

Responses to questions for Overview and Scrutiny

Question from Councillor Weber:

QUESTION 1.

An "efficiency review" is being conducted into planning enforcement.

So that councillors can make an enlightened contribution to this exercise, would she please

- *set out the circumstances that led to the review being initiated*
- *set out the terms of reference and scope of the review*
- *tell us who has been invited to contribute to the review*
- *confirm whether members of the public and outside bodies will be invited to contribute.*
- *the time frame for the review*
- *how the findings will be reported and to whom*

Answer

In response to Councillor Canver's request, an internal performance review of planning enforcement has been agreed. This review fits well with the rolling programme of internal service reviews undertaken by the Policy and Performance Team to ensure that all Councils services are value for money. This is a short review and where possible we will use existing information. We also intend to benchmark with a few other authorities that are like for like and has a reputation of performing well in this area.

The terms of reference and scope of the review have been drafted but are still to be agreed by the Project Board which will meet in April.

Councillor Canver will invite a representative of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of the Planning Applications Sub Committee to sit on this project board and support the process. Several Cllrs. have already been approached to put forward case studies.

It is anticipated that the review will be completed by the end of June 2007.

There will be a final report with recommendations that will be reported to the Executive Advisory Board, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Planning Applications Sub Committee, for comments and final contributions.

QUESTIONS From Councillor Bevan:

QUESTION 2

Please can I be advised as to the number of established posts attending to planning enforcement. When did the establishment numbers last change and what was the change implemented. Please may I be advised as to how many

of the present established posts are filled with council employees, agency staff or are vacant.

ANSWER

There are currently six posts established for Planning Enforcement. One post is a Team Leader, one is a Monitoring Officer and there are four field Planning Enforcement officers.

The last recorded change on SAP shows that this was changed in April 2005 when two posts were added. One post was to formalise the post for Monitoring Officer and one post was following the release of Planning Delivery Grant (PDG). PDG is currently £70k and has been included in the Enforcement cash limit for 2007/8. The actual cost of a planning enforcement officer with on costs is approximately £40k. Costs arising such as legal support, customer services, training and IT etc are additional to this cost.

There are three posts permanently filled. There are three posts filled by agency staff.

In addition we have recruited an additional 4 supernumerary posts to deliver the final stage in reducing the historic number of planning enforcement cases. One post is filled by secondment, 3 by agency staff. This project is scheduled to complete in June 2007. This project is being funded through projected salary under spend from vacancies.

The agreed future structure of the Enforcement service will provide one Lead Officer for Planning Enforcement, to coordinate planning enforcement activity. We aim to recruit a very senior planner or planning lawyer to this role if possible. The Monitoring officer duties will be merged into the Technical Support function serving the whole business unit. There will be 4 area based Tactical Enforcement Officers (TEOs) primarily delivering planning and public eyesore enforcement, with 4 more specialist TEOs operating within Commercial, Environmental Crime and Housing service groups. These additional TEOs will be working on HMO conversions, empty properties and change of use class issues. TEOs will be experienced enforcement officers but may not be from a planning background.

In addition the new Out of Hours team will be delivering enforcement of planning conditions such as opening hours, and Environmental Crime officers will be enforcing street facing issues such as satellite dishes and advertising hoardings.

QUESTION 3

Please can I be advised if visits to hairdresser's shops are being made by health and safety officers due to the recent concern as to the chemicals being used in this trade, causing the condition DERMATITIS. If visits are being made please advise me as to how many such businesses there are in Haringey and how many have been visited.

ANSWER

Haringey has 77 hairdressing/barbers establishments. We are working to support the HSE Dermatitis campaign and during inspections of hairdressers, methods of preventing dermatitis are discussed and information is provided to businesses. Dermatitis is one of the Health and Safety partnership working areas that we will be focussing on during our 2007/8 workplan.

The Hair and Beauty Industry Authority (HABIA) in partnership with the National Hairdressers' Federation (NHF) are about to launch a guidance document on dermatitis in hairdressing. This booklet has been drawn together by a steering group from the relevant professional and regulating bodies.

QUESTION 4

Please can I be advised as to when SCORES ON THE DOORS will be implemented in Haringey as is done by Hackney. When will the results of the last food hygiene inspection be available on a web site and exhibited on the door or window in each food outlet.

ANSWER

Haringey Council has signed up to the Scores on the Doors pilot scheme for London, which is supported by the Food Standards Agency. The Scores on the Doors scheme is currently supported by 32 of the 33 London Boroughs, with the only exception being Greenwich. Other LA's may choose to opt out of the pilot, if costs increase. Some LA's across the UK and in London already operate similar schemes in-house. These include Hackney, Brent, Southwark and Islington.

The Scores on the Doors Pilot Scheme will operate across the vast majority of London Authorities. It will be in operation from January 2007 until June 2009. The aim is to provide information about the level of compliance with hygiene legislation to consumers in a way that is clear, easy to understand and available at key places of reference points.

The Scheme is planned to go Live on 11th June 2007 to coincide with the National Food Safety Week. Food Businesses will be scored following a food hygiene inspection and will receive a star rating for safety. The scores will be hosted on the www.yourlondon.gov.uk, in addition the business will receive a certificate which they **may** (not required at present) display at the front of the premises. The website will be fully accessible to the public who may use this information to make informed choices about where to eat/buy food. It is envisaged that the pilot scheme will assist in the improvement of food safety standards in the Borough.

QUESTIONS From Councillor Newton:

QUESTION 5

Youth on Youth crime - would she please outline what is being done to tackle the problem, including any measures being taken to help all those involved victim, perpetrator, families, school

ANSWER

Through a partnership arrangement with Victim Support Haringey, we have a worker to provide support to children and young people who are victims of crime. This worker is developing surgeries in secondary schools to provide easier access to this service. The YOS police officers also contact young people who has been a victim of youth crime to provide guidance and support. Plus reparation work and Referral Panels organised by the YOS provide a chance for the victim to let the young offender know what impact the crime has had on them and their lives. Reparation gives the victim a chance to suggest what the young offender could do to 'repair' the harm they have caused.

The Youth Service and YOS both work with young people referred to the ASBAT through a range of programmes – outreach, homework clubs, after school activities being just some examples. And the Children's Fund and On Track programmes also help prevent our children and young people from entering the criminal justice system – one example being the Chess Clubs, where they are taught chess and this is used to see that their behaviour will have an impact on how others behave towards them in response – teaching children that there are consequences to their behaviour is important.

QUESTION 6

Youth re-offending - would she please

- *tell us what the rates are for youth re-offending in the Borough*
- *provide comparator figures with other boroughs*
- *outline what is being done to tackle youth re-offending rates*

ANSWER

The current rate for re-offending in Haringey is 31.9% after one year and 43.4% after two years. We are ranked 24th nationally out of 156 Youth Offending Service's, and 11th in London out of 32 for this.

The Youth Offending Service is a multi agency service working with children and young people to both prevent them from offending and reduce their ending. The service works to 15 key performance indicators set by the Youth Justice Board and our performance has increased over the past year. Our YOS is 9th highest performing YOS in London and second in our family group.

Young people subject to court orders are allocated to an individual worker who assesses the young person to identify the factors which put them at risk

of re-offending. Individual intervention plans are drawn up with them and their parents to prevent them from re-offending. This always includes screening them for substance misuse and may also include referrals to other YOS specialist staff (e.g. Connexions worker, psychologist, teacher etc) or other agencies. These risk factors are the same for offending as for re-offending.

Each young person is expected to complete an element of reparation which often involves working in the local community and generally includes victim awareness work. The YOS runs Weapons Awareness, Anger Management, Driving Awareness, and specific groups according to the needs of the young people currently being referred by the courts.

The YOS also runs an informal fortnightly drop-in for parents and carers, which includes staff from other agencies to attend to give information with regard to drugs, education, health etc. A regular formal 8 week parenting group is also run using the Trust for the Study of Adolescents "Escape" programme.

QUESTION 7

Youth anti-social behaviour - Given the 1 star unacceptable JAR report on the Youth Service does she not think that the Youth Service should be doing much more to engage with young people and provide activities that they would like throughout the borough, so as to drive down the incidents of anti-social behaviour

ANSWER

Working closely with the Youth Service, the YOS is able to refer young people to their programmes so that leisure time is more appropriately filled. The Exposure magazine has had some amazing results with some young people who were previously offending and later have gone on to write articles and do presentations at national conferences.

Through the YOS and Police referring young offenders to the Youth Inclusion Project and Positive Futures programme, the Youth Service have been able to get these young people into sporting, music and other activities, and to provide an 'exit' for them after the YOS has completed its work with them.

And of course, the Youth Service has provided school holiday activities, so that these young people with a tendency towards crime and anti-social behaviour are occupied during those holiday periods. The Police are also involved in this work, facilitating workshops on the law, gun/knife crime, stop and search etc. And we have a police officer attached to each of our Secondary Schools to help make the schools and area around them safer for everyone.

The Youth Service work very closely with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams and the youth clubs encourage them to visit and play table tennis or pool with the local young people. This helps build better relationships between young people and the Police so that the young people feel more

confident in reporting any crime they have been a victim of/ have witnessed/are aware will be taking place.

There are many other examples where our Youth Service work with young people to prevent their involvement in crime and I will just state a few more examples:

- Football through the Kickz project run with the help of Spurs coaches at both Ferry Lane and White Hart Lane
- Homework clubs at Wood Green library
- The Detached Youth Team is being re-developed and will provide a means of seeking out young people who may be causing concern, to bring them into our youth services.
- Work with Neighbourhood Management on Campsbourne Estate, St Anne's area
- Work with the NDC through the NDC youth mobile bus.
- Targeting those young people not in education, training or employment to provide a Job Club

All the Youth Service programmes are designed to ensure that young people gain some form of recognised accreditation to build self esteem and increase aspirations.

Therefore, as you can see, although we did receive a poor inspection report for our Youth Service, we have already made great strides to improve the facilities that will prevent our children and young people from becoming involved in crime. And you will appreciate just how much of this is done through partnership working!