

# London Policing Ethics Panel Minutes of Meeting

Monday, 11 April 2022

## Membership

Professor Suzanne Shale (Chair)  
Dr Jyoti Belur  
Professor Jennifer Brown  
Abdul Hye Miah

## Research Adviser

Ben Bradford, Institute of Global City Policing

## Observers

Jane Gordon, MOPAC  
Commander Jon Savell, MPS

## MPS Openness and Transparency Project

1. Gavin Hales from the Police Foundation and London Metropolitan University attended the meeting to present his ideas regarding openness and transparency in policing. The issues he discussed with the Panel included:
  - 1.1. His perception that policing often fails or declines to explain why it does what it does, fails to appreciate how the public view and (may not) understand police actions, and struggles to respond to issues that arise from social media footage in particular.
  - 1.2. The need to consider the ethical implications of both action and inaction in police practice: understanding the rationale for a given practice, the consequences of not doing it, and alternatives to the practice. He noted the way individual officer and institutional risks and resulting decisions may not always align, resulting in tensions.
  - 1.3. He discussed the police custody environment and observed that decisions made in the course of managing custodial risk can give rise to challenges to the legitimacy of the organisation and also present professional risk to the custody officer.
  - 1.4. His views on possible causes of distrust between police and local government.
  - 1.5. Reflections on factors conducive to good working relationships between police and local authorities.
2. In light of the issues raised in the discussion with Gavin Hales, the Panel reflected on:
  - The ways in which the assumptions of the police and the public may differ and the ongoing challenge for the police to understand how their actions are viewed, in order to shape effective communication.
  - That the use of certain policing tools may become a habit rather than active consideration being given to their use at each incident.

- The impact of social media on police comms.
  - The relative priority for different stakeholders in approaching situations that raise issues of both safeguarding and potential criminality.
  - The importance of personal relationships in the police's engagement with local authorities at a senior level.
  - How officers exercise discretion and how they learn to exercise discretion.
  - How police manage risk within custody suites compared to how it is managed within mental health inpatient units.
  - The risks and safety of officers versus the need to protect the dignity of people being strip searched.
  - The impact on human rights and other consequences of different types of intervention that the police can use to manage risk.
  - The value to the police service of the police being open and transparent.
3. The Panel agreed to commission research to support the project, and they discussed the mechanisms for procuring the research and for ensuring it was undertaken in an ethically robust manner.
  4. It was agreed that Panel would have an evidence gathering session on 9 May with the MPS and MOPAC.

#### **Youth Voice**

5. The Panel was advised that members of the Young People's Action Group would be attending the Panel's May meeting to present on their discussions on strip search.
6. The Panel would be developing with the Young People's Action Group a model for working on future projects.

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The Panel's next meeting will be on 9 May 2022.