

# **Policy and Performance Scrutiny Review**

## **REPORT OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE KNIFE CRIME, MOBILE PHONE THEFTS, CRIME HOTSPOTS**



London Borough of Islington  
May 2016

## **CHAIR'S FOREWORD**

The Committee carried out a review in relation to increased knife crime and mobile phone theft, in view of the worrying increase that has taken place in the borough in the past 18 months.

We have considered a great deal of evidence in relation to the often complex reasons why predominantly young people get involved in criminality and gangs and the interventions that the Council are taking, especially in relation to early intervention, to try to ensure that current younger children are not attracted to criminality.

The Committee have also considered the current enforcement measures that are being taken by the Police and the Council to target the relatively small number of prolific offenders that commit most of these types of crimes in the borough. We are pleased to note that additional resources have been put into the borough by the Police in recent months and the introduction of the Integrated Gangs Team, which we visited, should start to assist in more sharing of information and resources to target offenders. In addition the Committee welcome the additional £0.5m allocated in the budget to youth services.

The Committee are of the view, that more work needs to be done with schools to identify children at an early age to ensure that early intervention takes place and support can also be offered to families. The evidence that we received from Chance UK and Safer Aspire London shows the valuable work that they do, and the difference that mentoring can make to children's future lives.

In addition we feel that youth provision should be made more readily accessible and discussions should take place with the Council's Leisure provider and schools so that facilities could be accessed at reasonable cost.

The Committee had concerns over the recent critical inspection report of the Youth Inspection service and we questioned the Executive Members for Children and Families and Community Safety on the measures being taken to address the concerns expressed in the report. The Committee noted that the measures being taken and the changes in management of the service and in Police personnel and procedures would increase the effectiveness of the service, however it felt that given the difficulties the service faces more training and support should be given to staff, particularly in the area of case management.

The Committee also noted that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee were intending to conduct an in depth scrutiny into the Youth Offending service and we welcome this.

The Committee has made a large number of recommendations, given the seriousness of the issue, that we feel will assist, especially in the long term, in reducing the incidence of knife crime and mobile phone theft in the borough and we hope the Executive will adopt our recommendations.

# **Knife Crime, Mobile Phone theft, Crime Hotspots Scrutiny Review**

## **Evidence**

The review ran from June 2015 until May 2016 and evidence was received from a variety of sources:

1. Presentations from witnesses – Ian Howells, Acting Superintendent – Islington Police, Borough Commander Islington Police – Catherine Roper, Mark Pearson and Andrew Pendleberry – Margate Task Force, , Ross Adams – Chance UK, Shareen Connolly plus young people and mentors – Safer London Aspire

Presentations from council officers/Members – Jennie Walsh and Theresa Ikoko – Islington Gangs Team, Catherine Briody, Victims and Offenders Service Manager, Councillor Paul Convery, Executive Member Community Safety, Tony Nagle, Head of Youth Offending Service and Targeted Support, Catherine Briody, Victims and Offenders Services Manager

2. Documentary evidence – Ending Gang violence and exploitation, Youth Offending service inspection report, Youth Crime Strategy
3. Visits – New River College and Integrated Gangs Team, New Horizons Centre

## **Aims of the Review**

**The Committee approved the following objectives –**

- **To better understand the issues and causes of knife crime and what the Council can do to reduce knife crime in the borough**
- **In parallel with the above, to review and improve what the Council and its partners can do to reduce mobile phone theft by thieves on bikes within the borough**

**The objectives of the review are set out in the Scrutiny Initiation Document at Appendix A to the review**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The issues of gang and youth violence and its associated issues of vulnerability and exploitation impact on all statutory and many non-statutory agencies in the borough.**

**The Committee therefore recommend the Executive to adopt the following –**

- 1. That, given the concerns expressed about sentencing, a briefing meeting be held with the Clerks at Highbury Magistrates Court, with the aim of informing them of the ‘local picture’, in respect of gang and youth violence and the community impact it is having and to support more appropriate sentencing for these types of offences**
- 2. That Integrated Gangs Team, together with the Police, set up an awareness raising programme for frontline practitioners working with young people in Islington, to increase understanding of the issues and the services available, with regard to gangs, violence and vulnerability of young people**
- 3. That in view of the fact that there are significant intelligence gaps in the drugs market locally and nationally through County Lines –**
  - i. The Child Exploitation (CSE) and Gangs Analyst develop a problem profile on County Lines from Islington, drawing on intelligence from statutory and voluntary sector organisations, to inform the co-ordinated response to gangs and organised crime groups controlling the drugs market**
  - ii. Whilst the Trident matrix can be an effective tool in identifying the cohort of gang members causing, or at risk of causing significant harm, it does not cater for the significant number of young people on the periphery of gangs. It is therefore recommended that the use of the ISCB Gangs Safeguarding protocol is encouraged to support agencies in identifying, referring and engaging this vulnerable cohort of young people in targeted gang prevention work, to prevent their rise to full gang status**
- 4. That, as a large number of mobile phone thefts take place at busy transport hubs and at shopping centres, MAGPI officers should develop a communication strategy to alert the public to the risks of using their phone in hotspot areas, and that local businesses be encouraged to contribute to funding this**
- 5. That the CSE and Gangs Analyst develop a problem profile on child sexual exploitation issues in Islington to increase knowledge of offenders and victims and to enhance the safeguarding of vulnerable young people at risk**
- 6. That the creation of the Integrated Gangs Team be supported and more cross border work take place by the Police and the Council with other neighbouring Police forces and local authorities to share information and co-ordinate activity, given that crime is not restricted to borough boundaries**
- 7. That whilst the Committee support the use of Stop and Search, this should only be used where appropriate and be proportionate. The Council should identify meaningful ways to involve young people, by setting up panels of young people, in the process of holding Police to account on stop and search issues and to provide training for young people to help inform them of their rights and responsibilities. In addition liaison should take place with the Stop and Search Monitoring Group, in order that both the Public in general and young people can hold the Police to account**
- 8. That the work carried out in relation to Early Intervention strategies, as part of the Youth Crime Strategy, be supported as this is a vital element in deterring future cohorts of young people becoming involved in criminality**
- 9. That discussions take place with schools as to measures that can be taken to ‘flag up’ young people who are felt to be at risk or vulnerable to becoming involved in criminality, in order to ensure early intervention can take place. In addition, as it has been shown that many young people permanently excluded from school are at a higher risk of taking part in criminality, measures should be put in place to**

permanently exclude as few young people as possible. Furthermore, there needs to be a clear and transparent process for exclusions and ensure liaison takes place with schools to ensure permanent exclusion rates, especially at primary level are kept to a minimum

10. That the work of the Police Safer Schools and other partners, e.g. the Ben Kinsella Trust be supported and extended to pupils in schools on crime prevention, knife crime and gangs and the CSE
11. That as the Committee heard evidence that many young people suffered from a lack of affordable sports facilities in their area, particularly the most vulnerable, it is of the view that discussions should take place with schools and the Council's Leisure provider, to investigate the possibility of the use of school and leisure facilities in the evenings and at weekends, this to include the provision of free/low cost options at Council Leisure facilities for young people. There should also be a review of the use of current Council community facilities for youth provision to ensure these are situated appropriately and are utilised in the most effective manner to meet current needs. In addition, as some young people are vulnerable to involvement in ASB and crime, Council provision and commissioned services should be encouraged to offer more evening and weekend facilities and that the hours of youth workers should be reviewed so that they are visible in crime hotspots at appropriate times
12. That the Committee heard evidence of the good work that Chance UK and Safer Aspire carry out in the borough in mentoring and working with vulnerable young people. The Committee noted that an evaluation of this work is currently taking place to assess its effectiveness. This evaluation should be made available when it is completed. Furthermore we noted that there are various funding sources across London that may be able to assist in supporting children in sports activities etc. and these should be looked at and accessed, where possible in relation to mentoring related activities
13. That, given the recent unsatisfactory report on the Youth Offending Service, we noted that measures are being put in place to address the concerns raised. However, more information sharing should take place with other boroughs with a good rating, in order to look at successful measures that can be replicated in Islington. We also recommend that given that the staff in the YOS team are probably suffering from low morale, that additional support and training should be given to them in undertaking often very stressful work. In addition, policies and practices be put in place to ensure that those considered most at risk of offending/re-offending are kept under constant review to reduce the risk of offending/re-offending of this cohort of young people
14. That as the Committee heard evidence of the high prevalence of mental health problems amongst young people involved in gangs and criminality, it is welcomed that there is a mental health worker situated in the Integrated Gangs Team. However we feel that more work needs to be carried out in establishing a more effective process to support young people when transferring from children to adult mental health services and investment, wherever possible, should be maintained and increased in mental health services
15. That the Council's housing policies be reviewed, and a Pan London approach be developed with the Mayor of London, in respect of emergency moves out of the borough for young people and their families at high risk of gang related harm, and increase the links with the Pan London Gangs service, which can provide support in moving gang members to other boroughs
16. That consequent to the Crime Summit community event in April the following take place –
  - i. A meeting be organised with key stakeholders to discuss the outcome of the summit and proposals for the future way forward
  - ii. An action plan be developed for the 'community' strand of the Youth Crime strategy

- iii. **Support the Safer Neighbourhood Boards in delivery of actions and to identify ways of involving young people in their work**
- 17. **That the IGT and YOS develop further relationships with New Horizons Centre, who have secured external funding from the lottery to work with young people at risk of gang involvement and increase the reach to Islington young people**
- 18. **That, as it has been shown that engagement in Education, Employment and Training is a key pathway out of offending, the Council should look to provide increased opportunities for young people, such as more use of apprenticeships for the Youth Offending service young people**

## **Main Findings**

### **Current situation in relation to Knife Crime, Mobile phone theft etc.**

The Committee were informed that in 2014/15 there were 3000 named individuals under 25 committing at least 8,000 crimes in Islington and the levels of phone snatch theft had reached unprecedented levels, at over 300 per month.

Serious youth violence had increased by 40% and knife crime by 16% and there were 32,137 victims of crime in Islington and 21.2% were young persons aged under 25 years. 4,178 young victims were Islington residents. The most prolific offenders were being targeted and one person has been arrested 32 times.

The Committee noted that there are three main established gangs in the borough, ranked in the MPS top 20 for risk. The most arrested age group are 15-17 year olds and there has been a significant increase in arrests of 10-14 year olds.

In 2014/15 Islington was the 30<sup>th</sup>. of 32 London Boroughs for the highest crime levels and had the worst youth re-offending rate in London.

In addition, theft person snatch offences were 81% higher than any other London Borough and Islington had the 3<sup>rd</sup>. highest first time entry rates in London and the 2<sup>nd</sup>. highest rate of young people in custody.

The Committee noted that gangs that are operational in the borough are all subject to multi-agency disruption plans and Operation Attrition is targeting the top 50 theft snatch offenders operating in the borough. Two thirds of these offenders are linked to established gangs and are known for drug offences and violence.

The Committee heard evidence of current action that is taking place to address the rise in crime which include –

- Implementation of the Youth Crime Strategy
- Early Help and Family Support strategy, in partnership with the voluntary sector
- Activities for young people
- Safer school plans in partnership with the Police
- Specialist services – targeted youth support, youth offending service, 18-24 Gangs Transition service, Integrated Gangs Team, Child Sexual Exploitation focus
- Integrated Offender Management
- Employment support
- Ben Kinsella exhibition about knife crime
- Targeted ASB campaign in hot spots across the borough
- Intelligence gathering and sharing
- Targeted communications aimed at young people

Islington's strategy for tackling youth crime included prevention and diversion activities, provides early help to young people and their families to address the underlying risk factors that may lead to crime and anti-social behaviour and also to respond promptly at the first signs of an issue arising.

There are also sanctions, enforcement and reintegration, which increase the chances of achieving positive behaviour and life changes for those that have committed crime by delivering

effective and high quality Integrated Offender Management, Youth Offending services and the 18-24 Gangs Transition service (referred to later in the report).

There is also community engagement that supports the wider community to be part of the solution, sharing of responsibility, leading by example and actively ensuring streets and outside spaces are places, where everyone can confidently go about their daily life.

The Committee heard evidence that historically, before the recent tragic deaths in the borough, Islington had been a relatively low priority for MET Police resources and that additional MET Police resources tended to be prioritised on more high profile London Boroughs.

Whilst the Police had also directed more resources into the borough during recent months, and there is increased co-ordination, it should be recognised that it will be difficult to solve the problem of criminality using Police resources alone. The young people involved in crime often belonged to very chaotic families who have a history of criminal activity. In addition, the children becoming involved in criminal activity appeared to be getting younger. Many of these children had witnessed domestic violence or been subject to trauma, which made them more likely to offend and therapeutic responses need to be tailored to the needs of these children at the earliest possible opportunity and be effective as possible.

In the past 6 months the Committee noted that there has been greater co-operation between all the crime reduction agencies in the borough and they were working together more effectively. This increased co-operation has led to a reduction in the number of criminal offences from 444 at the beginning of the year to 225 offences currently, a reduction of 41%. There is a need however to provide effective offender management plans to deal with ex-offenders coming out of prison and put diversionary opportunities in place.

There has also been a more targeted approach to stop and search and more engagement and diversionary activities were being employed.

The Committee were informed that the introduction of Criminal Behaviour Orders had come into force into October 2014 and there had been 16 orders applied for in Islington and these stopped an individual going back into an area. However, it was noted that not all of the conditions imposed in these orders were solely geographical and that these orders were only granted if the Courts felt it absolutely necessary.

The Committee noted that whilst the aim is to protect the community, an individual is not always excluded from their own area, dependent on the circumstances involved, and especially where there are family ties, and these orders often related to individuals crossing borough boundaries to commit crimes.

The Committee considered evidence from the Borough Commander, Catherine Roper and the Executive Member Community Safety, Councillor Paul Convery in relation to the current situation and the measures being taken in response to the situation.

The Committee heard evidence that, given that there has been an 11% increase in crime from the previous year, this has demanded a strong response with additional police resources being made available and determined efforts on behalf of the Council and partners to adopt a co-ordinated approach to youth offending and the marked increase in knife crime incidents. Over the past year the priority offence type has been mobile phone theft snatch offences, which reached very high levels in April and May, with nearly 400 offences each month. The partnership is now focusing on offenders, rather than offence type and the integrated offender management arrangements have been streamlined to bring multi -agency focus on those individuals causing most concern.

Currently, excluding the Youth Offending service cohort, there are over 200 individuals identified as persistent and prolific offenders and these are managed across different multi-agency arrangements.

The Committee were informed that the Police are encouraging a more positive engagement approach with young people and more work is being carried out with youth groups, Faith Forums and there are also visits to troubled families and officers were encouraged to take a more calm and engaging approach with young people.

The Committee noted that the Safer Neighbourhood Board, in partnership with the Council and the Police, had hosted the third annual Crime and Safety summit on 5 March 2016. The aim of the event is to give residents and other community members a chance to get involved in influencing how crime and disorder in the borough is dealt with. This year the theme was tackling youth violence and knife crime, with an emphasis on the best ways to involve the community in prevention and diversion. Over 160 people attended, including residents, officers, community groups, Police and Fire Brigade and Councillors and Youth Councillors. The Committee has made recommendations as to how key stakeholders and Safer Neighbourhood Boards should be supported going forward.

There is also a more sophisticated mapping of crime and of the individuals involved and links with schools can help to identify those young people more at risk of entering into crime.

The Committee expressed the view that there is a need for more community intelligence and targeted Police work on possible organised crime links to identify mobile phone thieves and to look at the links between these thefts and the drugs trade. There is also the need to encourage businesses and work with TfL, especially at hotspots such as tube stations, to publicise action that the Public could take to restrict the risk of being a victim of mobile phone theft.

Young people, 15-20, continue to dominate the most arrested chart. Children and young adults, under- 25, continue to feature heavily in the offending statistics, particularly in relation to knife crime and serious youth violence. However, the arrest rate for under 15 year olds has declined considerably over the past year, which may indicate that some of the intervention strategies in place may be starting to work. Islington does however continue to have a high youth re-offending rate, and whilst the sentences given to young people are relatively short, it does enable effective interventions to take place when they are released, with better chances of influencing behaviour change post release.

By concentrating on offenders, rather than the offences that they commit, it has become clear that there is a significant crossover between anti-social behaviour and serious criminality at all levels and that many of the same individuals are involved. The integrated offender management strategy arrangements have been streamlined to bring multi-agency focus on those individuals causing most concern.

The Borough Commander informed the Committee, that whilst she felt that stop and search is a vital tool in alleviating crime etc. she had made her officers aware that stop and search needed to be proportionate, helpful, professional, and be carried out by officers in a polite manner.

The Committee are of the view that the recent spate of knife crime has made the importance of stop and search more appropriate to apprehend young people carrying knives, but this should only be done in the manner, as outlined above by the Borough Commander.

The Committee felt that panels of young people, linking in with the Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group, had a vital role in delivering accountability on behalf of communities, and are made up of volunteer members of the community. The Committee have made recommendations in this regard.

The Committee expressed concern that the current budget constraints on the Police and the forthcoming cuts in their budgets would have a detrimental effect on levels of crime and reduce neighbourhood policing that often provided local intelligence. It was also felt that there should be more co-ordinated work with neighbouring local authorities, even though we learnt a number of these had previously taken place. The Committee also noted that the Borough Commander, whilst she could not specify what the neighbourhood policing model would eventually look like, is determined to maintain a Police community presence and continuity in an area and deploy resources flexibly, where required. There will also be bespoke packages for schools and other hard to reach groups within the young community and also opportunities for young people to engage in positive activities, such as Police cadets and as junior citizens.

## **Youth Crime Strategy**

The Committee also received evidence in relation to the Council's Youth Crime strategy, and that as part of this an Integrated Gangs team has been set up to deal with the current group of young people committing these crimes, involving the Council, the Police and the Probation service. The team is co-located in Tolpuddle Street Police station. This is dealt with in more detail later in the report.

The strategy will also be to prevent another cohort of young teenagers from being lured into criminal gangs, by reducing violence by and against the identified cohort, and redirecting some of the youth service resource into detached youth work with individuals who may be at risk. In addition, the partnership with schools will be strengthened to make sure they refer children that they are concerned about and review the use of alternative provision for children and who are not attending mainstream schools. Regular visits should also be made to young people involved in crime to direct them to diversionary activities and education and support.

All 46 primary schools have also now been allocated a single point of Police contact, which is an existing Safer Schools Police Constable. During the past month the Police have been developing a consistent, sustainable and regular police educational programme for primary and secondary schools. The engagement programme will consist of 12 main inputs covering early engagement with primary schools and following it through with 5 inputs dedicated to secondary schools. The programme looks to introduce the following topics, - introduction to the Police, stranger danger, road safety, bullying, decisions and consequences, Gang exploitation, Child sexual exploitation. Girls in gangs, joint enterprise, online awareness and knife crime. All schools will be offered the programme via the Safer Schools officers from November.

In addition, there are named Police Officers in each Islington secondary school and also there is a new Youth Engagement Police Sergeant who oversees the Police work in schools.

## **Targeted Youth Service/Family Support**

The Committee also received evidence from Islington Children's Services concerning the work undertaken by them in relation to Universal, Targeted and Specialist Child, Family and Young People's Services.

The Committee were informed that the Islington Healthy Schools team share information with all primary and secondary schools on a termly basis, which identifies suitable resources and evidence based personal, health and social education (PHSE) that can be utilised to address issues of personal safety, crime, anti-social behaviour and gangs. The majority of alternative

education providers deliver a PHSE curriculum which addresses issues of personal safety, crime, anti-social behaviour and gangs.

Youth provision in Islington consistently provides young people with opportunities to engage and participate in activities and projects that contribute to their social and emotional development.

All universal youth work in Islington is commissioned and delivered with a co-production framework and prevention, through diversion, is most effective when providing opportunities that are genuinely aligned with young people's needs and interests. This is at its most powerful when young people are actively involved in the planning, design and delivery of their projects in partnership with youth workers and other professionals.

The outcomes framework governs how all universal youth work funded by the Council is commissioned and provided and outlines 7 outcomes, which the Council purchases for each young person who takes part in the offer. These outcomes are linked to managing offending and lifelong positive outcomes. In addition, through effective commissioning against the outcomes framework, youth work in Islington provides engaging projects and activities that divert young people away from negative behaviours and peer groups and engages them in more positive opportunities and community activities, which play a key part in prevention.

For example, universal youth provision works closely with Targeted Youth Support to share information, and identify young people at risk of offending and in addition works together with the young person to identify needs and interests to divert them from ASB. Of the current caseload of the Youth Offending service for those offenders living locally, 35% used youth provision funded by the Council in 2014/15. This represents 1 in 3 of the current YOS caseload and in the general population, the equivalent figure is approximately 1 in 5.

The Committee were of the view that more use could be made of voluntary sector providers, who have a high profile in the borough and organisations such as Chance UK and Safer Aspire,

In Islington, universal youth provision plays an important role in responding to early signs of youth crime and providing children and young people with opportunities to discuss and explore issues that may be worrying them or affecting them or someone they know. Projects can also play a part in rebuilding community confidence where neighbourhoods have been affected by youth crime. Universal youth work can address issues around knife crime or bullying and work to help people be more resilient and confident within their communities. Universal youth work will be supporting the implementation of the Youth Crime strategy and specifically co-delivering the Knife Crime Prevention Programme, with Targeted Youth support staff across youth and community settings.

The Committee were concerned that the current hours of youth workers did not always coincide the hours that young people needed to be engaged and therefore we have made a recommendation in this regard and also in relation to increasing provision of facilities for diversionary activities.

Family support work includes an early help service, which reaches 12% of Islington's population, age 5-17, and Children's Centres reach 87% of the under 5's population. Families First and the Islington Families Intensive scheme provide thorough and well documented analytical assessments, which in most cases led to clear, outcome focused support plans, which are co-produced with families. This allows a strong relationship to be built with families and have an impact on their lives.

Families First supports families with a very wide range of needs, such as those with emerging problems that have not used the service in the past, to those with complex histories. This appears to be effective for about 80% of the families it supports. Data available on outcomes

achieved by families supported show that 68% of children and young people, with at least one unauthorised absence in the term preceding support, improved their attendance, following support. Exclusions, both fixed and permanent were not an issue for the majority of children and young people engaged in Families First. For the small number for whom this is an issue, 48% saw an improvement during the period during the period they engaged with Families First.

Islington Families Intensive Team (IFIT) works with families who have very complex needs and adolescents who are at high risk of entering custody, or being looked after. It is acknowledged that meeting the needs of these families poses a significant challenge and often has not been achieved by other services prior to referral. These are generally more difficult families to engage and are often resistant to support. The aim is to get families to a point, where risk is reduced to an acceptable level and the model of assessment is very comprehensive. In terms of key outcomes in 2013/14, there was a reduction from 24% to 7% of all children in this cohort, and for the first two quarters of 2014/15 exclusions reduced from 22% of the cohort to 10%. There has also been an improvement in unauthorised absence following intervention from the IFT and in offending behaviour.

Targeted youth support works with young people aged 10-21 years old (12-21 for youth counselling), who require additional support to enable them to make informed choices and maintain positive pathways. This support is specific, tailored interventions, aimed at young people and their families, who need extra provision on top of universally provided services. They work with young people from their own starting point, drawing in peers, partners and parents, as appropriate, challenging and enabling them to understand the consequences of their actions.

They also deliver work in local secondary schools, covering areas such as substance abuse, positive and healthy relationships, keeping safe, gangs, weapons awareness and joint enterprise. In the first 2 quarters of 2015 TYS delivered sessions in 4 schools to 78 pupils. There is also a strong emphasis on community based delivery, providing support within local community settings and working with local neighbourhood services to enhance community cohesion and prevent escalation of anti-social behaviour. Youth trucks are deployed together with detached teams across the borough, based on intelligence and ASB reports, working with young people where they meet and congregate, encouraging them to participate in group work and connecting them into their local area.

Targeted youth support are identifying early and intervening with young people affected or associated with gangs and group offending or coming to the attention of the Police, housing and ASB officers. There has been a 34% reduction in the rate of first time entrants to the Youth Offending service since 2013, and an 8% reduction in the rate of first time entrants from April 2014 – March 2015, which is better than London and the national average. The average age of young offenders is increasing alongside the number of young offenders decreasing, meaning that the flow of young offenders is being stemmed. On average over 2 years of tracking 85% of young people who completed a Triage intervention (an out of court disposal), following admission of an offence with the Targeted Youth service (TYS) did not go on to re-offend within 1 year of that intervention.

In 2014/15 TYS delivered over 500 group/detached youth work sessions and examples include, girls groups, Community events, young Dad's groups, boys groups at Elthorne and Mildmay, Islington Young Peoples Drug and Alcohol service, sexual health in the community, and other projects. TYS are working alongside the Youth Offending service, Children's social care, Victim support and the 18-24 Transitions team to establish the Integrated Gangs team.

The Committee are concerned that the current hours worked by youth workers do not always correspond to the times that they need to most actively engage young people at risk of offending and we have therefore made a recommendation in this regard.

## **Voluntary agencies**

The Committee also received evidence from Chance UK and Safer Aspire London.

Safer Aspire London is a mentoring project for 11-18 year old young people at risk of involvement in ASB, offending and gangs. The mentors met regularly with the children, who were mainly referred from Families First, youth offending etc.

The scheme was currently funded by MOPAC monies until 2017 for early intervention for 11-17 year olds but it is hoped that the funding will continue after this although this was not confirmed.

The Committee also heard evidence from two young people who were benefitting from the scheme.

Chance UK provides an early intervention programme for 5-11 year olds through intensive monitoring and family support. Referrals mostly came from schools and would be in relation to concerns about mental health, hyperactivity, peer pressure etc. and work would be carried out with the child and the family and the Committee noted that there were high instances of parents who suffered from depression, anxiety and/or domestic violence.

The results of Chance UK were consistently good and 85%-95% of children graduating from the service had shown improved behaviour and 75% had improved social care and relationship with their families.

It was noted that the approach of Chance UK had changed over recent years and that now a more targeted approach was taken to assist the child/family concerned to enable them to access the most appropriate services. Chance UK services were externally evaluated and they are involved in a Randomised Control Trial which will provide further evidence of the value of the service.

The Committee noted the views of Chance UK that in order to put a legacy in place to continue progress, out of school activities, small scale projects and access to social and sports clubs and were of the view that discussions should take place with the Council's Leisure provider and schools to enable facilities to be used outside of school hours at a cost that is affordable.

Chance UK informed the Committee that they linked in with Families First to give them information as to possible sources of funding that could be accessed and that in terms of Council initiatives there were bits of funding across London that could be accessed in order to assist, based on the needs of the child. Chance UK did not monitor progress at present through to GCSE, but it felt that there is more collectively that can be done to assess how families were progressing. However, there is evidence to show that following intervention children re-engaged with education and school.

Chance UK stated that it is important to build trust with children and assess their coping skills and if there is an immediate need to access assistance. However it is often difficult to get parents to access a GP and counselling but an ongoing dialogue takes place about how things are progressing.

Chance UK now had a girls' programme, which involved 10 Islington and 10 Hackney girls, which has a focus on siblings of gang members. The programme also deals with child sexual exploitation and Chance UK stated that schools were well placed to be able to build up a picture of the child and the family.

## Youth Offending Service

The Youth Offending service (YOS) principal aim is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people. The YOS is a multi-disciplinary team made up of health professionals, Police, youth offending case managers and social workers. All young people are offered a comprehensive health screening service and where required access to speech, language and communication support, mental health assessment and treatment, substance abuse assessment and treatment and sexual health services. The YOS was inspected in 2014 and has been following an improvement plan. Most Islington children who receive an order supervised by the YOS do not reoffend, and as stated previously, re-offending in first time entrants is reducing.

However, youth violence and gang related offences, principally violence, robbery and drug offences are increasing and re-offending and custody rates of Islington young people are much higher than national averages, which in part has resulted in a recent increased police presence in the borough.

The age of those supervised on YOS orders is getting older with 16 and 17 year olds being most prevalent. A small but significant number of children and young people, known to YOS, present a high risk to themselves and others, around 40 young people of the current caseload of 120, have complex needs, including mental health and learning disabilities. This includes children and young people involved in sexually harmful behaviour, sexual offences and violence. These children and young people require high quality approaches and programmes that are evidence based and effective. Those who work with these children and young people need to have a high level of expertise.

The YOS work must take into account both the needs and risks of a high risk child or young person. Identification, assessment planning and management should be tailored to the needs, age and stage of development of the individual child or young person. Work to address the needs and risk of this cohort of young people includes intervention programmes addressing public order, robbery and motoring offences, a knife crime prevention programme and family group conferencing/family networking. In addition there is life coaching for young women, and all young people have access to a free phone line to contact their families or case managers. There are also risk management panels, alternatives to custody, transition work including resettlement and support into probation which are crucial in preventing young people remaining in the criminal justice system. There is also a probation worker and close integration with the Gangs Team.

National findings show that a significant proportion of those being released from custody are likely to reoffend. Islington currently has high numbers of young people in custody and it is therefore important that new interventions are developed to reduce the likelihood of re-offending on release. Work is being carried out with the North London Resettlement consortium to develop new methods of intervention to reduce re-offending in this cohort, such as anger replacement therapy, employment opportunities and good accommodation options for those that cannot return home.

The victims of crime by young people are most likely to be other young people. In addition, there is strong evidence that many young people who commit crimes have, before they became offenders, been victims themselves. This includes the children who come to the attention of services and some brought into the criminal justice system, on welfare grounds, as victims of neglect and abuse, many as a result of domestic violence or parental substance misuse. Strengthening the response to young victims is therefore imperative, to prevent offending and other negative outcomes. There is a close link with schools to combat bullying and problem behaviour.

The Committee considered witness evidence in relation to the most recent report on the Youth Offending Service, which highlighted a number of deficiencies. This is the third unsatisfactory report on the service in the past few years and gave the Committee a great deal of concern and we received evidence from the Executive Member Children and Families in this regard.

The Committee noted that the poor inspection report had highlighted that the lack of co-location with the Police had been a problem and the lack of access of the service to Police records is also an issue and that work is being carried out to address this.

The Committee were informed that new management had been introduced and better training for staff introduced, particularly in the area of case management. The Committee were of the view that given the fact that there had been a significant turnover of staff and that morale in the team must be low it is imperative that training and support be given to staff, as this is a service where staff deal with some of the most difficult young people in the borough and can be often stressful.

The Committee also were of the view that schools, in particular, could play a part in school assemblies by highlighting the dangers of gang affiliation, child sexual exploitation etc. and that this should be encouraged. There is also the need to effectively engage with parents about these dangers and the risks to their children of offending behaviour.

In addition, the Committee were of the view that L.B. Camden had a good YOS and that it would be useful to share information with them and other high performing boroughs about the types of interventions used that had proven successful.

The Committee noted that if a child is excluded from school there is now in place a full family referral which will flag up concerns and enable early interventions to be put in place to hopefully reduce future offending. In addition we noted that whilst the numbers coming into the YOS is slightly reducing the complexity of the needs of the young people was increasing.

### **Visit to Integrated Gangs Team (IGT)**

The Committee also considered evidence from Acting Superintendent, Islington Police, Ian Howells, Jennie Walsh, Forensic Psychologist in the Gangs Team and Theresa Ikoko, Gangs Team Transition service worker. Since January 2016 the 18-24 Gang Team workers have become part of the Integrated Gangs Team.

The Gangs Team engage with those at risk of offending and also offenders and looked at a series of issues such as housing, employment and mental health and tried to remove these barriers. A number of individuals had been in Pupil Referral Units or alternative provision, and lacked social skills. In addition, some had been involved in criminality through family relationships or violence. The Gangs Team also engage with partners to share information and is now focusing on outcomes.

There is mental health expertise in the team, with a clinical psychologist being a member of the team, which focuses on young people with multiple risk factors and at the time the Committee received evidence that over 35 young people had been seen by the psychologist based in the team. Young adults are actively engaging with the mental health service, who otherwise would not meet the threshold for adult mental health services.

There are a number of difficulties faced by young people in turning their backs on crime, and housing is often identified as a major issue. It is often difficult to persuade these young people to have aspirations and enter training, college etc. as they could be at risk of losing benefit or their accommodation. There were increased pressures on young people to achieve and some turned to criminality and for some young people there was a sense of inclusion in being in a gang and being part of a group.

The Committee also visited the Integrated Gangs Team that are located at the Tolpuddle Street Police station. It was stated that the Police were committed to their involvement in the team and it is recognised that they needed to be in a partnership to not only operate an enforcement strategy, where necessary, but to support early intervention. There are also safer schools officers in secondary schools and there is a need to get key messages across to young people and the community of the dangers of gang involvement. The advantage of the Integrated Gangs Team is that all agencies are co-located and can share information.

The Gangs Team will not only look at the individual but also at family and known associates and the use of criminal behaviour orders that can limit the ability of an individual to enter into a particular locality however some gangs members often breached these orders.

The Committee noted that it is felt, despite representations from the Police, that the sentencing of the Magistrates Court is often inconsistent and in one instance a repeat mobile phone snatcher had committed over 50 offences before being given a custodial sentence. The Committee had concerns over sentencing policy and have made a recommendation in this regard.

The numbers involved in gangs is fluid and youth crime and gang membership were not always the same thing. The Gangs matrix consisted of around 165 individuals but separate to these many be other individuals involved in mobile phone theft who did not figure in the matrix and also others known to the Youth Offending service.

The Committee heard evidence from Abianda, which is a social enterprise project that worked with the Gangs Team and young women, affected by gangs, sexual violence and exploitation and is a 1:1 service to facilitate young women to make changes in their lives. The Star Project targets 18-24 year old young women and did not just look at sexual exploitation but also family relationships. The project assisted 20 young women a year and had developed a good model of practice and evaluations carried out had found that young women who had not previously engaged with services were now being engaged and to build up a trusting relationship.

There is a huge benefit in having a clinical psychologist in the Integrated Gangs Team and she carried out mental health assessments on the young people and assessed their needs. Often even if these young people did not have severe mental health issues, they did have anger or behavioural issues and they would be clinically assessed, needs identified and actions put in place with other services to assist.

Victim focused work also takes place within the IGT and work is also carried out with schools and the schools Police officers.

The Gangs Analyst informed us that she is also working with the rest of the Team to identify those at risk of child sexual exploitation and that in addition work is also taking place to look at the profile of young people who are involved in County Lines and how children who go missing are involved in this. Work is also taking place to look at data that could be used by agencies to get a more accurate picture across the board as to how social media feeds into the gang culture.

In addition, regular briefing meetings are scheduled for the Team to look at data and recent events that have occurred to analyse the best way of responding and assess any gaps in information.

The view was expressed that it would be useful to make an assessment of what works well in the voluntary sector in terms of strategies that could inform the additional £500,000 allocated by the Council to fund gang prevention work.

### **Mental Health provision**

A key focus has also been on bridging the gaps in mental health provision for low level ASB cases, where individuals do not meet the need for intervention, or refuse to engage with support services. A clinical psychologist has been appointed, through Community Safety, to provide guidance and support to housing and police practitioners in dealing with vulnerable victims and perpetrators with mental health needs. This includes assertive outreach to encourage people to engage, including signposting people to the most appropriate support services.

As stated elsewhere in the report the Integrated Gangs Team now has a clinical psychologist to work with young people although the Committee are of the view that there needed to be better arrangements in place in relation to the transition from adolescent to adult mental health services.

### **Visit to New River College**

The Committee visited New River College which is the Council's Pupil Referral Unit that works with excluded children, families and schools across Islington, including with children at primary level.

The Lough Road site is the main site, but there are small satellite sites across the borough and the medical PRU caters for children who have medical or mental health difficulties.

When we visited there were 121 children on the school roll, however this is above the number that there should be. These children came from all sorts of backgrounds and have highly individual needs. Some of the children excluded had been permanently excluded from Islington schools and some from neighbouring boroughs such as Camden and Hackney, but whose families resided in Islington. In addition there are pupils nominally on the school roll who were attending alternative provision.

The Committee were informed that about 50% of primary school pupils at the College are re-integrated into mainstream school and often health and safety care plans are put in place as part of the re-integration. The College had in the past year achieved its best ever academic results.

Reception class children were being referred to the PRU and some of these exhibited extremely challenging behaviour and family circumstances and we were pleased to note that the PRU are working with primary schools to re-integrate these young children into mainstream education.

The PRU had received a good OFSTED inspection and the College had also received additional funding, reviewed on a yearly basis, to have workers from the IFIT team, which is an early help service and assists vulnerable young people.

The College has a dedicated Safer Schools officer and this is working well with the current officer and this officer also assists the school with gang culture and has delivered talks about gangs and the College holds coffee mornings to foster relationships with parents and these were well attended.

Spot checks are carried out in the College to check that pupils are not carrying weapons and this helped to reinforce amongst some students that staff were ensuring that the College is a safe place to be. In the last four years there had been three occasions where knives had been found at the PRU. It is planned to give a future talk to pupils by the Police armed response unit on the dangers of gangs, guns and knives and how the Police respond to this.

The profile of the College, in terms of gender has changed, and now one fifth of the pupils at the PRU were girls. Some of these pupils are very challenging and having a CAMHS worker available had proven very beneficial. However at present there is only one girl in the Primary PRU. The issue of girls in gangs is something that the College is trying to address.

The Committee were informed that some schools in the borough tended to exclude more than others. Some pupils were on alternative provision, which meant that they spent time at organisations such as Spark Plug, but there is weekly contact.

In general pupils on alternative provision tended to be less successful at GCSE, than others attending the College full time and alternative provision is usually used for more specialist 1:1, however if alternative provision placements break down, the pupils usually came back to the College. Attendance at the College can be difficult to manage and the College had a member of staff who worked across all the sites, to maximise attendance and some additional MOPAC funding assisted in this. We noted that currently there were 12 pupils at the College on youth offending orders, which was much less than previously had been the case.

The Committee noted and were concerned that children excluded from school and placed in alternative provision often did not attend the alternative provision for a full days education and that this left them on the streets and potentially to get involved in criminal activity. The Committee felt that this is an area where more work could be carried out with schools. This would enable individuals and families to be targeted and preventative strategies put in place for those considered at risk of offending.

The Committee noted that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee were currently carrying out a scrutiny review on alternative provision and the Committee welcomed this and felt that every attempt should be made to identify children at risk of offending at an early stage, especially at primary level, to prevent permanent exclusion from school and the young person and families given the necessary support. The Families First service, which is an early intervention scheme, could assist in this and every school now has a Families First representative. There is also the IFIT service, which works with adolescents, who have more intense difficulties, and also their parents, and while a very valuable service the Committee concurred that there is a need for the focus to directed to early intervention strategies in future to support behavioural change.

The Committee noted that there is a target of 50% in the Youth Crime strategy to prevent permanent exclusions and that the College should work closely with schools and the Local Authority in this regard.

## Visit to New Horizons Centre

The Committee also visited the New Horizons Centre in Camden, which is a Centre that aims to enable young people to gain skills and knowledge to improve their life chances and help them move from adolescence to adulthood. It is the only day centre in Central London responding to the needs of homeless, vulnerable and disadvantaged young people aged 16 -25.

The Centre have recently secured new funding from the Big Lottery to work with 250 high risk youth offenders, many of whom are gang affiliated, who will be referred from Prison, Probation, Camden and the Youth Offending services. However, New Horizons have strong working links with Islington Youth Offending service and the 18-24 Gangs Team .

The Committee were informed that the Centre is open during the week and at weekends and the majority of the young people who attended were homeless and, that because of the high level of shortage of accommodation across London, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find accommodation for them. This is likely to become even more difficult when the benefit changes imposed by Government are introduced for 18-21 year olds. Counselling is available at the Centre 2 days per week, and there is an advice service, a laundry and a nurse on site to give health advice.

There is also an accelerated service to assist NEET's and young people often needed 1:1 assistance with accessing employment.

There were 38 full and part time staff employed at the Centre and there is also a volunteer programme in place, and work carried out by young people who volunteer is evidenced to their College. There is a 75% success rate in getting volunteer workers into employment and a number of staff in the Centre came through the volunteer programme.

The Committee were informed that for the past 3 years the Centre had dealt with young people referred from the Youth Offending service and were currently dealing with offenders from Islington gangs and young people who self- referred.

We heard evidence that some young people who wished to move away from gangs needed to be relocated, as it was not safe for them to remain in their area, and there is a problem with many of these young people suffering from mental health problems. The Committee are recommending that the Council review housing policies in regard to young people/families at risk of gang violence.

The view was expressed that there was a need to take a long term approach with regard to combating knife crime and there were a number of challenges, such as the cross border nature of gangs, and the large sums of money involved in drug dealing and this is an ever changing picture. One of the attractions of gang membership is the fact that many young people could not earn the money elsewhere that they did through drugs and this made it difficult to persuade some young people to stop.

The Committee were informed that a MOPAC strategy is being developed, which would adopt a more Pan London strategy, and that a more holistic approach could be taken to support young people where appropriate, or the appropriate enforcement action taken. There is also felt to be the need to take a more co-ordinated approach across boroughs to target young people, to enable them to access employment opportunities. The Committee are recommending that more apprenticeship opportunities should be made available for young people under the Youth Offending service.

The Committee also noted that New Horizons dealt with some of the gang members in the Easy Cash gang that operated in EC1 and where there were gang members in a London prison they

were visited every 2 weeks and if at an outside London prison, every four weeks. Discussion also took place with gang members on alternative lifestyles and if necessary, work is carried out to try to find them accommodation outside of their area, if there was a gang association and if it is felt that it is unsafe for that person to return to his/her home area.

The Committee noted the view that there also needed to be diversionary opportunities put in place such as affordable youth provision and leisure facilities etc. to enable young people to access these and avoid drifting into criminality.

## **Margate Task Force**

The Committee received witness evidence from two members of the Margate Task Force.

The Task Force is a multi-award winning, co-located integrated services team based at Thanet District Council in Kent. The team comprises of 30 staff from 14 statutory and voluntary organisations, delivering street-level social justice and safeguarding to the most deprived wards in Kent. The Margate Task Force aims to identify the most complex social issues and deliver a joint level service to respond to risk and vulnerabilities and has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at risk from gangs.

The main challenges for the Task Force were gangs operating County Lines (drug dealing by London Gangs into Margate) and sexual exploitation and has been operating for 4 years and consists of a variety of agencies including Police, Fire, Mental Health, housing, troubled families etc. and focused on delivering criminal justice, social justice and safeguarding. There is an understanding amongst the agencies involved that they need to operate in an integrated manner and work tended to concentrate on the two most deprived wards in Margate.

Most crimes committed are drug related and the integration of services had demonstrated the usefulness of sharing information and shown that over a third of crime emanated from just two wards, which had enabled resources to be concentrated in these particular areas. There were high numbers of vulnerable people in these wards and looked after children were going missing on a regular basis and there are high levels of child sexual exploitation. There are 46 nationalities represented in these particular wards.

The Task Force carry out street surveys to try to identify problems and vulnerable people and social issues present to be able to better respond to the risks to these vulnerable young people and to try to provide solutions.

Members were informed that there were 12 currently operating in Margate and gangs were coming down from London, in addition to local gangs, and these gangs were of varying ethnicity. There are a number of tactics used by the gangs to draw people into drug use and trafficking and sexual exploitation. The gangs targeted vulnerable people and gang members dealing drugs are rotated to avoid detection.

Young people as young as 9/10 years old are being used to courier drugs and even children from middle class families are now being targeted. Young people joined gangs for a variety of reasons, such as a sense of importance, social status, feeling part of a family, money etc. The large amounts of money that young people can make from being involved in the drug trade is a major deterrent in them leaving gang involvement, but the Task Force always 'left the door open' for them to seek assistance.

The Task Force were also involved in Family Support Panel meetings, where families and young people were able to express their feelings and concerns, and the Panel sought to agree a way

forward. The age profile of the gangs is getting younger and the numbers of children going missing is increasing. There had also been an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children who had gone missing in Margate the previous year.

Members were informed that gangs organised street parties and lured young people, via social media, with promises of free drugs and alcohol, but then they made them become 'runners' in order to pay off their debts. The Task Force worked with schools and the PRU and health services to share information, which enabled a more comprehensive picture and a postcode joint agency approach and analysis.

The Task Force is also working on prevention and in dealing with young people who wish to exit gang involvement and schemes, such as the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, are being used to enable young people to be able to put positive things on CV's.

It was noted however that there were difficulties in showing the cost benefits of the Task Force when it was first established, and there is a need for all agencies involved give a lead and commit resources and work in a collaborative manner to show the benefits of joint working. One of the problems that had been identified, is that youth workers who did a lot of engagement with young people, worked at nights and at weekends, whereas other Task Force members tended to work 9-5 and generally not at weekends. It was felt that this is an area that the Task Force needed to give consideration to in the future.

The Committee heard evidence that there is good youth provision in Margate and that this provision tended to adapt to the ever changing demands of young people. There were youth workers at centres to ensure that young people who may attend did not involve other young people in criminality and that those young people attending are kept safe.

The Task Force also carry out community work and engages in 'door knocking' exercises, where the Public are informed of the work taking place and the improvements being made and it is felt that the Task Force is having an impact.

The Task Force carried out work with schools in order to identify if there had been behaviour change, as this could be an early sign of gang affiliation or involvement. There were now instances of 12/13 year olds carrying knives and it is crucial to get CAMHS involvement in a number of these cases, due to the mental health concerns about some of the young persons.

The Committee were informed that Margate is also suffering, because of the benefit changes and the shortage of social housing, which is forcing many vulnerable and complex families to be moved out of London to areas where accommodation is cheaper. There is therefore a need to work with London Boroughs and across County Lines, in particular, to share information and carry out more cross border work. However joint working is sometimes difficult, due to the fact that Local Authorities had different ways of operating.

It was noted that a number of the referrals were received as a result of the street visits and also from schools, and it is easier and more advantageous to intervene, at an early stage, rather than when criminality and gang membership had become too entrenched

## **Resident Impact Implications**

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010).

The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to take account of disabled persons disabilities and encourage people to participate in public life. The Council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding. A resident impact assessment has been completed, which suggests that the youth crime strategy should have positive impacts on all relevant protected characteristics by ensuring the issues below are taken into account.

### **Age**

The scrutiny relates specifically to young people, this is pertinent because of the specific issues relating to the prevalence of young people in the criminal justice system. For instance under 25 year olds currently make up the most arrested group in the borough and are also the majority of victims of youth crime. This means that the scrutiny will have a positive effect on young people.

### **Disability**

Young people who are victims of crime are disproportionately affected by mental health and young people with learning disabilities are over represented nationally within the criminal justice system. The scrutiny heard from two Psychologist Forensic and Clinical and psychiatric and psychological support is offered within the Integrated Gangs Team and CAMHS in the Youth Offending service and there are recommendations on sustaining this important work, as part of the strategy.

### **Sexuality and Gender reassignment**

There are no known differences or effects of trans-gender or gender reassigned people as a result of the youth crime scrutiny. It is to be noted that issues relating to hate crimes are picked up with the Council equality objectives and should issues become pertinent to youth crime they will be picked up in the Youth Crime strategy. This also holds true for the lesbian, gay and bisexual community.

### **Race**

Black young people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system in Islington. They are also overrepresented in the figures for No Further Action meaning that they are likely to be identified as suspects in crimes, but less likely to have any follow up following an arrest. The Council has worked in partnership with the Police, to reduce the over representation of black young men in stop and search. If the overall disproportionality within the criminal justice system is to be reduced then the Council and partners will need to take specific steps to address this when implementing the strategy. If the strategy is successful then it should increase the chances that young people of all racial backgrounds will have a better chance of leading rich and fulfilling lives, not marred by the 'revolving door' of the criminal justice system.

### **Gender**

Males are over represented in the criminal justice system.. Historically, females offend less often than males and those that do offend start later, stop sooner, and commit less serious offences

than their male counterparts. (Home Office, 2014). In recent years however, that trend seems to be changing as female roles in youth crime have become more understood. The 2011 report of the Children's Commissioner highlights the role of girls and young women in gangs – the hiding and transportation of drugs and weapons and as victims of sexual exploitation by gang members, including their 'boyfriends'. The Committee heard about the work of Abianda within young women in the Integrated Gangs Team and agreed that there should be more effective and targeted working with both boys and girls, which should address the specific issues faced by females.

### **Socio Economic status**

Socio- economic status is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act , but the Council takes the view that it is important that we try to minimise the disadvantage faced by poor and working class people, as exemplified by the Fairness Commission. It is the case that low socio-economic status persons are more likely to be negatively affected by crime, both as young men and perpetrators. This is due to a number of factors – the type and geographical location of their housing, the capacity of their parents, to provide material support, the nature of their education – state school or private school: the capacity of their parents to provide material support, the age at which their formal education terminates, the nature of qualifications (if any), they receive on completion of their education, their age at entry to the labour market and the nature of their employment (if any) and the type of leisure activities that they pursue. The scrutiny is likely to have a positive impact on people with low socio-economic status.

### **Safeguarding**

The Council's safeguarding responsibilities take into account young people as victims and the Council works collaboratively with partners to identify and respond to the many risks faced by young people. The Council are concerned about the impact of domestic and other forms of violence and of young people falling vulnerable to cybercrime, internet or other forms of radicalisation or sexual exploitation. The Council and partners already have robust processes in place for safeguarding vulnerable children. The Youth Crime strategy should strengthen safeguarding arrangements for older young people.

### **Human Rights**

In implementing the enhanced enforcement proposed in the strategy the Council will need to have due regard to human rights and seek legal advice, as appropriate.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Committee were of the view given the recent incidents in the borough that the recommendations in the report should be adopted.

The level of criminality, especially with regard to knife crime and mobile phone snatch theft is too high and measures need to be taken in order to reduce this and to ensure that early intervention strategies are put in place to discourage future generations of young people becoming involved in criminality.

The current generation of young people that are involved in criminality and on the edge of criminality have to be subject to enforcement action, where necessary and to be offered support and diversionary opportunities, where appropriate.

The Committee heard a great deal of evidence in relation to the scrutiny and are of the view that the measures put in place by the Council have established a base on which to go forward in the future and reduce levels of criminal behaviour. This has to be done by both enforcement measures and early intervention strategies.

The Integrated Gangs Team model introduction and the additional monies allocated by the Council should assist in this and it is hoped our recommendations will contribute further to the work currently taking place.

## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 205/16**

### **COUNCILLORS 2015/16**

**Troy Gallagher – Chair**  
**Una O’Halloran – Vice Chair**  
**Jenny Kay**  
**Martin Klute**  
**Michael O’Sullivan**  
**Raphael Andrews**  
**Jilani Chowdhury**  
**Rakhia Ismail**  
**James Court**  
**Caroline Russell**  
**Clare Jeapes**  
**Kaya Comer-Schwartz**  
**Gary Doolan**

#### **Substitutes:**

**Alice Perry**  
**Nick Wayne**  
**Flora Williamson**  
**Mouna Hamitouche M.B.E.**  
**Theresa Debono**  
**Alex Diner**  
**Alice Donovan**  
**Satnam Gill**  
**Nurullah Turan**  
**Robert Khan**  
**Paul Smith**

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#### *Officer Support:*

*Peter Moore – Democratic Services*

*Lead officer/s- Catherine Briody, Victim and Offenders Service Manager*

## APPENDIX A – SCRUTINY INTITIATION DOCUMENT

<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)</b>
Review: Youth crime – youth violence, mobile phone theft, and crime hotspots
Scrutiny Review Committee: Policy and Performance Review Committee
Assistant Director leading the Review: Alva Bailey
Lead Officers: Catherine Briody
<p>Overall aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To better understand the issues and causes of knife crime and what we can do to reduce knife crime in the borough.</li> <li>• In parallel with the above, to review and improve what the Council and its partners can do to reduce mobile phone theft by thieves on bikes within the borough.</li> </ul>
<p>Objectives of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A review of Islington’s current performance on moped/mobile phone theft, bench marked with other areas with a focus on knife crime, moped theft and mobile phone theft and mapping of main crime hotspots</li> <li>○ Review current approach by comparing and contrasting the work of Islington with other areas and identifying best practice</li> <li>○ Consider the borough’s approach to youth crime as set out in the new Youth Crime Strategy and the actions required to achieve the necessary improvements.</li> <li>• To review and compare how the council is working with and providing support to families to prevent crime among children and young people and the effectiveness of such work.</li> <li>• To review the use of the full range of enforcement available to the partnership to encourage positive changes in behaviour as well as holding offenders to account.</li> <li>• To review the role of schools/young people in tackling knife crime and how they can contribute towards shaping solutions.</li> <li>• To review policing around knife crime and knife possession including the use of NFAs and impact of stop and search tactics.</li> <li>• To review policing of moped enabled crime.</li> <li>• To consider how we use the intelligence on crime hotspots to reduce theft in those areas and how local communities can assist with solutions.</li> <li>• To consider the role of the council in addressing the sale of stolen goods including mobile phones and bikes etc.</li> <li>• To increase the relationship with the key statutory partners in delivering a more robust collaborative approach to youth crime: YOS, police, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, courts, secure estate</li> <li>• To consider the impact of mental health on knife crime and review the work around health in the YOS and 18 – 24 team (Forensic Psychologist)</li> <li>• To look at communication between neighbourhood police and the community, and how to improve public confidence</li> </ul>

- To explore the links between mobile phone theft and drug dealing and how we can use tenancy law and other civil powers to address these
- To explore the role that local businesses can play in reducing thefts.
- To explore new methods of community engagement, and a young people friendly approach including using social media, virtual panels and other modern technology to tackle youth crime.

### **How is the review to be carried out:**

This review is undertaken at a time when the borough has experienced a disturbing rise in youth crime, especially violence, which has caused widespread anxiety to residents, particularly families with children. The council is committed to stopping this rise in crime as a matter of urgency, and recognises that we all need to do more if we are to achieve the improvements required to turn the tide and prevent further harm to young people and community. This review will therefore be undertaken over a relatively short period so that the findings can inform improvements to the council's approach and the delivery of the new Youth Crime Strategy.

The review will look at various aspects of the council's work with young people and their families to prevent crime and keep young people safe, including the extent to which the community believe the council is tackling the issues that concern them most. It will examine opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the council's approach in delivering services to prevent and engage/divert young people at risk of being involved in crime, and the use of enforcement powers where young people continue to offend.

The review will involve a deep dive on to the causes and impact of knife crime and will include a focus on mobile phone theft and crime hotspot areas.

It will explore the extent and nature of youth crime and anti-social behaviour in Islington and the impact of current services and initiatives and consider good practice from other areas that can be replicated in Islington. It will explore with young people their experience and perception of youth crime and views on the police, and their thoughts on how we can reduce crime and improve the safety of young people.

It will specifically consider the proposed model for the new Integrated Gangs Unit in Islington which will involve a collaborative approach and in some cases co-location of council staff (YOS, 18 – 24 team), police, probation and JCP etc.

### **Scope of the Review:**

Types of evidence will be assessed by the review:

1. Documentary submissions:
  - Crime statistics
  - Young people as victims
  - Strategic Assessment
  - Islington Youth Crime Strategy
  - London Mayors Gang Strategy

2. It is proposed that witness evidence be taken from:

- Metropolitan Police (Gangs / IOM / YOS teams)
- MET Police Borough Commander?
- Community Safety Partnerships Unit
- Anti-social Behaviour Team, including MAGPI officers
- Youth Offending Service
- Children's Services Safeguarding
- Legal Department
- Public Protection
- Local residents
- Local businesses
- Safer Neighbourhood Panel chairs and members
- Victim's families
- Youth workers and young people
- Ex-offenders/ ex-gang members
- Ward Panel members
- Voluntary and community sector representatives
- Islington Community Safety Board
- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
- Probation: NPS/CRC
- Victim Support
- Knife Crime charity
- Rep from Secure estate (Pentonville?)
- Two local MPs

3. Visits

- LB Lambeth
- Schools and head teachers
- Some scrutiny sessions to be held in community settings

Additional Information:

## Appendix 1

### Knife Crime, mobile phone thefts and crime hotspots' scrutiny review

#### Progress update on each of the recommendations

**Recommendation 1: That, given the concerns expressed about sentencing, a briefing meeting be held with the Clerks at Highbury Magistrates Court, with the aim of informing them of the 'local picture', in respect of gang and youth violence and the community impact it is having and to support more appropriate sentencing for these types of offences.**

The YOS court lead regularly attends the court user group meetings at Highbury Magistrates Court and the court receives regular updates and information on the local picture on crime in the borough. The Chief Magistrate sits on the Youth Justice Services Management Board and therefore has very good knowledge of youth crime issues in the borough and the partnership's response. An area for development going forward will be to explore the use of knife crime impact statements between the police and council to identify the risks and violence.

**Recommendation 2: That Integrated Gangs Team, together with the Police, set up an awareness raising programme for frontline practitioners working with young people in Islington, to increase understanding of the issues and the services available, with regard to gangs, violence and vulnerability of young people**

Since October 2016, the Gang Coordinator who is the Social Worker in the IGT has delivered borough wide training to 329 practitioners in Safeguarding Young People in Relation to Gang Activity & Serious Youth Violence. The training was co-delivered with police and IGT partnership colleagues including St Giles. Objectives that are covered in the training;

- Understanding the mind-set of a gang member.
- Key indicators & signs of a YP involved in gangs.
- Key interventions and strategies when working with gang affected YP.
- A clear understanding of Islington procedures for YP affected by gangs and serious youth violence.

The training has been successful in raising staff awareness on the protocols and procedures around safeguarding children affected by gang activity/violence and there has been a significant increase in the number of Strategy (safeguarding) Meetings being requested in relation to gang concerns. Feedback from the training:

**"This training has given me the confidence and resources to (address issues with adolescents)".**

This training has now been incorporated in to the Islington Safeguarding Children Board training offer and will be delivered more frequently in the coming year.

**Recommendation 3: That in view of the fact that there are significant intelligence gaps in the drugs market locally and nationally through County Lines –**

- i. **The Child Exploitation (CSE) and Gangs Analyst develop a problem profile on County Lines from Islington, drawing on intelligence from statutory and voluntary sector organisations, to inform the co-ordinated response to gangs and organised crime groups controlling the drugs market**

- ii. **Whilst the Trident matrix can be an effective tool in identifying the cohort of gang members causing, or at risk of causing significant harm, it does not cater for the significant number of young people on the periphery of gangs. It is therefore recommended that the use of the ISCB Gangs Safeguarding protocol is encouraged to support agencies in identifying, referring and engaging this vulnerable cohort of young people in targeted gang prevention work, to prevent their rise to full gang status**

The CSE and Gangs Analyst has completed a problem profile on County Lines that provided both individual analysis of young people involved/suspected to be involved and wider analysis of the extent of county lines in Islington. This was taken to MOPAC and circulated to the relevant professionals, and is informing the borough's approach to county lines. It has identified previously unknown young people and trends in relation to county lines and safeguarding in our borough. The information from the problem profile will also inform the funding application for the MOPAC London Crime Prevention Fund top slice for a cross London project around County Lines. The CSE and Gangs Analyst recently contributed data and information for the recent training provided to British Transport Police on County Lines, attended by 50 BTP Officers.

The multi-agency Gangs Safeguarding Protocol and Practice Guidance has been widely promoted and is supporting practitioners in understanding the 3 risk level categories and in how to take appropriate action when risk is identified. The protocol is included in the gangs training (see recommendation 2) and its use has led to a significant increase in strategy meetings, and the earlier identification of children and young people due to gang risk.

**Recommendation 4: That, as a large number of mobile phone thefts take place at busy transport hubs and at shopping centres, MAGPI officers should develop a communication strategy to alert the public to the risks of using their phone in hotspot areas, and that local businesses be encouraged to contribute to funding this**

The MAGPI team has worked with the council communications team on the mobile phone theft campaign and developed leaflets that have been widely disseminated across the borough. In addition, the police have tried some innovative approaches including using messages on pavements to alert members of the public to be more careful with their phones. However, this is an area that requires a lot more work and partnership focus as mobile phone theft has continued to rise, and the phenomenon is now widespread across London. We have recently been working with council communications team to update our messaging for this summer and have involved the youth council in reviewing our communications around knife crime and mobile phone theft in particular.

**Recommendation 5: That the CSE and Gangs Analyst develop a problem profile on child sexual exploitation issues in Islington to increase knowledge of offenders and victims and to enhance the safeguarding of vulnerable young people at risk**

The CSE and Gang Analyst post holder works closely with Childrens Services and Police colleagues to provide analytical products that assist in mapping intelligence on CSE and gangs and youth violence in Islington. This involves providing information to Islington's Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation meeting, IGT and the

Bronze Gangs Tasking Group as well as to relevant strategic partners. The aim of the post is to increase identification and intelligence on victims and perpetrators of CSE and of young people at risk of involvement in gangs and group offending. In the past year her work has assisted with the identification of a CSE perpetrator with links to county lines, as well as helping to build a much better picture of a young person that was missing.

**Recommendation 6: That the creation of the Integrated Gangs Team be supported and more cross border work take place by the Police and the Council with other neighbouring Police forces and local authorities to share information and co-ordinate activity, given that crime is not restricted to borough boundaries**

The Integrated Gang Team has been operational since January 2016 and fully co-located at the Police Station since May. The coordinated tasking is happening daily and collaborative work includes joint home visits to key gang nominals and their families, welfare checks to young people in the custody suite at Tolpuddle St, and targeted work with victims and young women. The IGT has worked with 97 Young People and Young Adults (up to 24 years old) since April 2016 - including 68 gang involved and on the MPS matrix, and 15 young victims and 14 gang affected young women. After the first year of operation we are beginning to see some positive signs of impact and the IGT has assisted 15 young people to access employment since April 2016, and 9 former gang matrix nominals who have successfully completed the IGT programme have not reoffended.

With regards to cross border working the IGT has developed improved links with all, neighbouring boroughs; Hackney, City of London, Camden and Haringey. Islington & Camden borough have now merged to form Central North area. This has improved information sharing with Camden as the Camden Police are working in the Islington IGT office. The team have also developed improved links with both the proactive & reactive OP Trident police and are in discussion with them regarding their attendance at the IGT tasking meetings.

Islington hosted a Home Office funded Review in March 2017 to explore County lines/CSE/Missing/Safeguarding issues. It was attended by Police and Local Authority Gang leads from surrounding London Boroughs, Op Trident, Essex, Norfolk and Kent Police/Local Authority leads.

**Recommendation 7: That whilst the Committee support the use of Stop and Search, this should only be used where appropriate and be proportionate. The Council should identify meaningful ways to involve young people in the process of holding Police to account on stop and search issues and to provide training for young people to help inform them of their rights and responsibilities**

The Islington Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group (ISSCMG) is a sub group of the Safer Neighbourhood Board and is the forum for discussing the police approach on stop and search in the borough. The ISSCMG with the support of the Youth Council have conducted a Youth survey on stop and search. 1000 responses have been received and a report due this June. The ISSCMG have expressed their request from more support with this group and with engaging with young people in the borough around stop and search.

**Recommendation 8: That the work carried out in relation to Early Intervention strategies, as part of the Youth Crime Strategy, be supported as this is a vital element in deterring future cohorts of young people becoming involved in criminality**

The council has invested a further £2million of funding to address serious youth violence over four years and this has added capacity into the teams and allowed practitioners to work alongside the community and voluntary sector who have developed expertise in approaches to support young people at risk. Interventions are targeted at those who are at risk of becoming involved in gang activity, a perpetrator or victim of youth violence. Investment is focused on those who would benefit from specialist interventions to enable them to leave gang activity and/or support to overcome trauma and risks associated with being victims of youth violence. The objective is to adopt a stronger early intervention approach to serious youth crime. The interventions, services, along with training and resources for practitioners focus on further embedding the Think Family approach to ensure the wider systemic issues (such as parental issues) are addressed alongside intensive direct work with the young people, addressing underlying causes of their behaviour.

Funding has been allocated to the following, as part of an integrated multi-agency approach to tackling youth crime, gang activity and violence. Services delivered to date include:

- mentoring delivered by Chance UK for an additional 10 targeted primary school children (to increase reach of current mentoring contract from 2016-2020) and Safer London for 25 young people 11 to 17 years
- one to one intensive support for 75 10-18 year olds plus group work, delivered by workers from St Giles Trust who utilise their experiences as a way of connecting with young people both on the fringes of and already entrenched in gang activity. They will be based in TYS, TYS/Integrate (a Camden and Islington Foundation Trust clinical led project that engages young people involved in gangs in EC1 area) and Integrated Gangs Team (IGT)

This early intervention approach is having a good impact in our borough and we have seen significant reduction in entrants to First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System this is down 25% on the previous year far exceeding the corporate target. In addition, 80% of Young People who are triaged did not go on to receive a substantive youth outcome within one year

**Recommendation 9: That discussions take place with schools as to measures that can be taken to 'flag up' young people who are felt to be at risk or vulnerable to becoming involved in criminality, in order to ensure early intervention can take place. In addition, as it has been shown that many young people permanently excluded from school are at a higher risk of taking part in criminality, measures should be put in place to permanently exclude as few young people as possible**

The council in consultation with schools, police, IGT, YOS and Early Help have developed a new guidance for Islington schools on an effective and whole school approach to preventing and addressing youth violence. Further consultation with schools took place at a consultation event February 2017 that was attended by representatives from nine primary schools, seven secondary schools and six Safer Schools Officers. The guidance was circulated to all Islington schools in May 2017

and includes information about risk and protective factors, tell-tale signs and trauma informed approaches.

**Recommendation 10: That the work of the Police Safer Schools and other partners, e.g. the Ben Kinsella Trust be supported and extended to pupils in schools on crime prevention, knife crime and gangs and the CSE**

There is a very good offer to Islington Schools from well-established projects such as the Ben Kinsella Trust, Victim Support and our Safer Schools police. The council is using some of the additional £2million investment in youth violence prevention to fund St Giles Trust to deliver 30 SOS+ sessions to Islington schools per year. SOS is designed to provide young people with the empowerment and tools to stay safe, resist street pressures and make better life choices. The sessions are delivered by credible ex-offenders with real first-hand experience. Feedback on SOS from Samuel Rhodes School March 2017:

**“It’s been completely on point. The pupils and staff were blown away by the workshop and information learnt via it and it alleviated all of their concerns. One class who had further questions asked if they could go into the workshop a second time in order to have all of their questions answered.”**

Islington police launched the London Met’s first School Engagement Programme in November 2015 and the Programme is offered to every primary and secondary school in Islington with the flexibility to tailor it to meet schools’ individual needs. Topics include personal safety, dangers of crime and in particular sessions around gangs, knife crime and the concept of joint enterprise. To date over 160 sessions have taken place within Islington Schools with over 7200 pupils taking part. The Islington Junior Citizen Programme ran for two weeks in June and July 2016 and was attended by 1185 children and teachers from 25 Primary Schools across Islington attending. The event aims to teach children how to react safely to scenarios that have been designed and adapted to suit local problems and will be running again in summer 2017.

However take up has not been consistent across all our schools, despite considerable effort to promote the programme by the Safer Schools police. This is disappointing as it means that some Islington pupils are missing out on important messages on knife crime and keeping safe.

**Recommendation 11: That as the Committee heard evidence that many young people suffered from a lack of affordable sports facilities in their area, particularly the most vulnerable, it is of the view that discussions should take place with schools and the Council’s Leisure provider, to investigate the possibility of the use of school and leisure facilities in the evenings and at weekends, this to include the provision of free/low cost options at Council Leisure facilities for young people. There should also be a review of the use of current Council community facilities for youth provision to ensure these are situated appropriately and are utilised in the most effective manner to meet current needs. In addition, as some young people are vulnerable to involvement in ASB and crime, Council provision and commissioned services should be encouraged to offer more evening and weekend facilities and that the hours of youth workers should be reviewed so that they are visible in crime hotspots at appropriate times**

Organisations like Arsenal in the Community and Access to Sport have a significant reach in Islington providing free and affordable sport activities across the borough including in areas impacted by youth crime. The YOS have an agreement with the Sobel centre to give free use of their facilities for young people subject to the most

rigorous monitoring in the community. Further discussion is required regarding the council leisure and community facilities and this will be taken forward through a key work stream in the Youth Crime plan which aims to co-locate more of our services in the community and extend the hours which our youth services work to include later in the evening and at weekends. We will be piloting an extended youth offer this summer to work later on Friday evenings and at weekends.

**Recommendation 12: That the Committee heard evidence of the good work that Chance UK and Safer Aspire carry out in the borough in mentoring and working with vulnerable young people. The Committee noted that an evaluation of this work is currently taking place to assess its effectiveness. This evaluation should be made available when it is completed. Furthermore we noted that there are various funding sources across London that may be able to assist in supporting children in sports activities etc. and these should be looked at and accessed, where possible in relation to mentoring related activities**

The Chance UK mentoring programme is undergoing a Randomised Control Trial (RCT) in order to determine the service's impact on children's behaviour and emotional wellbeing. The Social Research Unit (SRU) at Dartington is conducting the RCT, which is called the ECHO project (Evidence for Children's Outcomes). The Social Research Unit report on the trial will be available late in 2017.

In addition, we are evidencing the effectiveness of these services through our own monitoring processes:

In 2016 – 2017 **Chance UK** worked with 50 Islington children (43 boys, 7 girls).

By the end of the programme:

- 69% of ending SDQ's scored below 16 – indicating the children have no behavioural difficulty
- 63% of ending SDQ's also demonstrated an increase in pro-social behaviours (All children are assessed using Goodman's Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) the acceptance score is 16 and the average score of children taken onto programme is 29).

In 2016 – 17 the **Safer London Aspire** service matched 27 young people with mentors or intensive support. A snap shot of 7 young people who completed the programme showed a 93% Improvement in engagement with EET; goals and aspirations; engagement in positive activities and services, improved confidence and self-esteem and increased understanding of risks and consequences of gangs and offending.

**Recommendation 13: That, given the recent unsatisfactory report on the Youth Offending Service, we noted that measures are being put in place to address the concerns raised. However, more information sharing should take place with other boroughs with a good rating, in order to look at successful measures that can be replicated in Islington. We also recommend that given that the staff in the YOS team are probably suffering from low morale, that additional support and training should be given to them in undertaking often very stressful work**

The YOS has achieved significant improvement over the past year and has recently been taken off formal improvement processes by the Youth Justice Board. We have recently been successful in recruiting a new Head of YOS / TYS, Curtis Ashton, who brings extensive experience and skills. The YJB carried out an audit / mock inspection in January which showed that the quality of case management met or exceeded the required standard for HMIP Inspection. The staff team has stabilised and permanent staff recruitment and consequently there has been a positive improvement morale. The

YOS has in addition seen continued reductions in the rate of first time entrants to the youth justice system and a recent reduction in reoffending. However, despite the positive progress it is important to acknowledge that the Islington reoffending and youth custody rates remain very high and are among the highest in the UK.

**Recommendation 14: That as the Committee heard evidence of the high prevalence of mental health problems amongst young people involved in gangs and criminality, it is welcomed that there is a mental health worker situated in the Integrated Gangs Team. However we feel that more work needs to be carried out in establishing a more effective process to support young people when transferring from children to adult mental health services and investment, wherever possible, should be maintained and increased in mental health services**

The YOS now has a seconded Forensic Psychologist full time and a clinical Psychologist 2 days per week to work with young people identified as having emotional and mental health support needs. These roles can support transition to adult services where needed and can also hold on to cases of young adults to provide a gradual transition if appropriate. Both workers link into and share information with the IGT Psychologist where cases are transferring to the IGT service.

**Recommendation 15: That the Council's housing policies be reviewed in respect of emergency moves out of the borough for young people and their families at high risk of gang related harm, and increase the links with the Pan London Gangs service, which can provide support in moving gang members to other boroughs**

This area of work is still in development at the time of writing and the IGT Manager is in the process of writing new guidance on housing moves for young people at high risk of gang related harm. Housing remains one of the biggest challenges in our work with young people, especially in the current financial climate and the recent changes to housing legislation which are having a very negative impact on young people. Providing support around housing is a key area of work for the IGT and in 2016 – 17 the team assisted 4 young people in to permanent accommodation, 7 into temporary accommodation and 7 into supported accommodation. Furthermore, we have supported 5 families to move out of the Borough following a Gangs Strategy meeting, due to Police, Social Care and Housing all working together to safeguard the young person and their families from gang retribution/ activity.

**Recommendation 16: That consequent to the Crime Summit community event in April the following take place –**

- i. A meeting be organised with key stakeholders to discuss the outcome of the summit and proposals for the future way forward**
- ii. An action plan be developed for the 'community' strand of the Youth Crime strategy**
- iii. Support the Safer Neighbourhood Boards in delivery of actions and to identify ways of involving young people in their work**

The main issues from the Summit were captured and shared with the Safer Neighbourhood Board who continue to focus on youth crime issues by holding the police to account. The SNB has allocated the MOPAC community project funding to projects with a focus on youth crime this year. We have carried out extensive consultation with partners over the past year including 3 events in January and February to inform the youth crime plan. These events were attended by a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations, local residents including parents and young people. In addition the SNB continues to have regular representation from the Youth Council at their meetings.

**Recommendation 17: That the IGT and YOS develop further relationships with New Horizons Centre, who have secured external funding from the lottery to work with young people at risk of gang involvement and increase the reach to Islington young people**

The YOS has seconded a youth employment worker from New Horizons who has been based with the YOS at Iseldon Rd since September 2016. He provides 1:1 support to young people who are NEET and mentoring into employment. He also links lots of our young people into New Horizons Youth Centre so they can benefit from the full range of facilities and services they offer. Shelagh O'Connor the Chief Executive Officer of New Horizons Youth Centre is a member of the Youth Justice Services Management Board and contributes to oversight and strategic direction of the YOS.

**Recommendation 18: That, as it has been shown that engagement in Education, Employment and Training is a key pathway out of offending, the Council should look to provide increased opportunities for young people, such as more use of apprenticeships for the Youth Offending service young people**

The council's youth employment team work closely with the Youth Offending Service. In the past year there has been:

- one traineeship that started last year and ran into this year with 5 YOS YP
- one traineeship that started this year and is still running with one YOS YP
- 3 YOS on Artichoke work placement scheme this summer and all 3 went onto level 1 courses at Kings Cross Construction
- Apprenticeships – (awaiting numbers)

The employment team have promoted the Aspire (3 employer events for NEET young people with vacancies) heavily to YOS staff and young people.