

Views on the Drug Interventions Programme from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime

Roger Hadwen, Policy and Delivery Officer at the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime gives us their view on the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP):

"The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) in London came into being on 16 January 2012, some ten months ahead of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in the rest of England and Wales. The Mayor, Boris Johnson, has delegated the day-to-day running of MOPAC to the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Stephen Greenhalgh. Stephen brings a wealth of experience in service commissioning and stakeholder engagement, having served six years as the Leader of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

MOPAC has inherited the Home Office portion of DIP funding for London in 2012/13. This amounts to 40 per cent of the total DIP funding for the 32 London boroughs (£7.8 million) and funding for the MPS to drug test on arrest (£4.9 million). Agreements were drawn up between the Home Office and MOPAC so that these funds would be 'passported' to existing grant recipients for 2012-13. This has given MOPAC valuable early experience of formalising grant agreements with the boroughs, and has also facilitated an MPS move to drug testing on arrest in all 32 boroughs (previously only 21 boroughs were funded to do this) at no additional cost. The response from previously non-testing boroughs has been enthusiastic.

From 2013-14, PCCs, including MOPAC, will have an un-ringfenced Community Safety Fund from which to make spending decisions. At the same time, DIP funding (and also Communities Against Guns, Gangs and Knives, Youth Justice Board Prevention Fund etc.) ends. As such, this presents both a threat of disinvestment and an opportunity to refresh how London organises and funds local approaches to tackling substance-misusing offenders. MOPAC officials have visited each of the 32 DIP teams in London to gather outcomes-based evidence and whilst each locality is different, there are some emerging themes that MOPAC have identified and feel that incoming PCCs in other areas might be interested in:

- DIP has a particular focus on opiate and crack users – London boroughs would prefer to be allowed to focus resources on their local problem profile with regard to substance-misusing offenders. Alcohol and cannabis were the most often cited other substances, which are both out of scope of the current DIP drug testing arrangements. MOPAC welcomes the removal of the DIP ringfence to allow this increased focus on local priorities.*
- Targeted testing has been a success, but the range of trigger offences could be refreshed to take account of offences associated with drug use other than crack or opiates – this would require legislative changes to enable the police to routinely test for the presence of other drugs and to add to the list of trigger offences.*
- DIP is focused on outputs – e.g. numbers into treatment – rather than outcomes. MOPAC is considering outcomes-based payment by results models and is looking closely at the National Drug Recovery pilots.*
- PCCs need to be aware of how the other 60 per cent of DIP money currently works, as well as the imminent changes there. The move to allocation through Local Health and Wellbeing Boards means that the 60 per cent is subject to the same threat of disinvestment / opportunity to refresh, and agencies from the health side and the criminal justice side need to work together to ensure that mutually beneficial and mutually dependent outcomes are worked into local commissioning arrangements. This will help to guarantee the best use of public money."*