

<b>Committee(s):</b> Police Authority Board	<b>Dated:</b> December 2023
<b>Subject:</b> Chair's Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> James Thomson	<b>For Information</b>

## **City of London Police Race Action Plan launch**

The national Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) was launched last year, designed to improve outcomes for Black people interacting with, or working within, policing. I was pleased to attend the launch, on 20 November, of the City of London Police's local Police Race Action Plan, hosted by the City Commissioner. Michael Mitchell was also present. We heard some thought-provoking and (constructively) challenging inputs from a range of speakers including Dr Angela Herbert MBE, retired Chief Superintendent Raj Kohli, Teddy Burton and the City of London Corporation Town Clerk, Ian Thomas.

The City of London Police is an "ice-breaker" PRAP force. The local plan represents a clear signal of intent, which I fully support. It goes to the shared ambition of the Police Authority Board and Chief Officer Team to make the City of London Police the most inclusive police service in the country. And the related desire to better tackle crime and improve trust and confidence in policing. I know that all those involved in putting together the excellent local plan are passionate about turning that plan into tangible actions and outcomes. The Professional Standards and Integrity Committee, under Michael Mitchell's chairmanship, will support and scrutinise delivery of it.

On a related point, we have begun to develop plans for marking Stephen Lawrence Day in 2024, following up the successful engagement event hosted in the Guildhall in April. I was inspired to see, at that event, the current generation of young people wanting to make a difference in society and discuss difficult issues like racial inequality, racism and misogyny. I want to build on this at the event next year.

## **White Ribbon**

I was very pleased to see that the City Police obtained White Ribbon accreditation this year and as part of that a number of the Chief Officer Team and myself have become White Ribbon Ambassadors alongside the Town Clerk who had previously been accredited. It is an important signal of the determination, which I share, to eradicate violence against women and girls. I was happy to help raise awareness of the work the City Police is doing to protect women in the City - residents, workers and visitors – and to pursue offenders. And I was pleased to see that our new Lady Mayoress, Elisabeth Mainelli, joined officers on a 'Walk and Talk' to discuss and highlight issues affecting women in the City. Women and girls have an absolute right to feel and be safe. The City Police and Police Authority will continue to work tirelessly to make that the everyday reality in the City.

## **City of London Police Prevent Event**

I attended a counter terrorism Prevent event on 20 November hosted by the City of London Police at Lloyds of London. It was an excellent event focussed on Prevent and was supported by a survivor from the 7/7 London bombings – now a serving City officer – and survivors from Fishmonger’s Hall and London Bridge attacks. Their experiences were very impactful. The survivor from Fishmongers’ Hall praised the support he had been given by the City of London Police.

## **Ministerial engagement**

The City Commissioner and I wrote a joint letter to the Rt Hon James Cleverly MP following his appointment as Home Secretary. We set out some ideas about how the overall response to fraud, in particular, could be improved and invited him to visit the City to discuss these points further. Separately, following a discussion at the Conservative Party conference in October, the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire (Rt Hon Chris Philp MP) has agreed to visit the City Police early next year.

## **APCC & NPCC Summit**

I attended the annual APCC and NPCC Summit at the Queen Elizabeth Centre on 15 and 16 November. It was pleasing to note that the Policing Minister referenced fraud and a presentation on emerging trends highlighted the significant growth of fraud and computer misuse against a backdrop of overall reducing crime. Both the Home Secretary and Shadow Home Secretary made speeches that were very supportive of policing. The Shadow Home Secretary reiterated the Labour intention of an additional 13,000 officers. Participants noted that police uplift and pay settlements were having an adverse impact on staff numbers and the de-civilianisation of some roles.

## **Economic crime**

I was encouraged to see the publication, on 30 November, of the Government’s Online Fraud Charter. It marks a significant step forward in the fight against online fraud. Effective public-private partnerships are vital if, collectively, we are to make a strategic impact on the fraud thread. And those companies signing the Charter are demonstrating a real commitment to detecting and blocking fraud and in empowering consumers to help prevent them becoming victims of fraudsters.

The City Commissioner and Police Authority Board Deputy Chair took part in a fraud roundtable on 29 November with Labour Party representatives, hosted by Lloyds Banking Group (LBG). This followed the similar LBG roundtable, at the Conservative Party conference this year, which I attended. The discussion centred around the scale and nature of the fraud problem and potential policy and operational solutions to it. I am encouraged that politicians across the political spectrum are showing an interest in tackling fraud, wider economic crime and cyber crime. Political will is vital in terms of improving the response to these threats.

## **Independent Custody Visitors**

The Independent Custody Visitors Association (ICVA) announced on 29 November that the City's Independent Custody Visitors Scheme is assessed to be 'Code Compliant' when examined against the Association's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). This means the City's scheme complies with the requirements of the ICV statutory Code of Practice. Undertaking the assessment process is not mandated, but it is an extremely useful exercise in terms of assessing the effectiveness of ICV schemes, and to identify best practice. My continued thanks go to all our ICV volunteers, and to Rachael Waldron in the Corporation's Police Authority Team for her able support to them.

I am pleased to hear that ICVs from the City Scheme met the Director of Police Estates and Support Services and wider City Police colleagues last month to review plans for the new custody facility. I understand that this was a constructive meeting, and look forward to further constructive engagement as plans for, and construction of, the new facility develop further.