

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes



Tuesday 18 November 2025

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Stala Antoniades (Chair), Lucy Richardson, Sally Taylor and Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler

Other Councillors: Councillor Rebecca Harvey (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety)

Met Police

Chief Superintendent Christina Jessah
Superintendent Pali Grewal
Inspector Clive Hayes

Officers:

Mark Raisbeck (Director of Public Realm)
Neil Thurlow (Assistant Director of Community Safety, Resilience and CCTV)
David Abbott (Head of Governance, Corporate Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Omid Miri.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2025 were agreed as accurate record.

4. UPDATE REPORT ON POLICING IN HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

Superintendent Pali Grewal briefed members on the update report. He referred to the delivery of community crime fighting based on data-led policing around hotspot areas including Shepherds Bush Green, Hammersmith Broadway and Fulham, and said that the operations which used to take place on a monthly basis by inspectors were now reviewed weekly to see which wards needed more focus. This weekly update initiative helped track down any pattern of criminal offences that the relevant wards might require additional policing deployment. Inspector Clive Hayes outlined how the ward priorities were decided at the ward panel meeting. Superintendent Grewal added that ward officers had also started to follow up the outstanding suspects within their wards to keep H&F safe.

Hotspots

Councillor Sally Taylor noted the high crime figures in Shepherds Bush Green and Hammersmith Broadway and asked if it was due to higher footfall there breeding crimes. Inspector Hayes remarked the two wards were the main areas that generated most of the crimes. He said that Westfields, situated in the heart of Shepherds Bush Green, was the largest shopping centre in Europe and brought a lot of visitors. Hammersmith Broadway was probably the most transient places in the borough with multiple tube lines/stations running alongside the busy high street. He noted that while offenders were mixed with locals and non-locals, victims in general were across all other areas.

The Chair observed that as a result of extra policing in the hotspots like Shepherds Bush Green and Hammersmith Broadway, anti-social behaviour and crimes were seen being displaced to neighbouring wards. Superintendent Grewal reassured the Committee that in addition to the wards mentioned, the Met would look into the impact on other parts of the borough when allocating ward resources. He said adequate policing would be deployed to the appropriate wards based on operational data reviewed weekly.

Crimes and challenges

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler noticed that unlike some other crimes which had been reduced as compared to the same period in previous year, knife crime offences had increased slightly. She was concerned about the measures to be taken to prevent this life-threatening crime. Superintendent Grewal noted about the pattern of knife crime offences that the majority of knife crime offences happened in the same specific areas like Shepherds Bush Green and Hammersmith Broadway and the operations teams would look into the breakdown of knife crime offences there. On the possible reasons for the increase, Superintendent Christina Jessah drew members' attention that 12 of the 25 more cases were possession of knife/bladed article which was generated by proactive stop and searches.

The Chair asked about the main objective of conducting stop and searches. Superintendent Jessah noted the tactic was deployed for searching weapons to be used in violent crimes. For areas having a high level of anti-social behaviour, the

tactic might also help to track down the use of drugs in addition to the primary focus of violent crimes.

Considering the target emergency response time of 15 minutes was quite long for the calling parties on the phone, the Chair asked about ways to shorten it, for example, through the ward panels. Superintendent Grewal said he understood the expectation of the calling parties that 15 minutes seemed like a long time. While at times resources at the Emergency Response Teams were tied up to answer a call, the Met was exploring opportunities to improve the situation, for example, for the ward officers or the neighbourhood teams being freed up to take an outstanding call sooner. Nevertheless, he assured residents that the Met would arrive the crime scene as soon as possible. The Chair requested the Met to explore the possibility for the public to report crimes on an App.

ACTION: Met Police

In reply to the Chair's question about the reason for the rising number of hate crimes, Superintendent Grewal noted it was due to more reporting, but no pattern or trend could be worked out from the weekly analysis. The Met was monitoring the situation closely by identifying premises or venues in the borough where more hate crime incidents were generated and working with the LET to tackle them. On the types of hate crimes, Chief Superintendent Jessah noted antisemitism and Islamophobia were the two key areas of reporting both of which were seen increasing after 7 October plus a slight increase in disability hate crimes.

The Chair welcomed the front counter in Hammersmith Police Station would remain open but with reduced hours. Noting that it also served as a safe place for victimised women and children, she was concerned about the place they could go outside the opening hours.

Chief Superintendent Jessah explained that the opening hours were set based on demands and if needed, victims might go to the front counters in Charing Cross or Lewisham police stations. Superintendent Grewal said he understood there were safe spaces in every borough to deal with violence against women and girls and the ward teams were looking into them through the national online platform. After ensuring the venues identified in H&F were still operating as safe spaces, he would share the information online through various channels, including the websites of council's partners.

ACTION: Met Police

Live facial recognition

As regards Councillor Brocklebank-Fowler's question related to live facial recognition (LFR), Superintendent Grewal noted that the real-time system had been deployed at a certain time period on a particular day within the selected area. Chief Superintendent Jessah added that only images of wanted people were saved by the system, otherwise, the images were overwritten a few seconds after being captured by the system.

Noting from Croydon Council's figures that they had scanned 128,000 faces leading to c.133 arrests, Councillor Lucy Richardson sought information on the number of faces scanned in the 5 LFR deployments in H&F since April 2025 that had led to c.23 arrests. Chief Superintendent Jessah agreed to provide the information after the meeting and said the rate of scanning would depend on the footfall at the location and time of deployments. She assured members that LFR was a very useful technology to help the Met to track down dangerous and harmful people that would not normally be captured by police officers.

ACTION: Met Police

Noting the Court of Appeal had ruled in 2000 that South Wales Police's use of LFR technology was unlawful, Councillor Richardson was concerned about the legal basis for LBHF to continue the use of LFR to capture the images of its residents particularly young people, notwithstanding the images were just being kept in the system for a few seconds.

Chief Superintendent Jessah informed the Committee that as there was a judicial review going on in addition to a related trial in Croydon at the moment, it would be more appropriate to provide a response pending the outcome of the cases. Nevertheless, she would ask the relevant Lead to contact Councillor Richardson on the matter directly. Chief Superintendent Jessah also invited all Committee members to observe the deployment in action before Christmas.

ACTION: Met Police

Councillor Richardson was concerned that similar to the use of stop and searches tactic, half of the LFR deployments last year were held in areas with higher proportion of black residents. She requested information on the statistics and demographic data. Chief Superintendent Jessah said that the locations of LFR deployment were intelligence-driven and usually held in areas of highest footfall like Westfields which was quite a multi-racial area with higher number of crimes.

ACTION: Met Police

In reply to Councillor Richardson's further question, Mark Raisbeck (Director of Public Realm) explained if someone from the UK-wide database of people of interest walked past the camera, the police were then able to intercept. This was used to identify wanted offenders and, more recently, was used to prevent and deter crime and anti-social behaviour as in its recent use for Notting Hill Carnival.

Councillor Rebecca Harvey (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety) recalled this use and said the LFR was used in the outer zone in order to identify and intercept people of interest before they went into the Carnival. The use of LFR had hence helped reduce the number of sexual assaults and knife crimes.

Chief Superintendent Jessah noted that the wanted offenders were usually high-harm cases involved in high-level violence and perhaps suspects wanted in multiple crimes. She stressed again that the unmatched images of ordinary citizens would be deleted immediately. In this regard, Councillor Harvey noted that some of the people

arrested had committed crimes such as rape and serious sexual assaults. Inspector Hayes recalled that offences committed by people arrested through the LFR technology deployed in H&F included rape, serious grievous bodily harm (GBH) , theft, assault, possession of offensive weapons, breach of court bail and failing to comply with court orders. Some high-harm offenders arrested had remained outstanding for five to seven years.

In reply to the Chair's further question on accuracy, Chief Superintendent Jessah detailed the manual check and secondary check after matching the wanted person. Inspector Hayes confirmed that among all deployments he had been involved, there had been no errors, with the suspects identified being arrested or confirmed as the correct registered sex offenders.

Councillor Harvey took the opportunity to express her thanks to the outgoing Superintendent Craig Knight for his work and support as well as past contributions to the borough.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the report.

5. BRIEFING NOTE ON CO-PRODUCTION IN VAWG COMMISSIONING AND DESIGNING OF PROJECTS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the briefing note.

6. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee noted the following dates of future meetings:

- 2 February 2026
- 27 April 2026

Meeting started: 7.03 pm
Meeting ended: 7.57 pm

Chair

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