

Overview & Scrutiny Briefing from Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion

Recorded Crime Overview

Overall recorded crime fell by 7% during April – September 2010 compared with the same period last year (12,055 against 12,862). Haringey has now seen seven consecutive years of reduction for total recorded offences.

'Most serious violence' was a challenge over the past year mainly due to gang-related activity. This has now fallen by over a fifth (21.4%) – a fall of 49 from 229 to 180 offences. Contributing factors include the Gang Action Group work and the Tackling Knives Action Plan (TKAP) both of which are co-ordinated by specialised, Council-based staff.

Acquisitive crime (robbery, residential burglary and motor vehicle crime) is down by 13% compared with the same time last year and despite anticipated rises due to the economic downturn. This represents a fall of 490 from 3,713 to 3,223 offences.

Prevention

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is being addressed by a mixture of prevention, early intervention and enforcement. The Anti-social behaviour Action Team (ASBAT) is using all tools with care and in proportion to the problem in hand. There is high use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts as a first step to try and nip the problem in the bud. Injunctions are frequently used where a higher degree of protection is needed. ASBOs are used rarely in Haringey but to very good effect in persistent and serious cases. Case workers in the ASBAT are managing 20 cases at a time when the recommended case load is 6-8. Case loads are anticipated to rise further still and this is a worrying situation which will inevitably put additional strain on officers.

A great deal of the valuable work needed is also preventative. The Team currently has a Senior Parenting Practitioner and no further enforcement has been required for the 150 families with whom she has engaged. Her post is only secure until the end of March 2011 and all schools-based prevention and educational work is at risk.

Youth crime

Haringey's Youth Offending Service reduced the number of new young entrants from 84 this time last year to only 55 in Q1 this year. This equates to an annual rate of 1,178 new entrants per 100,000 young people residing in the borough compared to 1,800 for the same period last year. The final 2009/10 out-turn was a reduction of 37.5% against a London average of 22% during 2009/10 (figures are always released with delays). Much of the current success is being attributed to diversionary intervention by trained youth workers in custody suites (known as 'triage'). This work is not core funded and therefore at high risk of being lost.

Violent crime

The challenge over the past year in Haringey has been mainly from gang-related offending. The cross-border Gang Action Group has been the main response and is showing considerable promise. This is a multi-disciplinary group that uses a problem-solving approach and looks in detail at each individual. 10 of the current 23 so-called 'nominals' have been taken off the list due to reduced risk. This work requires a high degree of partnership brokering, specialist knowledge and inter-personal skill. The current post-holder is earmarked for the generic policy team in the Council.

Substance misuse

Under the aegis of the Haringey Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), local performance has consistently been above the London average for the numbers of clients completing treatment drug-free. The variation for 2009/10 was 44% success in Haringey (207 out of 471) versus 38% across London (4,674 out of 12,258), as reported in March 2010. The DAAT has been working with drug treatment agencies to ascertain the reasons for drop outs, identify and use good practice and to put appropriate support mechanisms in place for those at risk of dropping out. The future delivery of DAAT-related work remains uncertain and may be affected by the closer integration of public health with the local authority. Safeguarding the knowledge and expertise that currently resides within the borough should be a priority.

The nursing provision for screening and brief interventions provided by the Alcohol Liaison Service has made a significant contribution to the favourable performance on reducing alcohol-related hospital admissions. Haringey saw a 50% improvement since this service has been available (from 364 original attendances down to 182).

Reducing re-offending

The current programme is focusing on provision for adult, non-statutory offenders (sentenced to 12 months or less), as they make up 60% of all offenders in London and do not receive Probation support. The liaison worker has an initial caseload of 21 and this is set to increase. The work is personal and aims for long-term desistance. It is considered the National Offender Management Service to provide excellent value for money. Funding for this work is completely dependent on Area Based Grant and on the Basic Command Unit Fund. The former remains uncertain beyond the end of the financial year and the latter will cease from March 2011.

Community justice and confidence pilot

Haringey has been piloting a new approach to sentencing by Magistrates that investigates the causes of offending in the specific environment and uses a problem-solving approach. Funding was found locally for a year to employ a link worker and there has been unanimous praise for her work. However, despite positive noises from the Coalition about this model, there is no funding available to continue this service. It is expected that volunteers will fill the gap.

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

All work and planning is on track and the Council's emergency plans have been thoroughly reviewed. The team was granted a Silver Footprint Award from the RSPCA for Contingency Planning.

Equalities & Cohesion - Domestic & Gender Based Violence Briefing – (Quarter 2/3 July – November 2010) Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion

Equalities and Cohesion

Equality Act 2010

The new Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1st Oct and replaces previous equalities legislation whilst addressing some new equalities strands now known as 'Protected Characteristics'. The nine Protected Characteristics are;

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race,
- religion or belief
- sex (formally known as gender)
- sexual orientation

A project plan is in place to ensure that the Council complies with the new legislation. The Corporate Equalities Team is leading on this work. In August and September they initiated a series of briefings to the Corporate Equalities Group, Directorate Equalities Fora, Human Resources and Trade Unions. Work has already started to update Human Resources policy, procedures and practices and Directorates have already started to revise practices to ensure they comply with the New Equalities Legislation. All directorate equalities work programmes have been updated to ensure all the relevant Equality Act actions for their service areas have been included. In early October a presentation on the new Act was given at the Policy Network to ensure everyone with a policy brief is up to date with the implications for the council. A further programme of briefings and road shows has been planned including briefings for both the Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups.

Responding to the Consultation on the Equality Public Duty

We have drafted a response to the government's consultation on the revised Public Sector Equality Duty that accompanies the Equality Act and will into force April 2011 replacing the existing Equality Public Sector Duties.

Updating the Equal Opportunities Policy

We have started a consultation process to update our Equal Opportunities Policy and Staff Handbook in line with the new Equality Act, we have put our intention to do this on the Forward Plan with the updated policy going to Cabinet in February 2011. To consult we will use Directorate Equalities Fora, the Community Cohesion Forum (which includes representatives from community, voluntary and faith groups in addition to councillors and strategic partners), Equalities Industrial Relations Group and the Corporate Equalities Group.

Equalities Impact Assessments Screening Tool

The Equalities Team working in conjunction with Directorate Equalities Fora, the Corporate Equalities Group, colleagues in Planning and Legal have developed an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) Screening Tool. The idea of this tool is to help officers to identify the relevance of each policy, project, function or major development/planning application to equality and whether an EqIA should be undertaken.

Equalities Events

We have managed to attract sponsorship which has enabled us to carry out a paired down programme of Equalities events such as, a commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day in January and International Women's Day in March.

Domestic and Gender Based Violence

Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC)

In Haringey a pilot Specialist Domestic Violence Court has now been operational since October 2009 and it is held on every Tuesday at the Highgate Magistrates Court. Haringey's Specialist Domestic Violence Court was reviewed by the Ministry of Justice's (MOJ), Specialist Domestic Violence Court Programme Steering Group in September and we hope to gain accreditation.

"I SHALL SURVIVE"

"I SHALL SURVIVE" a practical guide to domestic & gender based violence in Haringey has been revised and updated and the 8th Edition was launched in September and is available on the councils website.

Rape Crisis Provision.

Haringey councils is one of the north London Borough to plan to run Rape Crisis services with the work centrally co-ordinated by an existing women's service provider funded by the GLA. This means that women in north London will not have to travel across boroughs but can access services locally. We started work on this in April and hope to have the new service up and running in December 2010. Services will be provided in Haringey from Children's Centres.

International Days of Action Against Violence Against Women IDAVAW

This year we shall be marking IDAVAW in late November with an afternoon seminar on trafficking and domestic servitude.