake community engagement to obtain the views of local people in the area about policing matters and gain their co-operation with the police in preventing crime in their area.

## Engaging with communities

- 58** The Authority is taking the lead in the development of a joint engagement strategy for 2010-2013 and has made good progress by working closely with the MPS in this regard. The Authority is committed to ensuring that lessons are learnt and improvements made to enhance its approach to community engagement.
- 59** The Authority makes effective use of the MPS' mechanisms for community engagement, such as the Independent Advisory Group in relation to Trident (operation to investigate gun related crime in London's black communities). Independent Advisory Groups and links with the borough engagement and consultative mechanisms in relation to Trident and Firearms (the MPS licensing team for firearms), help inform the impact of their activities upon local communities.
- 60** The Authority makes good use of information gathered through scrutiny and consultation in relation to equality and gender issues. The Domestic and Sexual Violence Board is a good example of consultation with local borough representatives. It monitors, assesses and challenges performance in relation to this important protective service. It also identifies and shares good practice. For example, in its annual report 2009/10 the Board noted the successful community engagement with hard to reach communities, in particular engagement with the Muslim Women's Forum and Primary Care Trust.
- 61** The Authority has a good understanding of the partnerships in which it is involved. A partnerships database and toolkit has been developed and is being used to enhance the Authority's and the MPS' working arrangements with significant partners. This has included a mapping exercise which has allowed the Authority and the MPS to jointly identify 323 different partnerships in which it is involved, their geographical spread and the nature of the work being undertaken. This is good practice as noted by the District Auditor; however, it is still at an early stage of implementation. As a result, the Authority is now focusing on key partnerships with the 32 boroughs.
- 62** The Authority has put in place good arrangements to engage partners. JEMs, which include local authority representatives, other public service providers and borough commanders, have been held for 31 boroughs. Action plans are produced after each meeting and the Authority is beginning to develop a database of good practice that has been identified through these meetings. Authority members are also engaged in CDRPs and CPEGs.
- 63** The Authority is effective at partnership working at a strategic and operational level. It is actively working in partnership with the GLA and the Local Criminal Justice Board to tackle youth violence. The implementation of the joint strategy, Time for Action, is work in progress with some promising work planned such as Project Oracle. This aims to identify learning from youth consultation on the causes, effects and impact of young people's involvement in crime as victims, witnesses and offenders and how this influenced their interactions with the police. While work in this area is positive, there is a need to ensure that several strategies that address this theme are complementary, coherent and have clearly stated outcome measures. The Authority has also effectively worked with partners to reduce crime and address community concerns and social disorder. Joint working with Transport for London has increased the uniformed presence on buses, trains and stations, leading to a 16 per cent reduction in crime on public transport.

- 64** There are some examples of the Authority identifying local priorities that reflect local concerns. The inclusion of a roads policing priority which had not previously been identified by the MPS was led by the Authority in response to local concerns about the anti-social use of roads. Targets for boroughs reflect local challenges and concerns.
- 65** In partnership with all London boroughs, the Authority and the MPS have worked effectively with other local partners, including local football clubs and voluntary and community organisations to engage young people, in particular those between 12 and 18 years old. Through the Kickz<sup>v</sup> project, the MPS has been able to break down some barriers between the police and young people. The programme has provided youth inclusion and diversionary activities to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in targeted neighbourhoods. This has also helped increase young people's interest in the police service. The Authority and MPS staff have used this opportunity well to understand young people's needs and address its action accordingly.
- 66** The Authority has a good track record on tackling inequality in the Authority and the MPS. It ensures that race and diversity implications are considered in every committee report that comes to the Authority and, where relevant, that reports are accompanied by Equality Impact Assessments. The Authority has set targets for BME recruitment and progression. It has undertaken a number of scrutiny reviews relating to equality and diversity issues through its Equal Opportunities and Diversity Board, with support from Londoners and partners. The Authority regularly considers formal reports on the diversity make-up of specialist areas of the MPS and progress in delivering increased minority representation.
- 67** The Authority is committed to addressing equality and diversity in how policing in London is delivered. It's Generic Equality Scheme – 2008 provides the strategic context to mainstream equality and diversity in the Authority and the MPS, and contains positive and wide reaching intentions. The Scheme encourages deaf and disabled Londoners to participate in the monitoring of all MPS services. The Authority completes Equality Impact Assessments for new policies and strategies. For example, the Equality Impact Assessment of Recruitment Policy and Procedures identified the need to provide guidance and advice to all those involved in recruitment processes on how to avoid bias, undertake questioning techniques and avoid discriminatory questions. However, application of these assessments has not always been consistent.

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<sup>v</sup> Kickz is a national programme to target some of the most disadvantaged areas of the country in order to create safer, stronger, more respectful communities through the development of young people's potential.

### Areas for improvement

- 68** The Authority needs to ensure that its consultation exercises are effective in engaging London's diverse population, including disaffected and under-represented groups. The Authority also needs to ensure that it seeks and understands the views of London's business community, which is currently under-represented in surveys.
- 69** The Authority needs to ensure that results from all consultation exercises inform priorities for all MPS functions, including specialist branches. The priorities of the MPS specialist departments, such as those for the Territorial Support Group<sup>VI</sup>, are not currently based on community consultation to the same extent as borough policing. Results of consultation with the local community should also be considered fully to inform priorities for non Territorial Policing business.
- 70** Progress in delivering the previous joint Community Engagement Strategy 2006-2009 has been patchy. The strategy was designed to address the MPS culture and day-to-day mechanisms of community engagement. However, the Authority aimed to use the engagement process to gather community views on policing. This resulted in limited implementation of the strategy.
- 71** The Authority had limited oversight of the delivery of the Community Engagement Strategy. The associated delivery plan lacked SMART<sup>VII</sup> targets, and expected outcomes were not clearly defined. The Authority and the MPS have recognised these limitations, and work is underway to develop a revised strategy. Work to strengthen the community voice and build capacity to engage within communities is also an acknowledged area of development.
- 72** Feedback to users and various sections of the community on action taken as a result of consultation exercises is limited. There is considerable scope to improve feedback following the determination of corporate priorities after community consultation. Currently the Authority provides feedback to all respondents to the survey 'Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner' through a feedback sheet that summarises findings. This is accessible through the Authority's website; however there is scope to focus the feedback for young people, BME groups and other groups.
- 73** Work is needed to ensure that all policing services are more widely accessible to all London communities including BME communities and vulnerable groups.
- 74** The Authority has recently revised its communications and media strategy for Met Forward. The Authority needs to work closely with the MPS to ensure effective and complementary communication to internal and external communities and stakeholders.
- 75** There is a need to clarify and communicate roles and responsibilities. For example:
- the role of the link member with regard to participation in CDRPs and engagement with local authority partners on boroughs; and
  - the purpose of JEMs so that they provide a valuable learning opportunity for all partners.

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<sup>VI</sup> The Territorial Support Group specialises in public order containment among other specialist policing.

<sup>VII</sup> SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.

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# Ensuring VFM and productivity

## **How effective is the Police Authority in ensuring a clear and sustained focus on VFM in order to secure a good deal for the public?**

- 76** The Authority is performing adequately in this area. The finances of the MPS and the Authority are complex and managing them is challenging. It is one of the largest public sector organisations in the country. The budget set for the Authority and the MPS totalled £2.7 billion in 2008/09 (£3.6 billion gross expenditure), of which the Authority received £12.9 million for its own budget. The MPS has around three times more staff than the next largest police force and has traditionally been well resourced because of its multiple responsibilities. The Authority is effective at holding the MPS to account for money spent in some key areas. However, it still has some way to go to provide assurance of value for money across all areas of MPS business.
- 77** The Authority knows that it faces the substantial challenge of securing efficiencies and improving value for money for the tax payer. It is beginning to put in place improved systems and processes. Although benchmarking is at an early stage, the Authority has carried out a corporate benchmarking exercise and identified high spending areas. At a strategic level, there are some examples of collaborative working, for example the joint funding of PCSOs to increase uniformed presence. It is also working well at a regional level in regard to the 2012 Olympics and is taking action to ensure that there are adequate resources available to police the event.
- 78** The Authority has a sound understanding of its financial position. It has identified that it has an immediate challenge of firming up processes and financial planning so that it secures sustainable savings. It is progressing plans to align Mayoral priorities with the budget process so that it is well prepared for the financial challenges it faces in the medium to longer term. The aim of the Authority is to secure 'more for less', that is better service performance and outcomes for the public with less resources. However, delivery of this ambition is at a relatively early stage. The Authority is beginning to strengthen its risk management framework. It has identified that its approach was not sufficiently robust to support effective strategic management of risk and has begun to put in place a more rigorous strategic management framework to better support corporate planning and decision making. The Authority needs to improve its long term financial planning, strategic risk management and benchmarking to inform decision making relating to productivity.

### Strengths

- 79** The Authority has good capability at member, chief and senior officer levels. The Authority has made effective senior officer appointments to key posts such as the Treasurer. Internal Audit restructuring has recently been agreed to increase focus on risk based auditing and to provide assurance on value for money to the Authority members. It has strengthened strategic capability through members' skills in finance and risk management. The Star Chamber<sup>viii</sup> process helps key members to get a better overview of finances and provides a good opportunity for members to work with officers from the Authority and the MPS to better inform future budget plans.
- 80** The Authority has a good track record of achieving planned efficiencies. In 2008/09, it exceeded its efficiency target of £144 million by £3.9 million and also maintained its financial reserves. The Audit Commission assessed the Authority as achieving level 2 – performing adequately, in its use of resources assessment in 2008/09. The Authority is aware of the future significant budget gap of £200 million for 2011/12 budgets. It is also aware of the impact of the financial challenges facing public services and as a result it will require a more robust and innovative approach to drive the efficiency and productivity agenda. However, it does not yet have firm plans to tackle this financial shortfall and it has asked the MPS in the first instance to identify savings to meet this gap in its bid to improve long term financial planning.
- 81** The Authority has made adequate progress in ensuring the delivery of value for money. It knows that much more needs to be delivered. Through the Met Support strand of Met Forward, the Authority has agreed to undertake reviews of a number of corporate functions to address this. These include:
- review of estates strategy to ensure maximum and effective use of its land and buildings;
  - improving governance arrangements, for example the Resources and Productivity sub-committee to have a better oversight to improve benchmarking information and inform decision making;
  - review of procurement services, with increased capacity both at member and senior officer level; and
  - review of the information technology strategy to improve opportunities for making further productivity gains.
- 82** There are good examples of the Authority influencing and working with the MPS to reduce crime and improve efficiency. The funding of Operation Blunt 2, an initiative to reduce knife crime, led to a 13 per cent reduction in knife crime between 2007/08 and 2008/09. In addition, there are other initiatives in place, such as review of police staff in custody suites and the establishment of virtual courts for routine offences, which are expected to generate savings.

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<sup>viii</sup> The Star Chamber is a private meeting between Authority members and officers and MPS senior officers and managers to review key business planning processes in order to scrutinise and challenge financial plans and savings and growth proposals.

- 83** The Authority is effectively directing resources to key priorities. Targeted resources are delivering reductions in crime. For example, there has been a 16 per cent reduction in crime on Transport for London buses and underground trains as a result of increased uniformed presence. Resources have been directed to deal with dangerous dogs used as weapons, and joint funding of additional policing and PCSOs in some boroughs has led to a reduction in anti-social behaviour.
- 84** The Authority is developing its understanding of the risks and potential financial consequences of London hosting the 2012 Olympics. It has started to take action to ensure that adequate resources are made available to police the event. The Authority has a dedicated sub-committee which receives and reviews reports on the implications for policing of the 2012 Games. Having identified funding requirements, the Authority is working closely with the MPS to ensure that it is able to meet the policing requirements and address funding requirements to effectively police the 2012 Olympics.
- 85** The Authority's committee structure supports effective decision making. The Authority has restructured its committees and sub-committees, which gives the Authority greater control over financial and resource planning and decision making. The BMG comprises senior members and officers. The BMG reviews and monitors progress against key corporate objectives, for example relating to resource deployment and the budget process.
- 86** The Authority is improving at holding the MPS to account for its proposed and actual expenditure. The Authority has a rigorous financial planning cycle which includes regular and detailed reporting on budgets by MPS senior staff to members through a Star Chamber process. This helps the Authority to make informed decisions about resource allocation and priorities.

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### Areas for improvement

- 87** The scale and complexity of the MPS' finances place a particularly pressing demand on the Authority to focus activity on improvements in value for money. A high emphasis needs to be placed upon police productivity and in delivering efficiencies beyond that needed to close the immediate budget gap of £200 million.
- 88** Risk management is not yet integrated and embedded. The Authority has put in place a governance framework for strategic risk management. More robust member and senior officer oversight and challenge of the MPS' key corporate risks are being developed. Members with specific risk management experience have been co-opted to committees. The Authority is also ensuring that the quality of information provided by the MPS supporting risk reporting is improved. These improvements are ensuring greater risk accountability to the Authority. Strategic risk registers have been aligned. These are all recent developments and the Authority cannot yet ensure that key financial and resourcing decisions are effective.

## Ensuring VFM and productivity

- 89** The recent Audit Commission use of resources report concluded that business and workforce planning are well integrated. However, in order to ensure value for money, the Authority needs to monitor the benefits of the HR transformation programme to ensure that planned levels of improvements and efficiencies in business processes are being delivered.
- 90** Financial benchmarking is at an early stage, with the Authority using the budget processes to drive it forward, but this has not yet delivered significant outcomes. The Authority has carried out a corporate benchmarking exercise, which identified high spending areas including premises, supplies and services and information and communications technology (ICT). The Authority has drawn up a plan which is focused on tackling these and other key areas. Within the plan the Authority is also reviewing the 2009 value for money profile to establish a value for money baseline. Once established, it will use this to prioritise areas for future challenges.
- 91** Cost profiling is under-developed. The Authority knows that it needs to do more. It has begun addressing this through the Resources and Productivity Committee review of HR activity. The committee is looking, in detail, at unit costs for staff overtime. The Authority has also commissioned a similar detailed cost review for transport. The Authority is using the budget scrutiny process to help inform and prioritise this area of work. It has a pilot for a risk maturity model in the Serious Crime Directorate and has plans to use this to inform future developments.
- 92** The Authority has developed some positive working relationships locally but needs to communicate its strategic direction to help ensure that collaborative working is effective and efficient in supporting the Authority's strategic objectives.

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# Next steps

- 93** We expect the Metropolitan Police Authority to address the areas for improvement identified in this report and secure targeted and continuous improvement. In doing so, the Police Authority should have regard to the wider improvement planning, support and intervention set out in the Home Office's performance framework and landscape for policing.
- 94** A thematic report was published in March 2010, drawing on the findings of the first ten inspections. It identified thematic issues relevant for police authorities to help secure improvement. The Metropolitan Police Authority should refer to and use this report in shaping its improvement planning.

# Appendix 1 – Methodology

- 1 This report summarises the joint Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary findings from the inspection of Metropolitan Police Authority which took place between October and December 2009.
- 2 In July 2009, the Audit Commission and HMIC published the Police Authority Inspection framework.
- 3 The inspection framework comprises four assessment areas:
  - **Setting strategic direction and priorities** – How does the Police Authority ensure that both it and the force have the leadership, capacity and capability needed to deliver good quality service outcomes on behalf of the public?
  - **Scrutinising performance outcomes** – How effective is the Police Authority in scrutinising and ensuring that the force delivers the priority services that matter to local people?
  - **Achieving results through community engagement and partnership** – How well does the Police Authority achieve results through community engagement and partnerships to deliver its ambitions and strategic priorities?
  - **Ensuring value for money (VFM) and productivity** – How effective is the Police Authority in ensuring a clear and sustained focus on VFM in order to secure a good deal for the public?
- 4 The Inspection team drew on a range of evidence to form judgements against each of the four assessment themes. This included key documentation that the police authority uses to run its business, interviews, focus groups, observations and reality testing with key police authority partners and stakeholders.
- 5 Each assessment theme was scored separately on a scale of 1 to 4 and is combined into an overall score. The scores of 1 to 4 for each theme represent the following descriptors of performance.

Score	Descriptor of performance	Public reporting
1	Police authority does not meet minimum requirements for this theme	Performs poorly
2	Police authority meets most of the minimum requirements for this theme with some exceptions and areas of concern	Performs adequately
3	Police authority exceeds minimum requirements for this theme	Performs well
4	Police authority significantly exceeds minimum requirements for this theme	Performs excellently

- 6 An accredited peer member inspector and a senior officer from a police authority supported the joint inspectorates during this inspection.
- 7 We have integrated quality assurance throughout the planning, fieldwork and reporting stages of the inspection. In particular, a quality assurance panel of the joint inspectorates ensured the consistency and robustness of the inspection teams' judgements before the publication of reports. A suitably qualified peer joined the quality assurance panel as an observer.
- 8 HMIC and the Audit Commission are grateful for the support and co-operation of the Police Authority, its staff and officers during the inspection.

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This document is available on our website.

For further information on the work of the Commission please contact:

**Audit Commission**

1st Floor  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4HQ

Telephone: **0844 798 3131**

Fax: 0844 798 2945

Textphone (minicom): 0844 798 2946

[www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk)

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**Audit Commission**

1st Floor  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4HQ

Telephone: **0844 798 1212**  
Fax: 0844 798 2945  
Textphone (minicom): 0844 798 2946

[www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk)



**HMIC**

Ground Floor  
Ashley House  
2 Monck Street  
London  
SW1P 2BQ

Telephone: **020 7035 2001**  
Fax: 020 7035 2176

[www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)