

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH MARCH 2018

PRESENT:

Councillors: Tim Gallagher (Chair), Barbara Blake, Makbule Gunes, Bob Hare and Anne Stennett

Co-opted Member: Ian Sygrave (Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches)

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at the meeting and Members noted the information contained therein.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Carter.

3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

6. MINUTES

In respect of item 51 (Transport Strategy), the Panel asked that the breakdown of Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding that was requested be circulated when available.

AGREED:

That, subject to the above, the minutes of the meeting of 31 January 2018 be approved.

7. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS; CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES

Councillor Ayisi, the Cabinet Member for Communities, reported on recent developments in respect of his portfolio as follows:

- The Community Safety Partnership had not been meeting regularly but had been relaunched and was now functioning with renewed vigour. All relevant stakeholders were now involved. Some joint meetings had taken place with the Health and Well Being Board to consider issues of mutual interest;
- Young people who came into contact with the justice system were often vulnerable and the gaps that there were in providing support needed to be acknowledged. There was a clear link to secondary exclusions. In respect of academic achievement, a specific group had been set up by Councillor Weston, the Cabinet Member for Children, to look at how levels amongst Black and Minority Ethnic communities could be improved;
- Some parents did not have the time to attend parents' evenings at schools due to their work commitments. In addition, some young people had no space to study when they got home. School could provide an escape for them;
- A study that had been undertaken of the 20 most prolific offenders in the borough had identified a number of common characteristics such as bereavement, having an older sibling involved in crime and domestic violence. A large percentage had experienced trauma.

In answer to a question, Joe Benmore, the Strategic Manager for Integrated Offender Management, reported that the increase in moped enabled robberies had now levelled off. There had been a pan London response with a dedicated Police squad set up. Operation Venice had been set up by the Police to address the issue. The strategy involved both enforcement and intervention. There was now a centralised hub for dealing with moped enabled crime as well as Police officers on motorcycles. However, there were also safeguarding issues that needed to be considered in respect of any pursuit. Many of the mopeds used were stolen and there was a security issue that manufacturers needed to consider.

Panel Members commented that moped theft was the root cause of the issue and felt that work should be undertaken with moped owners to encourage them to secure their vehicles properly. Mr Benmore reported that this was part of the overall strategy by the Police.

In answer to a question, the Cabinet Member stated that community safety work within the borough was financed by funding from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), which all London boroughs received. Anything additional to this was a bonus. However, the underlying issues were covered by other Council priority areas, such as Regeneration and Children's Services. Mr Benmore commented that MOPAC had reduced the amount of funding for boroughs by 30% and it had therefore been necessary to look for savings. This was being addressed in part by bringing together boroughs that faced similar challenges and aligning services. The aim was to build resilience into the system and there was confidence that the cuts could be accommodated.

In answer to another question, the Cabinet Member reported that action had been taken in response to recent violent incidents in the borough. The Metropolitan Police's Territorial Support Group (TSG) had been deployed and stop and search was being used more widely. 40 additional Police officers had also been provided for the borough

in order to provide reassurance to residents. Social media was also being monitored closely. There was a lack of recognised community leaders in the Wood Green area, which meant that it was difficult to engage with young people from the area regarding the disorder that had taken place.

The Panel noted that there was a perception amongst some young people that they were safer if they carried a knife. In addition, they could also be reticent to call the Police if under threat. Most knives were ordinary kitchen ones as these were small, concealable and of no value. Drugs and money were the motivation behind most gang activity. Young people wanted jobs that could fulfil their ambitions and lacked enthusiasm for apprenticeships. Gangs could become a surrogate family for them but it was difficult for them to exit if they so wished. The Cabinet Member commented that although signposting was provided for young people, there was a lack of effective careers advice and guidance.

In answer to a question, Mr Benmore reported that there was a national strategy around drugs that focussed on tackling organised criminal networks. There had been a lot of activity and some notable successes. It was a national issue though and not just confined to Haringey.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP; CRIME PERFORMANCE FIGURES

Sandeep Broca, Intelligence Analyst from Community Safety and Enforcement, reported that the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan (2017-2021) outlined the key priorities for London. These were:

- Sexual violence;
- Domestic abuse;
- Child sexual exploitation;
- Weapon-based crime;
- Hate crime; and
- Anti-Social Behaviour.

In addition, two local priorities had been set for Haringey. These were robbery and Non-Domestic Violence with Injury (VWI). Although total crime had increased, the increase in Haringey had been smaller than the average and this was a significant achievement. The hot spots were Wood Green, Bruce Grove and Seven Sisters.

There had been an increase in hate crime and this had included large increases in homophobic and anti semitic offences. It was felt that the driver behind this was a greater level of reporting which had been generated by a specific media campaign. Domestic abuse with injury had increased at a higher rate than the London average but it was also thought that this might be driven by increased reporting. In particular, there had been an effort to promote earlier reporting. Hotspot locations appeared to be related to where housing density was greatest. There had been a much smaller increase in sex offences. These were spread relatively evenly across the borough.

There had been an increase of 41% in personal robbery, which was very high. Approximately two mobile phones per day were stolen as part of this. Many of the perpetrators carried knives and it was possible that this also had a knock-on effect on levels of knife crime. In order to be recorded as robbery, such crimes needed to

include the threat of violence. There had been a significant decrease in the number of young knife injury victims, which was good news. However, it still remained a serious problem for the borough. Key locations were Wood Green High Street, Turnpike Lane and Bruce Grove/Lansdowne Road but they tended to shift in response to targeted work in high volume locations. Mr. Benmore commented that Operation Spectre had taken place in response to knife crime. Action had included a weapons sweep and an education campaign. There had also been a Police presence at the North Middlesex Hospital. Young victims often did not want to report crime and work needed to be done with them to encourage them to do so. Trends were analysed regularly by partners and there was a partnership problem solving group. Amongst other things, consideration was given as to how resources could be deployed most effectively.

Mr. Broca reported that 1 in 8 firearm discharges in London took place in Haringey and there had been a 160% increase in the past year. The use of firearms appeared to be targeted and specific rather than random. In order for firearm discharges to be recorded as such, they needed to have the capacity to be lethal. There also had to be proof of their discharge. The Police Operation Viper team were deployed where the need was greatest. The Panel noted that the team often had to come from the middle of London, which could cause delay. Newham had similar issues with firearms to Haringey and the two boroughs had to compete for resources. There had not been a significant escalation in the number of guns in London though and there was evidence that the same ones were being used in multiple incidents.

The Panel noted that non domestic abuse violence with injury had increased faster than the London average and was likely to be the focus for action in the next 12 months. The locations for incidents were generally busy locations around shopping centres and transport hubs. There had been a small increase in incidents in parks but this appeared to have dropped off now. Improving confidence and satisfaction levels was a big challenge but it appeared to be improving slightly, with the borough moving up from 32nd to 23rd. compared to other boroughs. However, there was still a confidence gap between the white and BAME communities. In terms of crime in parks, there had been a small decrease. It only represented 2% of total crime, with 629 offences being recorded last year. 40% of these were related to events in parks and were theft or robbery, mostly of mobile phones. There was a low level of violent crime in parks.

In answer to a question, Mr Broca stated that acid attacks were very rare in Haringey. Legislation was planned regarding the sale of such liquids. The Panel commented that, whilst the report was very helpful and contained some excellent data, a longer terms perspective would enable Members to obtain a more accurate impression of trends. In addition, some changes in figures were likely not to be of statistical significance. It would therefore be useful if standard deviations could be included with the figures. It was felt that more could be done to address the issue of disabled parking badges. It was felt that more could be done to promote the Companion Badge, which helped prevent theft as it incorporated the vehicle registration document. Mr Benmore stated that there had been an increase in motor vehicle offences. Many of these were committed by more prolific offenders.

9. REVIEW ON PARKS

The Panel considered the draft report of its review on parks. The Panel requested that an additional recommendation be added to the report concerning land abutting parks and open spaces. It was felt that any developments on such land should be sensitive to the surroundings, with the aim of creating a green buffer zone. Action such as greening the facades of buildings and limiting shadowing could be undertaken and the Council could commit to negotiating with developers on these issues.

AGREED:

That, subject to the above, the draft report of the review be approved for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

10. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

AGREED:

That the completed workplan for the year be noted.

11. VOTE OF THANKS

It being the last meeting of the Panel for the current Municipal Year, the Chair was thanked by the Panel for his work as Chair. The Chair thanked Members and officers for their kind assistance and co-operation.

CHAIR: Councillor Tim Gallagher

Signed by Chair

Date