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London Borough of Islington

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 22 November 2016

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 22 November 2016 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Greening (Chair), Jeapes (Vice-Chair), Chowdhury, Debono, Gantly, O'Halloran, Russell, Wayne, Heather and Champion

Also Present: **Councillors:** Hull

 Borough Commander: Catherine Roper

Councillor Richard Greening in the Chair

275 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Councillors Perry, Doolan and Klute

276 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

None

277 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

Councillor O'Halloran declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in that her son is a serving Police Officer and Councillor Nick Wayne declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in that he often represented the CPS

278 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 October 2016 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them

279 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Item 5)

It was reported that information requested at the last meeting had now been circulated to Members of the Committee

280 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 6)

The Chair outlined the procedure for filming and recording of Public meetings

281 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 7)

The Chair stated that in accordance with the decision made at the last meeting, the next meeting of the Committee on 20 December and the meetings on 26 January and 14 March 2017 would commence at 7.00p.m.

282 ANNUAL CRIME AND DISORDER REPORT -REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER COMMUNITY SAFETY - TO FOLLOW (Item 8)

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member of Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present together with the Borough Commander, Catherine Roper.

A presentation was made to the Committee, a copy of which is interleaved, following which these main points were made –

- There have been reductions in some types of crime, however there has been an increase in gun and knife crime and sexual offences, which mirrors the increase across London
- The five areas of focus for the Safer Islington Partnership are youth crime, violence against women and girls, hate crime, anti-social behaviour and preventing violent extremism. There has been a recent restructuring of the Community Safety function
- Theft from person offences has shown a decrease of 5% and serious youth violence has shown an increase of 21%. Gun and knife crime is a challenge, mainly linked to gang/group crime, and Operation Teal has been established to combat habitual knife carriers
- A recent successful Police and MPS Trident operation led to the arrest of 34 offenders for drug dealing in two key youth crime areas
- Serious youth violence was often gang related and a recent operation had resulted in 32 arrests. There has been a downturn in November however this when youths were taken into custody this often led to 'turf' wars, which often resulted in more violence
- The Borough Commander referred to the Integrated Gangs Team and that this is located at Islington Police station and had led to a better exchange of information and intelligence. Abianda were also working with the team and were doing valuable work on child sexual exploitation
- It was stated that the Police were doing valuable work in schools around education programmes for young people both in primary and secondary schools and that she would circulate details of these to Members of the Committee. In addition work was also undertaken with parents
- Secondary schools also had a dedicated schools officer and this often resulted in information being gathered and improved relationships with young people
- Councillor Hull referred to the additional £0.5m growth investment and that a mentor was now working with a view to trying to get young people back into school and away from criminality. Interventions had been improving, however there is still an outstanding difficulty with the Police and YOS which needed to be resolved, although the situation is improving
- Reference was made to the significant reduction in first time offenders and offending rates and alternative methods to custody were being looked at, where appropriate
- Councillor Hull stated that he had visited Pentonville Prison and the Council were looking to be involved in closer partnership working with the Prison following recent concerns and that they would be attending the SIP meeting in February

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- It was added that there were also concerns about lack of resources in the recently privatised Probation service and these concerns had been raised with the Deputy Mayor of London
- Improvements have been seen in youth reoffending, although it remains an area of concern
- Islington still has higher than expected levels of young people in prison custody. Measures are in place, such as the Integrated Gangs Team, County Lines profile, additional monitoring and support and key working for young people at risk to reduce this
- Reference was made to the recent restructuring of Neighbourhood Policing teams and the reduction of sergeants, which had been based around an analysis of patterns of ASB and crime statistics. The Borough Commander stated that she would circulate this information to Councillor Russell and other Members of the Committee and that there will also be a Partnership Inspector and a Partnership Sergeant
- There had been investment and an ongoing improvement in the Youth Offending service
- Councillor Hull stated that the Council were still concerned about the level of youths in custody and Intensive Supervision and Surveillance recruitment has commenced to try to reduce high rates of youth custody
- Violence against women and girls – Domestic violence offences have increased by 8%, and estimates suggest that only 38% of domestic violence was reported in 2015 and there were only 19% reported cases in respect of sexual offences. Sanction detection rates were 35.2%, however more young women continue to be the victims of domestic abuse than in older age groups. Areas of progress include training and increased awareness in health services. which has led to an increase in referrals, continued investment in the DV team and Abianda (charity working with gang affected girls) is working with the Integrated Gangs Team
- There is continuing awareness raising taking place and Police response to Domestic Violence is quicker than that to burglary offences
- Councillor Hull stated that the violence against women and girls strategy is being refreshed and the reorganisations referred to earlier in the Police service was hoped to produce a more local level response to DV and the BOCU arrangements would enhance the response to DV
- In response to a question it was stated that reductions in funding did not appear to have affected hostels or other accommodation being made available to DV victims
- Discussion took place as to youth community behaviour orders and the circumstances in which these were used
- It was stated that there was a high level of intergenerational family crime in the borough and that there is an acceptance of low level crime which means that it often goes unreported
- In response to a question the Borough Commander stated that the Police were looking to engage post 16 young people by targeting events at colleges and universities but details of these had not yet been finalised, however there were no plans at present to target NEET's specifically
- Hate Crime – increases in race hate (20%), faith (61%), homophobic (38%), and disability (380%), which mirrors the pan London picture. Levels have risen since Brexit, however Islington has achieved detection rates above the MPS average in Race, Faith – anti -semitic, and homophobic crimes. However, Islington has lower MPS detection rates in faith – islamophobic, and transgender and disability hate crime
- The SIP's new Hate Crime strategy was launched in October 2016
- Areas of progress include a Hate Awareness week, which has improved

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working relationships with community groups, a community led Hate Crime forum has been established, disability training rolled out to Islington Police officers, and also the use of a wide range of languages to encourage victims to report crimes and an increased Police engagement with hard to reach communities

- There has been delivery of online training packages to raise awareness among front line staff, key partners and community groups and opportunities to explore third party reporting sites are being explored
- Hate crime figures were still above pre Brexit levels and it is felt that confidence in reporting has led to higher levels of reporting
- A Member enquired as to the reasons for the lower than average detection rate on transgender crimes and it was stated that there is low reporting and in fact only 4 cases had been reported, however the Committee noted the Police statement that they were not under resourced to investigate crimes in this area
- In relation to disability crime it was stated that work is being carried out with a wide range of disabled groups and disability training is being 'rolled out'
- In response to a question the Borough Commander stated that the Police were doing work on stop and search to prevent escalation of a situation when young people were stopped and searched
- Anti-social behaviour – ASB calls to the LBI hotline have increased 6%, while ASB calls to the Police have decreased 3%, a trend witnessed for some time. There has been a 20% reduction in the number of persistent repeat callers to the Police and the ASB hotlines. The Community Risk MARAC continues to help vulnerable victims and repeat callers, ensuring a co-ordinated plan of support for cases. Public confidence in policing in Islington has risen from 57% in 2011 to 72%
- All anti-social behaviour enforcement teams were now located in Public Protection which was a organisational improvement and enabled additional focus to be given to repeat callers and joint working could be carried out with housing
- Reference was made to the fact that the new neighbourhood policing arrangements should provide more consistency as there will be ring-fenced PC's and PCSO's
- Discussion took place as to the merger of the Borough Command Unit (BOCU) with Camden, which the Borough Commander for Islington would be leading, and that the only service reductions would be at the senior management level
- It is anticipated that the new BOCU arrangements would enable Local Authorities to have more input and would result in more ring-fenced staff for Neighbourhood Policing teams
- Reference was made to the need for more cross borough policing and it was stated that work is taking place already with neighbouring boroughs, and that there is sharing of information
- Councillor Russell stated that she was concerned about the visibility of neighbourhood policing in Highbury East and the Borough Commander stated that she would look into this, although other Members indicated that this did not appear to be a problem in other wards
- In response to a question it was stated that the Police were committed to having Neighbourhood Policing Panels in each ward
- There have been improvements in partnership ASB problem solving in areas of concern, and there has been an alignment of most ASB teams, which are now located under Public Protection, and an increase in referrals to the Community Risk MARAC from a range of partners for various vulnerabilities. An ASB clinical psychologist is having a positive impact on cases
- Prevent – Islington has been identified by the Home Office as a priority area, in relation to risks and vulnerabilities, relevant to the Prevent strand of CONTEST and the borough has established a corporate Prevent Board, which released an updated Prevent position statement this year. Investments have been made in Children's Services, Housing and schools and Policing in the community to raise awareness

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and address any gaps. Areas of progress include the creation of the Prevent Board, the recruitment of a LBI Prevent officer, schools sensitively and proportionately implementing their Prevent duties (supported by the Police Engagement programme) and effective online training, including creating Pan London resources

- Training is being offered to schools and the Channel programme has improved and enabled people at risk to be assessed and the appropriate interventions made

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Members be informed how many people have been referred to the Channel Programme in 2016 and of these how many had been accepted on the programme. In addition of those not accepted as proper Channel cases, what other agencies/initiatives were put in place and if any further action was deemed appropriate
- (b) That the Borough Commander/Executive Member be requested to circulate the ASB/crime information patterns information, referred to above, and details of the allocation of neighbourhood policing to wards
- (c) That in view of the comments made above regarding the lack of visibility of neighbourhood policing in Highbury East, the Borough Commander be requested to investigate this and respond to Councillor Russell thereon
- (d) That the Borough Commander ensure that the changes in the neighbourhood policing structure are explained at ward partnership meetings and the reasons therefore
- (e) That the Borough Commander be requested to inform Members of the programmes and activities that they offer in schools

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull and the Borough Commander for attending and their presentation

The meeting ended at 10.05p.m.

CHAIR

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