

## **REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL 25 JULY 2013**

The draft minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Panel are herewith attached. The main items discussed were as follows:

### **1. CRIME STATISTICS**

We noted that there had been an unprecedented reduction in crime levels, with the vast majority of crimes seeing significant reductions. This was possibly due to a number of factors:

- “Hot spot” targeted policing;
- More young people were now living at home with their parents;
- Technological advances had helped to reduce many forms of crime.

Haringey’s performance figures were better than their statistical neighbours and other London boroughs, particularly in respect of violent and property crime. Recorded incidents of domestic violence had nevertheless shown a large increase. However, this was due to more being reported rather than the incidence being greater. There had been 715 cases of domestic violence with injury, which was higher than statistical neighbours and other London boroughs. This particular statistic had not been looked at before and had been included as part of the development of a more sophisticated set of data.

Although the figures for the number of first time young offenders entering the system showed a considerable reduction, the level of re-offending was higher than statistical neighbours. This could be due to the successful use of triage as the percentage of those entering the system who were likely to re-offend was now a lot higher.

Our Chair commented that the overall figures were very good news for the borough. We noted that 40% of crime within the borough originated from just six wards. Reductions in crime had nevertheless been shared across all wards within the borough.

We raised the issue of the role of youth services in providing diversionary activities for young people. The Cabinet Member reported that a meeting was being organised with officers responsible for youth services as well as the relevant Cabinet Member. There was considerable cross over between community safety and services for youth and a co-ordinated approach was important. The Cabinet Member responsible for the youth offer was on the Community Safety Partnership and that there was clear strategic direction but there was scope for improved co-ordination at operational level.

We noted that the youth offer was within the terms of reference of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel, who would be looking at future plans for it in due course. As there was cross over with the work of the Communities Panel, our Chair agreed to seek clarification from Overview and Scrutiny Committee on how best the issue might be approached.

The Police Service reported on clear up rates. There was good performance in two particular areas but performance was less good in other areas. Q Cars had been effective in dealing with robbery and the find my i Phone app had proven to be very successful. Q Cars had also challenged false reports of robbery. There were, on average, 5 to 6 of these per week and were normally due to individuals wishing to claim on their insurance. Dealing with these had had an impact on clear up rates. Burglary clear up rates had been helped by improved forensics and CCTV focussing on particular hot spots.

**We AGREED:**

1. That a further report on improvements to domestic violence services be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel and that this include a breakdown on ethnicity, religion and age;
2. That, in view of the links with community safety, the Chair raise the issue of the appropriate scrutiny body to consider the youth offer at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
3. That the next presentation of crime statistics to the Panel include, as an integral part of it, detection rates as well as figures for racially and religiously motivated crime.

## **2. WHITE HART LANE COMMUNITY SPORTS CENTRE - LEASING**

We noted that the Council had withdrawn its subsidy for the White Hart Lane Community Sports Centre in 2011 in the light of the reduction in the Council's budget. In order to make the Centre commercially viable, significant capital investment was required. The option of a long term lease of 50 years had been pursued and three bids received. The bid from Fusion was significantly better than the other two and removed the need for further revenue subsidy by the Council and ongoing liability for maintenance. It had been approved by Cabinet on 9 July. The lease included a range of milestones. Key to the achievement of these was the obtaining of planning permission. Fusion were a charitable organisation and the agreement secured the accessibility of the site to residents for the next 50 years.

Various periods for the lease had been considered and 50 years was a compromise. A shorter period of time might not have been attractive to prospective bidders. There had been in depth consultation with stakeholders and they had worked together with Fusion to develop the bid. The procurement had been challenging and complex. There had been a target level of investment and the scoping had looked at the two particular aspects:

- Who might take it on; and
- Would it achieve the necessary level of investment?

There were not many organisations that were in a position to bid. External advice had been sought and this had led to the recommendation that the lease be offered for 50 years.

Our Chair reported that Overview and Scrutiny had expressed concern at the large losses that the Centre was making as part of budget scrutiny in 2010/11.

We noted that the lease for the Centre would allow Fusion to control pricing, including concessions. The proposals would have the potential to bring investment into the borough and improve leisure facilities. The Council's leasing out of facilities at Finsbury Park had worked along similar lines and was hoped to attract external funding. Sports funding bodies appeared to be more inclined to assist in such circumstances.

The Cabinet Member for reported that service users were pleased with the performance of Fusion in running the borough's other leisure centres. Fusion also had had a community involvement officer who would be working closely with local organisations. In terms of pricing and concessions, although the Council would no longer have ultimate control, it was unlikely that the pricing would be any different from the other leisure facilities across

the borough as the provider would probably wish to have consistent pricing across all of their facilities. However, they had not wanted to be bound by conditions regarding this being included in the lease.

The Panel drew attention to the lack of facilities for cricket in the east of the borough. The Head of Commissioning for Leisure reported that the demand for particular sports and activities had been looked at. It was considered that football, tennis, fitness and swimming had unmet demand. It was not considered viable to build a swimming pool on the site so the focus had been on the remaining activities. It was recognised that there was a shortage of cricket facilities in the east of the borough but this would need to be addressed by the voluntary and community sectors as the Council did not have the resources to act, although support for a particular group that might be able to play a role could be considered. The Panel suggested that an approach be made to the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) who might be able to assist.

We **RECOMMEND** that an approach be made by leisure commissioners within the Council to the England and Wales Cricket Board regarding assistance in the development of facilities for cricket in the east of the borough.

**Councillor Dave Winskill**  
**Chair**