

MOPAC
169 Union Street
London
SE1 0LL20th January 2022**Re. Consultation Response to Draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-25**

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-25. Team London Bridge is the Business Improvement District (BID) for the London Bridge area and represents over 350 member businesses and their 50,000+ staff. Our members vary widely from small office occupiers to major corporates, hospitals, retailers, hotels, restaurants, iconic tourist attractions and universities.

We have been active in the area since 2006, consistently delivering a range of projects to enhance the safety and resilience of our community. Our work amounts to circa. £200k worth of investment every year and funds: an MPS constable through the Partnership Plus scheme; a dedicated British Transport Police constable; training for businesses on topics such as counter-terrorism, emergency trauma first aid and stalking/harassment in the workplace; our local Business Crime Reduction Partnership; BikeRegister marking; a team of medics for London Bridge Station; and an emergency alerts/information sharing system. Londoners spend more time in their workplaces and town centres than their own homes so it's no surprise that, of all our services, staff safety and crime reduction remains the most important for our members.

By virtue of delivering the above, we have an excellent working relationship with the Metropolitan Police and, alongside our stakeholders, are here to support them and MOPAC achieve their objectives. With regards the draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 we would like to offer the following constructive comments:

1. The Plan mentions that its success *“will be measured by women’s feelings of safety in their area during the day and at night, as recorded by the MOPAC Public Attitude Survey.”* Some clarity will be needed in the survey as to what defines ‘their area’; their experiences of home, work and social environments could differ significantly, and each requires very different remedial measures.
2. The Plan states that *“MOPAC and the MPS will continue to work with businesses in London to make our city a safer place to work and do business - supporting the work of Business Crime Reduction Partnerships and providing advice and guidance on key safety issues such as knife crime and counter-terrorism.”* We would like to see Business Improvement Districts (of

which there are more than 60 and combined membership significantly larger than BCRPs) explicitly mentioned as a partner here.

The examples of knife-crime and counter-terrorism illustrate a narrow view of what can be achieved by working with the business community whereas more prevalent and impactful are offences such as theft, violence against staff, harassment, fraud, cyber-crime and sexual assault.

We would welcome a regular dialogue with MOPAC to illustrate the variety of issues that could be addressed through better collaboration with BIDs, BCRPs and their members. For example, in response to the tragic death of Sarah Everard and faced by the personal engagement challenges of lockdown, our funded MPS constable developed a 'Women's Personal Safety' webinar covering topics such as stalking, drink spiking, bag theft, domestic abuse, travelling home safely and reporting crime correctly. Using our connections to arrange these directly with corporate HR teams, he has delivered more than 30 webinars in the past year, reaching over 2,000 people and vastly improving public trust in the police. This is just from London Bridge alone and is the sort of good practice that can be replicated elsewhere if there was a forum in which to share it with MOPAC and the MPS.

There is also scope for working with BIDs on making physical, design-out-crime improvements to the public realm such as upgraded street lighting and CCTV, enlivened store fronts and secure bicycle parking. Quite often BIDs have the funding and project management capacity that local authorities don't.

3. The Plan's Evidence Base Document identifies making "*improvements in knowledge sharing and data sharing across partners.*" We welcome this, particularly as BIDs, BCRPs, businesses and private security teams are ideally placed to assist, but work could be done to standardise information sharing agreements, remove misconceptions around GDPR compliance and identify local officers who can reliably act as conduits – knowing who in the community to contact and how. We're fortunate that our Partnership Plus officer fulfils this role for us, but we're an exception and across London chances are being missed to gather intelligence, improve detection rates and locate wanted offenders – all through a lack of efficient information sharing. There's an opportunity to develop this using the new Town Centre police teams, and we'd gladly share our experience of the model we've successfully used in London Bridge since 2015.
4. One of The Plan's stated objectives is for the MPS to "*work with partners to increase even further the speed with which missing children and adults are located.*" This neatly follows the previous point about information sharing and is a perfect example of how the resources of businesses and managers of 'private' public space (their employees, security personnel and CCTV) could be better utilised by the MPS.
5. We welcome the proposed move towards more responsive neighbourhood policing: reviewing local priorities frequently, providing safety perception data to local partners and supplying additional neighbourhood officers to high crime areas. No two wards are the same yet historically there has been little flexibility in matching supply with demand. Town Centre teams are a positive step in this regard but more needs to be done to address imbalances –

the SE1 postcode of Southwark & Lambeth for example generates the highest volume of crime in Central South BCU but is proportionately understaffed in terms of neighbourhood officers.

6. We would strongly urge a greater focus on volume crime such as robbery, theft person/other, theft of pedal cycle, shoplifting and violence against retail staff. To improve confidence in the police and provide a better service to victims, it's logical to target those crime types that create the most victims. 80% of crime in London Bridge is acquisitive and, personal victim impact aside, it's immensely damaging to a local economy that's trying to attract visitors and staff back to the area. Repeat offending also tends to be particularly prevalent with volume crime but The Plan's initiatives to address reoffending are mainly concerned with violence and young people. The scope must be broadened to incorporate all repeat offenders because of the disproportionate impact they have on police time and quality of life for Londoners.

We hope the above comments prove useful and re-iterate our desire for BIDs to have a more collaborative working relationship with MOPAC. There is an enormous amount of under-used knowledge, resource and goodwill in the business community which could be better used to make London a safer city for all.

Yours sincerely,

Henry Johnstone
Operations Director

Email: henry@teamlondonbridge.co.uk
Tel: 020 7407 4701