

Meeting Name:	Housing, Community Safety and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission
Date:	23 July 2024
Report title:	Southwark Policing Oversight Board Terms of Reference
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
From:	Stephen Douglass, Director of Stronger Neighbourhoods

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Housing, Community Safety and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission review and comment on the proposed Terms of Reference for the Southwark Policing Oversight Board.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Following a number of high-profile incidents, Baroness Casey was appointed to lead an independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service. The final report was published in March 2023, identifying a number of failings and shortcomings by the Metropolitan Police and made a number of recommendations to build trust with London's communities to restore consent and public respect, which has fallen to an all time low.
3. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has since published his plan for policing and keeping Londoners safe during this Mayoral term. The four key themes of the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan are reducing and preventing violence, increasing trust and confidence, better supporting victims, and protecting people from being exploited or harmed.
4. The Housing, Community Safety and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission (14/12/2023) recommended: *The Cabinet and the Cabinet member for Community Safety explore the options for the creation of a Police Oversight Body for accountability in policing, and as an intermediary body between the Ward panels for policing and Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), within the municipal year 2024-2025.*

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. The Southwark Policing Oversight Board has been established in response to the above to increase public trust in our local Central South Borough Command Unit (BCU).

6. Central South BCU have developed a local Trust and Confidence Plan, that is aligned with the recommendations of the Casey report and tailored to Southwark. The Trust and Confidence plan focuses on the following:

- a. More trust
- b. Less crime
- c. Higher standards

Please note: The Trust and Confidence Plan, included in this report as an appendix, is an internal document owned by Central South BCU. We have permission to share it with the scrutiny commission, however, this should be taken into account when providing feedback.

7. The Policing Oversight Board, which has been established in collaboration with the Police yet is fundamentally independent from them, will have oversight of the local Trust & Confidence Plan. A dashboard covering key areas and measurements of Trust & Confidence in policing will be developed, agreed and monitored by this Board.

8. Other identified topics may be added as the board develops. It may include both thematic issues and more practical day to day issues which are seen to be affecting Trust & Confidence. The board welcomes and encourages local residents to put forward areas of focus for potential discussion.

9. The Board will be chaired by Cllr Natasha Ennin, Cabinet Member for Community Safety.

10. Members of this board will be composed of Police and Local Authority leaders, as well as independently appointed representatives from various stakeholder groups.

11. Membership of the group will be independently appointed through a recruitment process. The Board will aim to recruit between 6-10 members, with an optimal target of 8 members. The membership term will be 2 years from appointment. Experience will be sought from a number of sectors, which could include:

- a. Specific Policing and Criminal Law
- b. Legal Expertise
- c. Media and communications
- d. Applied ethics
- e. Voluntary Community and Faith groups
- f. Medical/NHS
- g. Business/Commence
- h. Accountability to the public
- i. Professional or personal connection to Southwark through community and or civic leadership/partnership activity or voluntary work

12. The board will be held quarterly commencing in September 2024.

13. Board meetings will be held in public. There may be cases when sensitive

information or areas are discussed. In these instances, the board reserves the right to hold those discussions privately. A communication plan underpinning the boards work will be produced and will be a key outcome of the work programme.

14. Baroness Casey's review found that the MPS lacks transparency and accountability to Londoners. To address this concern, she recommended that "a new, quarterly Policing Board for London – chaired by the Mayor of London, similar to the model used for Transport for London – should be created" to "oversee and scrutinise the changes needed and ensure full transparency and accountability to Londoners, while maintaining the operational independence of the Commissioner".
15. As a result of this recommendation a London-wide Policing Board was established to provide specialist advice and constructive challenge to effectively support the Mayor – as incumbent of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime ("MOPAC") - in holding the MPS to account for delivering wide-ranging MPS reforms as part of its strategic oversight framework. In so doing, this Board contributes to MOPAC's discharging of its statutory duties under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
16. The Southwark Board is about local accountability and trust and confidence at a Southwark level, making recommendations to the BCU Commander and as such will not duplicate or conflict with the London wide body.

Policy framework implications

17. The establishment of the Board aligns with the proposed Southwark 2030 strategy, Goal 3: To deliver a safer Southwark. This includes the aim of improving trust and confidence in local policing. By 2030, we will be successful if there are higher levels of trust in the police experienced across all communities.

Resource implications

18. Administrative and policy support for the Board will be provided by Southwark Council Community Safety and Partnerships Team and the costs met within existing resources.
19. There will be operational costs associated with the facilitation of quarterly Board meetings, including room hire, catering, travel expenses, and other related expenditures.
20. There will also be costs attributed to the recruitment process, including advertisements on relevant job hire portals.
21. It is proposed appointed board members receive an allowance in line with Home Office guidance.

Note: Legal/Financial implications (and when to seek supplementary advice)

22. It is crucial to address the use of the term "independent" in relation to the board. The degree of independence from Southwark Council will impact who is subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and who bears the responsibility for handling complaints.
23. To ensure independence, it is requested members will not participate in any other existing police oversight/interaction group in Southwark. Self-declaration of membership to such groups will be required upon application. Membership of these groups will be cross-referenced against.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
The Baroness Casey Review Final Report: March 2023 BARONESS CASEY REVIEW Final Report (met.police.uk)	Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB	NA
London's Police and Crime Plan 2022-2025 London's Police and Crime Plan 2022-25 London City Hall	Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London	NA

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Policing Oversight Board Terms of Reference
Appendix 2	Central South BCU Southwark Trust and Confidence Plan (Document owned by Central South BCU).

AUDIT TRAIL

This section must be included in all reports.

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Director of Stronger Neighbourhoods	
Report Author	Abbie Box, Community Safety Project Officer	
Version	1	
Dated	18/07/2024	
Key Decision?		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director, Finance	No	No
List other officers here		
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	19 July 2024	

Note: Consultation with other officers

If you have not consulted, or sought comments from the Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and assurance or the Strategic Director of Finance, you must state this in the audit trail.