

## **BCU Update for Lead Member Briefing for the London Borough of Havering**

We have now reached a stage that where the BCU model is to be rolled out across the Met, merging all London boroughs into 12 Basic Command Units.

This was announced last week by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Cressida Dick. Although this is indicative of the success of the Pathfinder sites (the tri-borough of Havering, Barking and Dagenham and Redbridge), we have faced immense challenges on this journey.

The initial BCU design has rigorously been reviewed and modified since its inception. The tragic events that have taken place in the city during the pathfinder test and the ever changing need of the public has accelerated our learning process. We have ultimately reached our goal of a more efficient and dedicated service

Neighbourhood policing has seen an increase in ring fenced dedicated ward officers. In the East Area there were a total of 60 DWO posts across the three boroughs prior to the BCU implementation. At go-live this increased to 145 posts, all of which were filled. Normal staff movement and the lead-in time for recruitment means that there are currently 128 DWOs in post, with recruitment in hand to fill the remaining posts.

Response performance suffered at the beginning when officers were all of a sudden expected to take calls within a much larger area, of which two thirds they were unfamiliar. The problems were immediately identified and rectified. The extent of the recovery measures is now seeing the BCU operating at levels higher than when they operated as individual boroughs. Therefore, the BCU's focus is being increased in other aspects of Response, such as positive investigation outcomes and quality of service.

The Safeguarding design involved the integration of central sexual offences and child abuse teams into the local safeguarding strand of the BCU and the integration of the MASH and child abuse referral mechanism. The specialist workload undertaken by the appropriately trained officers faces diverse challenges and the work we do to overcome them is ongoing. Despite the fact that Borough based safeguarding arrangements has faced difficulties at a BCU level, good performance within the Safeguarding strand, has been maintained, which is often above the MPS average.

The primary change within CID involved shifting workload so detectives could focus on a smaller amount but more serious and complex crime. Other changes include the concentration of proactive resources within the CID portfolio including an expansion of the gangs unit. This has given scope for initiatives such as Operation Mexico. The focus for Op Mexico is burglary. Since the 02<sup>nd</sup> January 2018, we have arrested 52 suspects and have charged with 54 offences including 31 charges for burglary. 21 investigations relating to these arrests remain ongoing.

The BCU began by using a streamlined leadership model involving 4 superintendents, one for each of the local policing functions, without chief inspectors. However, since it was recognised that more capacity was needed to support senior leadership in the BCU, we now have the full complement of three chief inspectors and 3 detective chief inspectors. As well as allowing effective collaboration with partners, this provides a superintendent level senior point of contact for each borough.

The Pathfinder has delivered efficiencies that are above the level expected at this stage – whilst retaining additional officer investment in key areas such as 2 DWOs per ward, Youth Officers, Safeguarding and Offender Management. These efficiencies have been delivered without the mobile technology from which further benefits will still accrue.

The pathfinder has demonstrated the ability to deliver acceptable levels of performance with overall post reduction and investment into priority areas (Neighbourhoods and Safeguarding). It has also shown that management savings can be delivered as planned (despite the increase in superintendents and chief inspectors) to assist in keeping the number of frontline PCs and DCs as high as possible.

It is accurate to say that the BCU has stabilised, the issues we now face are replicated elsewhere across the MPS and are not necessarily attribute to the East Area BCU.