

London Policing Ethics Panel Minutes of Meeting

Monday, 11 September 2023

Membership

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

Research Adviser

Professor Ben Bradford, Institute of Global City Policing

Observers

Chief Inspector Ben Smith, MPS
James Bottomley, MOPAC
Tay Sarwar, MOPAC
Alf Harris, MOPAC

Minutes of Meeting

1. The minutes of the August meeting were approved.

Chair's Update

2. The Chair updated the Panel on her recent meeting with the Assistant Commissioner for Professionalism, Barbara Gray, advising that AC Gray was very supportive of the Panel's work. It was noted that Commander Savell was moving posts and that the MPS has advised that it would be identifying a new senior officer to attend the meetings as an observer.
3. The Panel will be developing its annual programme of work, and the Chair will be liaising with AC Gray to get the MPS's input.
4. Jennifer Brown advised that she had been involved in an evaluation of the Police Now graduate programme and would enquire whether the findings would be shared with the Panel.

Policing in Schools

5. The Panel reviewed the information it had gathered and the issues that it had identified. This included:
 - The context for the presence of police officers in schools.
 - The aims of the Safer Schools Partnership (SSP) programme and the MPS's review of the SSP and the role of the Safer Schools Officers (SSO).
 - Ethical issues, including the moral justification for police officer presence in schools, the potential unintended consequences and the rights of the child.

6. The Panel discussed:
 - The difficulty in getting data in order to evaluate whether SSOs are achieving the intended benefits and outcomes.
 - The difference in purpose and impact of having police officers in schools as an educational and child welfare resource, versus their presence to “police the corridors”.
7. The Panel used the Ethics Matrix that it had developed for its March 2022 report “Ethical Foundations for Policing Policy Development”¹ to draw out the ethical issues arising from having police officers in schools. Issues considered in the context of a school environment included:
 - Its impact on victims; the extent to which it would minimise vulnerability and help avoid repeat victimisation; and how it might contribute to healing.
 - The extent to which it balances security aims with an individual’s and society’s freedom to flourish; and the measuring of policing benefits against policing harms.
 - How it will promote procedural justice; uphold perceptions of justice in different groups; and be justified with evidence of effectiveness.
 - Whether it is essential to achieve policing goals; the policing capacity and capability required; and how it might affect the police officer’s wellbeing.
8. There was a discussion of the issue of dual loyalties for SSOs – whether this is an issue in the context of a duty to individual students and the exercising of discretion.
9. The Panel agreed that they would write up initial drafts of the ethical issues arising from the discussion, for consideration at its October meeting.

The Panel’s next meeting will be on 9 October 2023

¹ [Ethical Foundation for Policing Policy Development: An Ethics Matrix](#)