

London Borough of Islington

**Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 3 July 2017**

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee held at on 3 July 2017 at 7.30 pm.

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b>	Greening (Chair), Jeapes (Vice-Chair), Chowdhury, O'Halloran, O'Sullivan, Russell, Gallagher, Khan, A Perry, Heather, Williamson and Champion
<b>Also Present:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b>	Hull and Calouri

**Councillor Richard Greening in the Chair**

**357      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)**

Councillors Klute, Debono, O'Halloran – lateness, Doolan

**358      DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)**

None

**359      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)**

None

**360      MEMBERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE ETC. (Item 4)**

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted

**361      TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 5)**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 20 April and 4 May be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them

**362      MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Item 6)**

None

**363      PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 7)**

The Chair outlined the procedure for Public questions and filming and recording at meetings

**364**      **CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 8)**

**Flooding Scrutiny**

The Chair stated that due to the rescheduling of the meeting that evening the Flooding Scrutiny review report and draft recommendations would now be considered at the meeting of the Committee on 20 July.

The Chair added that he felt it would be appropriate to invite Thames Water to this meeting and also to receive feedback from them in relation to the recent problems at St. Johns Street and Copenhagen Street. The Committee concurred with this view.

The Chair added that Thames Water would also be presenting the Strategic Review to the Committee at its meeting on 30 November

**365**      **GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS (Item 9)**

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present, together with Jan Hart, Assistant Director Environment and Regeneration.

During discussion of the report the following main points were made –

- It was noted that partners had been consulted on the revised arrangements and were supportive of these
- The view was expressed that there was a need to involve the community more, given the serious problem of youth crime in the borough
- Concern was expressed at the low level of community Police officers in certain wards and it was stated that this would be raised with the Borough Commander. In addition, it was noted that attendance by the Police is not always satisfactory at SNP's and that Members should encourage local Safer Neighbourhood police officers to engage in more community engagement at Ward Partnerships
- It was noted that under the revised structure there would be a revised role for MAGPI's giving them specific geographical responsibilities, and the Community Safety Team would be promoting more community involvement and improved communication with parents
- Reference was made to the fact that the new Policing merger with Camden, proposed to increase the SN Policing teams, and that Safer Neighbourhood Teams should be liaising with Safer Neighbourhood Panels about policing priorities for the area
- Members expressed the view that they felt that Safer Neighbourhood policing should be a priority and felt that it was vital for local communities and that more pressure should be put on the Mayor and Government to fund this adequately

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted and the revisions to the arrangements be welcomed

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull and Jan Hart for attending

**366**      **YOUTH CRIME - UPDATE/12 MONTH UPDATE REPORT ON KNIFE CRIME, MOBILE PHONE THEFT ETC. (Item 10)**

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Councillor Joe Calouri, Executive Member Children, Young People and Families was present for discussion of this item and was accompanied by Stuart Ryan of Islington Police.

During consideration of the item the following main points were made –

- The Committee were informed that joint working was taking place on County Lines with Enfield, Barnet, Camden, Hackney and Haringey to exchange information and work together on gangs, drug dealing etc. Work is taking place to prepare a funding bid to MOPAC for resources in this regard. The Executive Member stated that he would report back to the Committee at a future meeting on progress
- It was noted that there had been a reduction in the number of first time entrants entering the criminal justice system, and it appeared that the early intervention strategies being employed were beginning to show some benefit
- There is however still an unacceptable level of mobile phone theft and the detection rate is low and this needed to be improved
- Knife crime is still also a huge problem in the borough, as across many parts of London, often linked to young people and drug trafficking
- There are difficulties in ‘turning around’ a number of disaffected young people
- The OFSTED report on Children’s Services would shortly be available and this would be referred to the Committee for consideration
- It was noted that over the past 3 years there had been a change in the crime profile with significant increases in mobile phone theft and knife crime, although it was pleasing to report that there had been a reduction from the previous year in knife crime incidents
- The introduction of the Gangs Team had been positive and work took place with children and parents. Work is taking place to ensure a younger cohort of the young people likely to be engaged in offending are engaged with early intervention methods and strategies
- Reference was made to the fact that some gangs were coming together to challenge other gangs in geographical areas and this is resulting in rising tension
- There had been an increase in the recovery of guns and other firearms, although this has not resulted in an increase in gun crime
- There is also a challenge to stop shops selling knives to young people
- The Committee were informed that there was felt to be around 200/300 young people involved in mobile phone theft and drugs and it is hoped that the County Lines approach being adopted, referred to earlier, would assist in exchange of information and arresting or deterring offenders
- The view was expressed that many of the young people involved in crime had witnessed Domestic Violence or had traumatic lives and that more education needed to take place in schools and to work with these young people to ‘turn’ them away from criminal activity. It was important to develop understanding of the trauma that some of these young people faced and develop it across Council services
- The view was expressed that the Council had a public health role to play in relation to child sexual exploitation and that work needed to be undertaken, especially in schools, to show the risks and dangers of child sexual exploitation, including ‘peer to peer’ work
- It was noted that there is a lucrative second hand market in mobile phones that are stolen and that the Police were looking to stop this by closing down shops involved in this and by other measures
- Reference was made to the need to take stronger measures against families in Council accommodation that were involved in criminality and that demoted tenancies or eviction should be considered. It was noted that 3 families had been evicted in the previous 5 years

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- Reference was made to the fact that it was important to keep children from being permanently excluded, and put into alternative provision, as the attendance rate in alternative provision is only 70%
- Discussion took place in regard to moped theft and use in crimes, especially mobile phone theft, and it was stated that the Police were looking to introduce measures that would enable moped users involved in thefts, to be stopped more easily and safely. In addition, there is a dedicated team to deal with moped theft
- It was noted that the additional investment by the Council of £0.5m had started to show improvements in terms of early intervention, but this was a lengthy process. It was stated that it was felt that early intervention is key, and there is a need to convince young people that there is a future of a better life away from crime
- A Member referred to an example of a child who she had known as a youngster who had turned to criminality and that there was a need to look at the reasons why certain young people turn to criminality
- The view was expressed that young people should be given free access to sporting facilities and that this should be investigated
- Reference was made to the closure of Hammersmith Magistrates Court and the transfer of business to Highbury Corner Magistrates Court and whether this would impact on gang problems given the County Lines difficulties. It was stated that this should not be a problem as the Court organised hearings on different days in respect of different areas
- In response to a question it was stated that there are targeted youth services available and the Council had better provision in this area than most other Boroughs. A Member stated that she felt that housing should do more to tackle families where problems were reported and that parents did have to take some responsibility for the actions of their children and that housing officers needed to be more proactive
- It was stated that the ASB team now had daytime officers who could take up complaints and that if instances were reported these could be taken up with Housing officers
- Members expressed the view that a public information campaign about the dangers of mobile phone theft should be introduced and it was stated that work is going on with the Communications Team in this regard. In addition, it was felt that posters warning of the dangers should be put up in underground stations
- The view was expressed that it needed to be recognised that a number of young children who become involved in criminality are often traumatised themselves by their family situation and were vulnerable to grooming
- A Member stated that he felt that the cuts to funding to BME projects had impacted on criminality amongst BME communities
- Reference was also made to the fact that often the elder masterminds of criminal activity escaped justice and more efforts should be made to target these people. It was stated the Serious Crime squad were now becoming involved in the borough and that they would be doing focused work in this regard

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted and the Committee receive reports at a future meeting in relation to the OFSTED report on Children's Services and progress on the MOPAC bid for County Lines work funding, as referred to above

The Chair thanked Councillor Calouri and Stuart Ryan for attending

The meeting ended at 9.40p.m.

**CHAIR**