

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL
THURSDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2014**

Councillors Blake (Chair), Gallagher, Gunes, Hare and Jogee

Also Councillor Wright
present:

CSP10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Newton. Councillor Wright was welcomed to the Panel. It was noted that he would formally be replacing Councillor Doron once approval for change had been given by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

CSP11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

CSP12. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

CSP13. MINUTES

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of 30 September be approved.

CSP14. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS; CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES

Councillor Vanier, the Cabinet Member for Communities, reported on the key areas and developments within her portfolio as follows:

- Increasing confidence amongst the public was one of the key priorities of community safety partners, especially amongst young people. Other priorities included preventing gender violence, the further development of the integrated offender management scheme, addressing property crime and violence extremism;
- There had been an increase in levels of confidence from 50% to 68%. The borough had previously been one of the lowest performing boroughs in London but was now around the middle. The improvement had been achieved through effective partnership working. One initiative that had contributed to this was the "Summer Night Lights" scheme that the borough had participated in. This had been set up to reduce violence, crime and anti-social behaviour during the summer months, when levels of offending tended to be higher. Seven boroughs had been chosen for the pilot of this scheme, including a number of significant neighbours. The scheme had operated in Haringey on the Love Lane Estate in Tottenham. It had involved a number of activities, including basketball, social events and workshops and had been very successful. It was planned to run it again;
- A responsible retailer scheme had been launched to support efforts to make the borough safer. Amongst other things, retailers were being encouraged not to sell single cans of beer or beers with very high levels of alcohol. This was aimed at

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preventing their sale to those involved in street drinking. It was part of Operation Equinox, which was a partnership initiative aimed at addressing violence;

- A ten year gang and serious youth violence strategy was being developed. This focussed on prevention and early intervention, community engagement and enforcement;
- The borough's Safer Neighbourhood Board had now been established. Haringey had been one of the first London boroughs to put its arrangements in place, which had earned it praise from the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

In answer to a question, the Panel noted that action had been taken to address violent extremism. This had included a number of workshops internally and externally and, more recently, with schools. Haringey was one of a number of boroughs involved in the Prevent initiative to address violent extremism, which was funded by the Home Office.

In terms of improving confidence, community safety partners had worked closely with the local community to address the issue. In addition, they had also sought to tackle anti social behaviour. This had included weeks of action where the Police and Council officers had sought to provide a highly visible presence. This had included, where necessary, the use of anti social behaviour orders. Engagement had also been undertaken with young people, including work with Haringey Youth Council. In addition, there were now young people representatives on the Safer Neighbourhood Board.

In answer to questions, the Panel noted that London wide comparative crime data could be found on the Metropolitan Police's website. The Love Lane had been chosen for the Summer Light Nights initiative due to issues that had arisen with drugs, alcohol and youths hanging around. In reference to the responsible retailer scheme, work had been undertaken last year to encourage retailers to act responsibly in order to address health issues but it had not been possible to get many to respond. The hope was that retailers who participated in the current scheme would encourage others to follow suit.

The Panel also noted that there had been an increase in the reporting of hate crime. This was a positive development as previously crimes were often not reported as people could feel that they would not be taken seriously. It was agreed that a breakdown of statistics relating to hate crime would be provided to Panel Members.

In respect of Operation Equinox, it was noted that Ipswich had managed to successfully reduce levels of street drinking due to effective engagement with retailers. Panel Members suggested that specific incentives could be provided to encourage retailers to participate. In particular, the feasibility of offering reduced business rates could be examined. The Cabinet Member felt that this would not be possible.

In answer to a question, the Cabinet Member reported that there was so far only one known instance of a borough resident travelling abroad with the intention of joining a radical Islamic group. In terms of violence against women and girls, there were no budgetary reductions that were planned in the near future and the issue remained a very high priority for the borough. There was a need to reach different communities

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that there were within the borough regarding it and efforts were being made to address this.

Hazel Simmonds, the Interim Head of Community Safety reported that the budget for community safety support was around £400k. In addition, there were additional funds that had been obtained externally such as £2 million that had been obtained for the Mac-UK project to address mental health issues amongst young people and funding from MOPAC to deliver a range of projects. There was also funding from Homes for Haringey for the ASBAT team.

AGREED:

1. That a statistical breakdown of hate crimes committed in borough in the last year be provided to Members of the Panel;
2. That further information be provided to Panel Members concerning the responsible retailer scheme; and
3. That a progress report be provided to a future meeting of the Panel on the Prevent initiative.

CSP15. HARINGEY COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Panel welcomed Victor Olisa, the Police Borough Commander for Haringey. He reported on the development of the local policing model. The main driver for this had been financial. The Metropolitan Police Service had been required to save £600 million by 2015 as part of the government's first spending review. It was likely that the next spending review would see an additional reduction of approximately £700 million and it would be a massive challenge to achieve this. At the same time, the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) was seeking to make London the safest city in the world.

The Metropolitan Police had been one of the lowest performing police services nationally so it had been necessary for it to improve. The MOPAC had introduced a greater focus on neighbourhoods as well as new targets. These included cutting 7 priority crimes by 20% (the MOPAC 7), increasing public confidence by 20% and cutting costs by 20%. These were to be achieved by 2016.

As part of this, there had been a need identified to improve public access. It was necessary to reduce the number of buildings that the service was responsible for at the same time. There was now only one police station that was open for 24 hours per day and for 7 days per week within the borough. There had previously been three police stations within Haringey that were open for extended hours and, with the exception of Westminster, Haringey had been the only London borough where there was more than one. Accessibility had been improved by enabling people to report crime on-line, developing new contact points and visiting people where necessary.

Additional resources had been directed towards the front line. In particular, wards had been amalgamated to develop neighbourhoods. There were three of these in Haringey. However, neighbourhood Police Officers were now required to investigate low risk crimes which meant that they spent less time on the street due to the processes involved in doing this. In answer to a question, Mr Olisa reported that the

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changes had not impacted on confidence levels. He felt that this was because there was more purposeful contact and improved engagement in following up issues.

Mr Olisa stated that residents had been promised that there would be at least one dedicated Police Constable and Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) in each ward. This promise still stood but there was now local decision making regarding joint patrols between officers from adjacent wards. Consideration was nevertheless being given to increasing the level of visibility. It had been the case that PCSOs would not be replaced if they left but recruitment had resumed and numbers were now increasing. Most vacancies within the service locally had now been filled.

Mr Olisa reported on performance in respect of the MOPAC 7 priority crimes. Burglary had increased and the Police were working with the Council to address the issue, especially in problem areas. They were also focussing on offenders. Many prolific offenders had been jailed in the aftermath of the riots in 2011. They were now being released and returning to committing offences. The Integrated Offender Management scheme had been developed in order to respond to these issues. In terms of criminal damage, there had been a high number of offences reported by residents in the Alexandra ward in the vicinity of Alexandra Palace. Many of these had involved graffiti and one prolific offender had recently been arrested.

He acknowledged that the current priority crime targets would be a challenge to achieve. Of particular note was the increase in violence with injury, which was a concern across London. It was not clear why this had happened but there had been a change in the definition for recording of offences that may have been a factor. It was not necessarily the case that more violence was taking place.

Mr Sygrave complimented that Borough Commander on performance achieved despite the reductions in funding. However, he reported that there were still concerns about the new model of neighbourhood policing, especially in relation to visibility. In addition, there were also concerns about the high turnover of staff. In particular, all three neighbourhood inspectors were changing. When staff were promoted, they normally left the borough.

Mr Olisa stated that he understood concerns regarding visibility. It would be better if there were more dedicated officers within wards but they would have to come from somewhere else. In particular, it was crucial that there were enough officers to provide an emergency response. In addition, neighbourhood officers were required to follow up low level offences and this required a lot of paperwork. This was necessary in order to ensure accountability but consideration was being given to the use of technology to speed processes up. There had been investment in new technology and this included the trialling of the use of iPads. The issue of turnover was difficult to address. Chief inspectors were moved across the borough to enable them to develop experience. In addition, it would be difficult to stand in the way of officers who wished to progress and develop their careers further. In answer to a question, Mr Olisa reported that a site for a contact point in Muswell Hill was still to be identified.

Mr Olisa reported that performance figures in respect of confidence were nevertheless encouraging, particularly in respect of people who felt that they were given fair treatment by the Police. Despite overall performance figures being good 18 months ago, levels in confidence were only 50%. Comparative data showed the borough was

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performing well in respect of this which, bearing in mind historical issues, was very welcome.

In respect of Special Constables, they were required to work 16 hours per month. However, it had been found that a significant percentage had not worked for over a year and this had now been addressed. Although there were now fewer of them, they were required to attend regularly and the vast majority were doing so. In answer to a question, he reported that the vacancy rate would soon be down to 1%.

The Chair thanked Mr Olisa. She noted that there was still concerns regarding the neighbourhood policing model and felt that there should be further discussion of the issues in due course. She welcomed the reduced number of vacancies.

The Panel commented that the improvement in the figures for confidence was a significant achievement. They felt that the increases in levels of reported crime were not necessarily all indicative of there being more offences but might be linked to there being an increased likelihood of people reporting crime.

AGREED:

1. That a report on the outcome of Operation Equinox in Haringey be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel; and
2. That a further report be made to a future meeting of the Panel on progress of the Neighbourhood Policing Model.

Clr Barbara Blake
Chair