

London Policing Ethics Panel Minutes of Meeting

Friday, 17 May 2024

Membership

Dr Suzanne Shale (Chair)
Professor Jyoti Belur
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

The Panel had an all-day meeting to discuss their future projects and ways of working.

MPS and MOPAC Priorities

1. Assistant Commissioner Pippa Mills and Sophie Linden from MOPAC¹ attended the start of the meeting to provide context for the Panel's discussion of their potential future projects.
2. AC Mills advised that the top priorities for the MPS are implementing the MPS's New Met for London (NMfL), which includes emphasis on putting communities first, implementing the Strongest Ever Neighbourhood Policing model, improving operational results, fixing the organisation's foundations.
3. Sophie Linden advised that the Mayor's top priority for this term is delivery – how to move from strategy and plans to action. There is also a focus on supporting the Met's reforms, improving trust and legitimacy, tackling serious violence including against women and girls, supporting neighbourhood policing and ensuring the Met is financially sustainable.
4. The Panel then discussed with AC Mills and Sophie Linden the topics it is considering and the ethical issues that they may pose for the Met and MOPAC.

Reflecting on past 16 Months' Work

5. The Panel discussed their work over the past 16 months', identifying aspects of ways of working that they wished to continue, what they had learned, and what they would change for the better.

¹ Following the May 2024 Mayoral election, Sophie Linden has been nominated by the Mayor to return as the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. A confirmation hearing is to be held before her formal appointment.

MPS Ethics Panel

6. Chief Inspector Ben Smith briefed the Panel on the MPS Ethics Panel, outlining its membership and summarising some of the issues it had considered. He advised that it also has a role in ensuring that the Code of Ethics underpins the MPS's work and features in training.

Future Projects

7. The Panel discussed a number of issues as potential next projects. They identified what the ethical issues might be and scored the proposals against panel capability, degree of controversy and reputational risk to the MPS and/or MOPAC, and practical relevance. The highest scoring topics were:
 - **Developments in the use of Live Facial Recognition (LFR)** There was a strong consensus that the Panel needs to revisit its earlier report in light of developments to date, the prospect of enhanced technological capability, new use cases arising, LFR's implementation in practice, and broader public debate than at the time of its first report. An additional reason to score this highly is the attention given in the NMfL to engagement with communities, as it is noted how LFR may be used and viewed differently in different communities.
 - **The challenge of maintaining trust, legitimacy and consent in the context of polarised community views and interests.** The Panel initially considered two separate projects around a) policing civil disruption and b) crime response activities that may bring immigration status to attention (e.g. modern slavery). When it looked at these more closely, the Panel concluded they have several ethical aspects in common and it would be useful to adopt them as two case studies for the same report. As with LFR, the Panel scored this project highly in light of the emphasis on communities in the NMfL.
8. The Panel agreed that it would bring into the development of both issues the consideration of the topics through a violence against women and girls' lens.
9. The Panel would now consult the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and AC Mills on these proposals and develop terms of reference.

The Panel's next meeting will be on 10 June 2024