

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON MONDAY, 11TH MARCH, 2019, 18:30

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Eldridge Culverwell, Scott Emery, Adam Jogee (Chair),
Julia Ogiehor, Matt White and Barbara Blake**

ALSO PRESENT: Ian Sygrave

50. FILMING AT MEETINGS

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

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Rice.

Apologies for lateness were received from Ian Sygrave.

52. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In relation to Item 7, Cllr Culverwell declared that he was Vice-Chair of the Friends of Finsbury Park.

54. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

55. MINUTES

The Panel chased responses to outstanding actions, and requested that they be notified of responses to actions in advance of the meeting in future. **(Clerk).**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 18th December be agreed as correct record on the meeting.

56. PARKS AND UPDATE ON GREEN FLAGS

The Panel received a presentation on the Green Flag award scheme in Haringey, which had previously been given as part of an all member briefing session on 11th February. The presentation was introduced by David Murray, AD for Environment and Neighbourhoods. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. The Panel sought clarification about the changes that were proposed to the inspection regime of Parks. In response, officers advised that they were moving away from a Group Judging process which involved unannounced mystery shopping inspections, and back to a full planned inspection regime. Officers commented that they had received an unprecedented level of scrutiny through the Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) inspection regime and that that this had created a very large workload, in terms of responding to individual inspections and defects, as well as arranging follow-up visits. The new inspection regime would involve full inspections of every Green Flag park and was more challenging, but it would allow officers to plan inspections rather than respond reactively to the timings and programme of another organisation. Officers set out that the new regime would be collaborative and would allow a process of dialogue and challenge with the judges during inspections.
- b. The Panel requested an update on the flooding in Albert Rec. In response, officers acknowledge that this had been a long standing issue but emphasised that this was due to the topography of the area in question. Officers advised that hydrology reports had been undertaken and that there was a project underway to try and address the problem. Officers cautioned that resolving the problem would involve external fund raising and would likely run into 2020.
- c. The Panel enquired about proposals to engender behaviour change in parks and what this would involve. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that she wanted residents and service users to feel proud of their local park and to take ownership of it. Particularly in terms of disposing of their own litter but also through engagement on activities and events. A key part of this would involve engagement with stakeholder groups and getting them to be part of process of driving change.
- d. In response to this, the Panel cautioned that behaviour change alone could only achieve so much and members emphasised the need to also increase enforcement and inspections in the parks to ensure compliance. The Panel cautioned that greater involvement of friends groups and volunteers was not a replacement for parks officers and enforcement activities. Officers acknowledged these concerns and set out that they were not expecting friends groups to police parks. The Panel was advised that there had not been any budget savings made in the parks service in latest MTFs and there had been a firm commitment to maintain spending levels in parks. Officers emphasised that in the existing financial climate, with further reductions to local government budgets in the pipeline, the only way to increase the budget for parks was through additional income streams such as events.
- e. In response to concerns about how councillors could reassure members of the community that events would benefit smaller parks, officers emphasised that income generated from events would be ring-fenced for that specific park. Officers acknowledged that the Council needed to be better at engaging with users about what they would like the additional income to be spent on in

- individual parks. Officers also set out that the Parks team were good at monitoring events and withholding deposits from event organisers where damage had been done. Further work would be undertaken to ensure a proactive response to weather related issues such as using straw in the event of heavy rain.
- f. In response to a question about how action plans and the individual actions contained therein would be prioritised, officers advised that this would be done in conjunction with key stakeholders such as members and friends of parks groups but that the process was still to be determined.
 - g. In response to a question around external play equipment inspections, officers advised that these were carried out quarterly rather than the national standard of annually, due to the large amount of play equipment in the Borough. The inspections were carried out by the Play Inspection Company and officers confirmed that they were paid for carrying these out, to provide a warts and all assessment of the condition of the equipment.
 - h. The Chair sought the Panel's views on how it could best get involved in the Parks Improvement Plan as part of some detailed scrutiny work. The Chair advised that this work should take priority over the Scrutiny Review into Plastics for the time being, due to the level of interest involved and because there was an opportunity to take a real-time policy development role. The Chair suggested that the work include some site visits, some evidence gathering sessions and some engagement work with residents.
 - i. The Panel enquired about the action plan for parks and whether the Panel could scrutinize this as a first step. In response, officers agreed that an outline vision of where the Council wanted to be with its parks along with an outline of its approach for the engagement and community visits could be made available relatively quickly. Officers advised that they would have to get this finalised and signed off by the Cabinet Member as a first step. It was envisaged that, all being well, this would likely take a couple of weeks. Some key considerations for the Panel at this point would be about; how best to manage the engagement process, whether the correct people were being engaged with and how the Council could continue to build a relationship with KBT through the scrutiny process.
 - j. Officers set out that this work would have a number of phases and emphasised that the first phase would be around sense checking the initial plans. Further phases around implementation and evaluation, particularly in terms of directing resources and managing community input into this prioritisation process, would follow. It was envisaged that the service offer for parks could be more reflective of local priorities and that it wouldn't necessarily be a 'one size fits all approach'.
 - k. Officers agreed that they would come back to the Panel with an outline vision document and some initial engagement proposals. **(Action: David Murray)**. Following this, it was envisaged that the Panel would arrange an initial session to review those plans and that a site visit could follow from there.
 - l. Following further questions about likely timescales in regards to site visits, Officers cautioned that they needed to pull together a schedule of activities that was flexible enough to reflect the wider workload of the team as well as provide worthwhile opportunities for the Scrutiny Panel's involvement. In response, the Chair acknowledged the fact there were other issues at play as well as the need to work out the best way for the Panel be involved.

- m. The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that she was keen to hear from Members and would welcome any suggestions at this early stage. **(Panel members to note).**
- n. In response to a question around the staffing resources available in Parks, officers set out that there were 55 staff in total and that this comprised of 36 gardeners as well as a further 8 seasonal gardeners. The workforce within the Parks service was reduced by around one-third in 2012, however no further reductions had been made since then. Furthermore, there had been no reduction in the size of the parks footprint in that time. Officers also advised that an additional horticultural crew was being added to increase maintenance in Green Flag parks.
- o. Members of the Panel emphasised the importance of horticultural maintenance and noted the difficulties that could exist in getting friends of parks groups involved in planting events. It was suggested that some groups had got to the stage where horticultural events took place and were well attended. It was further suggested that there was some learning to be shared among the groups on how to best achieve this. Officers acknowledged this and suggested that part of the initial work around the Parks Improvement Plan was around working out how to keep people engaged.
- p. The Panel suggested that the Kings Cross development could be a good venue for a site visit as part of the Parks Improvement Plan.

RESOLVED

That the work being undertaken as part of the Parks Improvement Plan was noted and comments were provided on how the Panel would like to be involved in shaping this plan.

57. REDUCING THE CRIMINALISATION OF CHILDREN

Clerk's note – The Panel agreed to amend the order of the agenda so that Item 10 on Reducing the Criminalisation of Children would be taken immediately following Item 7. The minutes reflect the order that the items were discussed during the meeting rather than the order that they were listed on the published agenda.

The Panel received a report from the AD for Early Help and Prevention which was set out in the agenda pack at pages 51-83. The report provided an update on work that was taking place to reduce the criminalisation of young people that was taking place in partnership with a range of stakeholders. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. The Panel noted that the authority had a key role to play in identification and early intervention with young people through the Haringey Youth Justice Service. Out of Court disposals provided an opportunity for community panels to work with young people and their families to put in place a package of support to prevent further entrenchment within the criminal justice system.
- b. In response to a query, officers advised that there was always a tension in the system between punishing offenders and improving outcomes for a cohort of young people who are often vulnerable and may have undergone significant trauma during their lives.

- c. Officers offered to invite panel members to a youth justice session where they could explore a range of examples of some of the work undertaken around restorative justice. **(Action: Gill Gibson)**.
- d. In response to a question around staffing levels in 2010 compared to present, officers agreed to come back with this information. **(Action: Gill Gibson)**.
- e. The Panel sought to highlight the correlation between school exclusions and criminal behaviour and gang membership in later life. The Panel enquired what was being done around exclusions and how this linked into the Young People at Risk Strategy. Concerns were also raised by the Panel around a failure of schools to change behaviours and lack of awareness of different cultural factors. In response, officers acknowledged the issue of unconscious bias within the criminal justice system. Officers advised that there was an exclusions review underway and that work was also being done around alternative provision. Officers advised that they had a role in challenging schools around exclusions but that it was ultimately up to the schools. The Panel was advised that schools had been engaged with around the development of the Young People at Risk strategy.
- f. In response to a question, officers advised that an analysis done of the 20 most prolific offenders showed a significant amount of trauma from a young age, such as domestic violence. Those traumas went unaddressed throughout their childhood and the system responded to negative behaviour through exclusions which ultimately led to the further rejection of an already vulnerable young person. Discussions with police around adopting a trauma informed approach had been positive.
- g. In response to further questions, officers acknowledged the role of language issues. The Panel were advised that additional health checks for children had been introduced including tests for language skills.
- h. In response to concerns raised about the scale of County Lines operations, officers acknowledged that this was a national issue and that young people from Haringey were known to be involved in operations across the UK. Officers advised that the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub shared information on those involved and that funding had been successfully secured from MOPAC for a prevention fund.

RESOLVED

That the Panel noted the contents of the report.

58. CRIME PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PERFORMANCE UPDATE INCLUDING GANGS MATRIX

The Panel received a presentation which provided an overview of crime performance data in Haringey. The Panel also received a report for noting which set out performance information for Community Safety and also provided a response to queries raised at the previous panel meeting in relation to; the Gangs Matrix, incidents of serious youth violence in Haringey since December 2018, building community capacity space for young people and funding streams to address serious youth violence. The following arose from the discussion of the presentation and accompanying report:

- a. In relation to proposals for building community capacity space for young people, the Panel noted that discussions had taken place with a number of venues, regarding the potential to run youth projects from their premises. A number of sites were identified where suitable community organisations could be linked together. The organisations being linked as part of phase one, were from the Haringey Community Gold consortium. To avoid any potential post code issues, the report set out that further suitable locations would be identified from across the borough.
- b. The Panel suggested that it would also be useful to see the data presented as per head of the population as well as a percentage increase. The Panel also sought clarification around the locations used in the data, in response officers advised that this was generally ward specific data but that sometimes this was drilled down to a specific hot spot location such as Turnpike Lane. Officers commented that this was a MOPAC dataset and that the methodology used was set by the Mayor's Office. Officers agreed to clarify whether faith, homophobic and islamophobic hate crime were all subsets of the wider racist and religious hate crime. **(Action: Eubert Malcolm)**.
- c. Panel members acknowledged the positive improvements around gun and knife crime. The Panel sought clarification around why homophobic hate crime was not a bigger priority for the Borough. In response, officers advised that although this was a serious issue, priority had been given to violent offences, which caused a significant degree of harm to the public, as well as high volume offences.
- d. In response to a question about the reasons behind the rise in hate crime, officers advised that this likely reflected an increase in both the number of incidents taking place as well as an increased level of reporting. The data used was reflective of 3rd party reporting for hate crime i.e. through religious and community leaders.
- e. The Panel raised concerns with the figures that showed an increase in figures for domestic abuse. In response, officers advised that the data showed that there was degree of clustering of incidents in areas of highest housing density, however some of the increase may also be explained by increased levels of reporting. Officers also cautioned that the data could be slightly misleading as all of the high clustering was in the east of the borough, which could give a misleading impression that domestic violence was not prevalent in the west of the borough.
- f. In response to a question, officers acknowledged that there was the link between higher crime rates and high footfall areas. Officers also advised that in addition to litter sweeps that officers were also undertaking knife sweeps with police colleagues.
- g. In response to a question around whether an increase in crime was anticipated when the new Tottenham Hotspur stadium opened, officers advised that it was difficult to say definitively, however it was suggested that with such a high police presence on match days and very good CCTV coverage it was likely that any increase would be managed. Officers suggested that rather than a spike in volumes of crimes it was perhaps more likely that the types of crimes would be different on match days.

- h. In response to a question, officers acknowledged that there was a significant increase in burglary offences in January, particularly in the west of the Borough. Officers advised that they had been in contact with residents around closure of access to gates to particular locations and had even offered to provide some funding for those gates where it was needed. Officers advised that they were preparing some advice for all members on crime reduction measures and agreed to circulate this information to the Panel members. **(Action: Eubert Malcolm).**

59. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, SAFETY AND ENGAGEMENT

The Panel received a short introduction from the Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety and Engagement followed by a question and answer session on issues within his portfolio. The following key points were noted in relation to the discussion of this item.

- a. The Cabinet Member advised that schools had been badly affected by budget cuts and that this had a particularly acute impact on pastoral care, including after-school clubs. The Cabinet Member contended that this had played a part in some of the wider issues discussed such as surge of exclusions and some of the other factors affecting the criminalisation of children. The Panel noted that criminal gangs were the main perpetrators of the criminalisation of children and the Cabinet Member suggested that the scale of the problem was not widely understood, with County Lines criminal activities worth around £500m a year. The Cabinet Member advised that he was looking to set up a round-table seminar with key partners on the issue of criminalisation and agreed to invite panel members to the meeting. **(Action: Cllr Mark Blake).**
- b. The Committee requested that a separate meeting be established to go through the Council's Youth at Risk Strategy in detail. **(Action: Chair/Clerk).**
- c. The Committee sought assurance about what activities were being undertaken at a local level, particularly given that the Council had just agreed its Youth and Risk Strategy. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the administration was looking to establish a hub in Wood Green which would include the involvement of a detached youth work team as part of the Haringey Community Gold programme. The Cabinet Member also emphasised the role of partners working in specific areas and localities. £100k had been ring-fenced for the retention of the summer clubs programme from last year. There were also a number of lessons learnt from that process, including working with Fusion to reduce entry costs. Conversations had also taken place with HfH around what more could be done on estates. The Cabinet Member emphasised that a lot of the detail was being pulled together and that further progress would be made once the detached youth work team was in place.
- d. In response to further questions, officers advised that the Youth at Risk Strategy was a ten year strategy with a four year action plan and included a public health approach to work right across the system. Officers commented that it was a co-produced strategy that had been developed in conjunction with young people, practitioners and parents. Officers acknowledged that one of the key outcomes from discussions with the community was a lack of trust in institutions and that one of the responses required was to be better at

- signposting services to the community. The Panel was advised that the Young Londoners Fund would see 2000 people go through the system over a three year period and was awarded to Haringey in reflection of the strength of some of the proposals outlined.
- e. The Cabinet Member advised that he would come back to the Panel during its summer meeting with a further update in relation to the Youth at Risk Strategy. **(Action: Cllr M. Blake).**
 - f. The Panel sought clarification around how the proposals outlined differed from previous proposals for a youth zone in Wood Green and what was being done to overcome the postcode issue. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the Youth Zone was sold as borough-wide provision but was located in an inaccessible part of Woodside ward in which young people would be unwilling to travel to. The Panel was advised that the youth hub in Wood Green was far more accessible and it was anticipated that in the future, as part of the Young People at Risk Strategy, there would be specific allocation of resources for youth hubs across different parts of the Borough. Panel Members requested some further conversations with the Cabinet Member about how to develop some of those resource opportunities in their own wards. Members also requested the opportunity to attend a walkabout with the Cabinet Member. **(Action: Cllr M. Blake).**
 - g. Officers advised the panel that they were in discussion with community organisations to identify suitable locations in different parts of the borough. Officers further emphasised that there was a definite need for a hub in Wood Green as the first step.
 - h. The Chair acknowledged that this was an issue that Members felt strongly about and set out the need for a detailed discussion on the Youth at Risk Strategy. The Panel agreed that an all-Member briefing session should be set up to encourage a wider conversation on the subject. Officers agreed to set this up as quickly as possible. **(Action: Clerk/Eubert Malcolm).**

60. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Panel received a cover report and a copy of the Panel's work programme for 2018-20 for approval.

The Panel requested that an item be added to a future meeting to discuss the Active cycling and Walking Plan, which was part of the Transport Strategy. Members also requested to receive an update in relation to the Crouch End Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy. **(Action: Clerk).**

RESOLVED

- I. The Panel noted the work programme for the Scrutiny Panel as per Appendix A of the report and agreed the amendments.
- II. The Panel feedback comments on the scrutiny process for 2018/19 for the Chair to take forward at the 'scrutiny stocktake' meeting being held in early April.

61. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

62. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting was noted as 8th April.

CHAIR: Councillor Adam Jogee

Signed by Chair

Date