

Report for: Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 8th April 2025

Title: Matters arising from the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel – One off Scrutiny Review of Community Safety.

Report Authorised by: Ayshe Simsek Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

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Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Non-Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 This report is put forward in accordance with Part 4, Section G, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules – paragraph 12.1 and sets out recommendations from the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel agreed at the meeting on the 11th of March 2025. These were developed following consideration of reports on crime and community safety in the borough, and a question and answer session in the meeting between Officers, the Borough Commander and representatives of the Youth Panel.
- 1.2 As set out in Part 4, Section G, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules - paragraph 10.2, the Scrutiny Review Panels must make any recommendations they wish to put forward through the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. OSC is required to formally ratify the request from the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel and agree to submit the recommendation to Cabinet.
- 1.3 As set out in Part 4, Section G, the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules- Paragraph 1.2 (xi). To review and scrutinise action taken by partner authorities in discharge of crime and disorder functions and to make reports and recommendations to Cabinet on these.

2. Context

- 2.1 In line with the Panel's responsibilities for community safety and the discharge of crime and disorder functions, every year the Borough Commander has been invited to the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel where Haringey crime statistics are considered. However, within the context of a high crime rate in the borough, and the outcomes of September 2024's Scrutiny Poll and Café (where 'Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour) were prioritised as one of the highest concerns of residents; the Panel decided to scrutinise the measures taken by Police and the Council to lower Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour rates. In addition, Panel members noted that the safety of young people particularly in certain areas in the borough, and in the late afternoons and evenings had been a key concern of the Youth Council. This had been raised at the Young People's

Full Council meeting in October 2024. Therefore, the Panel also invited representatives of the Youth Council to ask questions of the Borough Commander, Cabinet Member for Communities, and Officers responsible for community safety to inform the discussion of the measures on lowering crime in the borough - and to provide a young person's perspective on these issues.

- 2.2 At the above Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel on the 11th of March 2025, the Panel considered and discussed two reports which set out crime statistics - and key enforcement and preventative strategies to combat crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in the borough. There was a special focus in the reports and verbal discussion on youth, knife and organised crime.

Some of the key considerations in the meeting were:

- Young people's perspectives on police measures such as 'Clear, Hold, Build'. 'Clear Hold Build' relies heavily on enforcement to clear an area of crime, then to ensure that no criminal activities replace the first in the power vacuum. The last stage of 'Clear, Hold Build' relies heavily on building good relations with the community. The scrutiny session uncovered a strong need for the Police and the Council's Community Safety functions to build relations with youth representatives and youth leaders within the community, to address long standing issues regarding trust in the Police. It was highlighted that this would especially be relevant within the 'Clear' or enforcement part of 'Clear, Hold, Build'. The Panel sought assurances that young people's viewpoints were being incorporated into police measures such as 'Clear, Hold, Build'.
- Ward Panel Meetings were discussed at length. These meetings are run by the Met. Police and meetings should be advertised on each ward of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams website. Councillors attend these meetings. Residents are encouraged to talk to their local policing team, discuss local crime and disorder concerns - and inform local priorities of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams. The Panel discussed and shared their experience of the Ward Panel Meetings. It became apparent that these meetings were not being regularly timetabled, and they were also not well attended. There were issues too with residents being left to arrange and promote the meetings themselves. It was noted that these meetings were used by the Police as the main source of communication with residents and therefore there was a strong need for the Ward Panel Meetings to be strengthened as a tool of communication.
- Issues with the reporting of Anti-Social Behaviour to the relevant authorities was discussed. It was noted that there were areas of confusion amongst residents as to the definition of Anti-Social Behaviour. There were issues too as to the clarity of accountability for Anti-Social Behaviour - the police, housing providers, or multiple departments in the council (for example housing, noise nuisance, resident services or community safety). It was highlighted that clarification was urgently needed to avoid underreporting.
- It was noted that the Anti-Social Behaviour policy was currently under review and the Panel expressed a strong need for the Scrutiny Panels of all relevant areas of the council to be involved with the review of Anti-Social Behaviour - and for

this to be built into the workplan. In addition, the Panel uncovered that guidance was needed for Councillors and residents as to where the relevant Anti-Social Behaviour complaints should go and who was responsible. The Panel also considered how Anti-Social Behaviour was reported on the council website. It had been reported to Panel members that the Anti- Social Behaviour form was very difficult to find on the website and this may too lead to underreporting.

- Issues with 'Stop and Search' were also discussed. The effectiveness of 'Stop and Search' as a police tactic was considered at the meeting. Particular mention was made of the relatively low rate of success when carrying out 'Stop and Search' in comparison with the negative feeling it created in the community. It was decided in the meeting that the Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group and a representative from MOPAC's London Disproportionality Board, should be invited to a future Community Safety scrutiny session next municipal year, to discuss this in more depth.
- Youth projects and their impact on crime were showcased in the meetings and the Panel sought an understanding of the impact of the short-term nature of funding in the sector on projects supporting the lowering of crime in Haringey.

3. Recommendations to the Cabinet.

- 3.1 The Panel recommends closer working, and better and more frequent communication between the Youth Council representatives and The Community Safety Partnership which is co-chaired by the Borough Commander and Cabinet Member for Communities and meets on a quarterly basis. The Cabinet Member for Communities is asked to work in partnership with the Borough Commander to consider how young people's views are built into policies and procedures for this partnership meeting as a matter of urgency.
- 3.2 The Panel asks the Cabinet Member for Communities to discuss with the Borough Commander the standardisation and regularisation of Ward Panel Meetings as a main tool of communication between Police, Council and residents.
- 3.3 That the Community Safety Team, through their existing communications channels and their assigned Council web pages, support residents find venues and help promote Ward Panel meetings.
- 3.4. For the Cabinet to request that the Borough Commander organise quarterly ward performance figures on Safer Neighbourhood Teams' (SNT) visibility and front-line police resourcing, for the proposed newly standardised Ward Panel Meetings. This is so that residents understand how many 'fit for duty' police officers are available.
- 3.5 For the Cabinet to request that the Borough Commander provide quarterly ward by-ward Anti-Social Behaviour reporting to feed into the newly proposed standardised Ward Panel Meetings.

- 3.6 In line with the Panel's policy development role, it requests consultation in the upcoming review of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. Consultation should also be sought with the respective Scrutiny Panels of all other relevant Council departments dealing with Anti – Social Behaviour. In addition, and as a matter of urgency a guidance note for Councillors and residents outlining the definition of Anti-Social Behaviour - and a structure or flow chart for reporting Anti-Social Behaviour be made available. This should include all Council departments that deal with Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 3.7 Subsequent to the implementation of Recommendation 3.6, another recommendation is to make the online Anti-Social Behaviour form on the Council website more prominent and user friendly – perhaps basing design on user feedback.
- 3.8 For the Cabinet to note that the Borough Commander has been asked about the proportion of successful outcomes in Haringey for 'Stop and Search' and further information on procedures and policy. This will come forward to a future meeting.
- 3.9 In light of the short-term nature of projects the Panel recommends that expertise within the voluntary sector be sought so that the Council have robust research, evidence and organisational support to successfully apply for longer term funding opportunities if they exist.

4. Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations

- 4.1 To recommend that Cabinet consider the recommendations above.