

External key message summary - Neighbourhood Policing Review

1. Background

When the Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe was appointed, he publicly confirmed his support for a strong neighbourhood policing model, which was supported by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.

In 2013 the Metropolitan Police Service introduced the Local Policing Model (LPM), which set out to move more officers to the front line and ensure their deployment to the right places at the right times to deal with the issues that matter to local people. Today's enhanced neighbourhood policing is contributing to the significant reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour in London and making communities safer.

The Metropolitan Police Service has now published its findings of the first phase of a review into neighbourhood policing in London. Commander Lucy D'Orsi carried out the review on behalf of Assistant Commissioner Helen King. Phase one has looked into a number of factors which impact on officer visibility and made a number of recommendations which have been agreed by the Met's senior leaders.

The review and its recommendations have been published on the Met's Publication Scheme, under the TP section, and can be read in full via this link: <http://www.met.police.uk/foi/corporate.htm>

2. Key findings

- Neighbourhood policing under the LPM is distinctly different to the previous ward-based 1:2:3 delivery model, which was identical across all London wards irrespective of demand profile or threat, risk and harm indicators.
- Under the LPM, neighbourhood police officer posts have increased by 2,600 officers (138%).
- The roles and responsibilities of neighbourhood officers have increased.
- The Dedicated Ward Officer (DWO) shift pattern could be better aligned to their core roles and responsibilities.
- The brand and clarity of neighbourhood policing needs strengthening.
- 32% of neighbourhood constables are student officers in their first two years of service.

3. Key recommendations

- The shift patterns for Dedicated Ward Officers will be adjusted to reflect their engagement role.
- DWOs will only be required to do central aid duties on New Year's Eve and for Notting Hill Carnival.
- The neighbourhood shift pattern will change to reflect the role of neighbourhood officers and to increase visibility.

- Non-emergency calls will be the responsibility of the nearest available unit and not just neighbourhood officers.
- Safer Neighbourhoods name to be readopted as this is recognised by the public.
- Review impact of aid on neighbourhood policing (phase 2).

4. The benefits

- The Dedicated Ward Officers' shift pattern will be adjusted to reflect changes to their responsibilities, enable greater visibility within communities and provide local flexibility.
- Dedicated Ward Officers will be able to carry out engagement activities through a shift pattern which is more reflective of this role.
- Neighbourhood officers will work a different shift pattern to maximise visibility.
- We will look into how other Met resources (Mounted Police, MSC and Volunteer Police Cadets) can help increase our presence in communities.
- There are many things that won't change and that have worked well since we moved to the LPM thanks to the hard work of our officers and staff in implementing the changes.

5. Key external messages

- We have continued to drive down crime and anti-social behaviour under the new model against a backdrop of increased confidence and satisfaction in policing.
- An additional 2,600 officers have been placed in Safer Neighbourhood teams across London, with much greater flexibility in the way they are deployed.
- We're attending more incidents on time - with 93% of our responses to emergency calls within target times.
- All of this has been achieved while big changes have been implemented and thousands of new officers have been recruited and trained.
- While many of the changes are working well, we are continuing to listen and make improvements so that we can deliver the best possible service to Londoners.

6. Supporting external messages

- Change is never easy and there will always be challenges involved in a change of this scale and complexity.
- The previous model of one sergeant, two police constables and three Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) on each ward was identical across London irrespective of the type or volume of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- It was replaced by the new model where each ward has a dedicated ward officer and PCSO. The larger Safer Neighbourhood Teams, who cover groups of wards to support the Dedicated Ward Officers, move across neighbourhoods to tackle the problems local people have told us they want prioritised.

- Despite the increase of 2,600 officers, the report found that the visibility of officers within neighbourhoods remained an issue for communities and stakeholders.
- Late shifts for neighbourhood teams haven't always been right for the public with local communities in some places raising concerns they aren't as visible or available to them as they were under the old model.
- To address this issue a new shift pattern will be introduced to reflect neighbourhood officers' roles and responsibilities and to maximise police visibility.
- We have reinforced the need for the dedicated ward officers and PCSOs, who have a high profile in their local communities, to be ring fenced so that they can fulfil their local commitments.
- We are also intending to introduce a different shift rota for them that is better suited for their roles and core responsibilities such as attending community meetings.
- Other duties that have taken them away from their core role, such as backfilling for other teams, providing hospital guard and guarding crime scenes, will be reduced.
- We have identified that some additional responsibilities, such as investigating lower level crime and local crime problem solving, will remain an important part of their role.

7. Questions and answers

Is this a case of going back to how the Met was working before LPM?

No. Many of the changes that happened in 2013 are working well but it's important to realise that there will always be challenges involved in a change of this scale and complexity and we won't get it perfect first time. Key is that we listen to the public, and our staff and officers to make any adjustments necessary so that we are continually improving.

How will you stop dedicated ward officers being abstracted for other duties away from their ward?

DWOs will remain ring fenced and only be called to do aid during the Notting Hill Carnival and New Year's Eve.