

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 10 November 2014

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 10 November 2014 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Shaikh (Vice-Chair), Doolan, O'Sullivan, Gantly, O'Halloran, Parker, Russell, Court, Gill and KayGallagher (Chair), Shaikh (Vice Chair), Kay, Gantly, O'Halloran, Parker, Russell, Gill, Doolan, O'Sullivan and Court

Also Present: **Councillor:** Convery

Borough Commander: Gerry Campbell

Councillor Troy Gallagher in the Chair

27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Comer Schwartz and Doolan for lateness

28 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

None

29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

None

30 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the following amendment – bullet point 2 page – the deletion of the word 'equitable' and the insertion of the word 'ethical' - the minutes of the meeting of the Committee, held on 29 September 2014 be confirmed and the Chair be authorised to sign them

31 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Item 5)

Members were informed that all the responses on the outstanding actions arising from the last meeting had been circulated to Members, with the exception of the responses from Councillor Hull which would form part of the report he submits to the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 08 December.

32 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 6)

The Chair stated that additional meetings of the Committee had been arranged for 20 November 2014 and 6 January 2015 to consider additional witness evidence on Income Generation. The Chair added that it was hoped that consideration could be given to the draft recommendations at the 6 January meeting in order that any proposals could form part of the budget making process.

The Chair outlined the arrangements for dealing with filming and recording at public meetings and the arrangements for Public questions.

33

ANNUAL CRIME AND DISORDER REPORT - BOROUGH COMMANDER (Item 7)

The Borough Commander, Gerry Campbell and the Executive Member Community Safety, Councillor Paul Convery were present for consideration of this item.

Presentations were made to the Committee, by the Borough Commander and Councillor Convery, copies of which are interleaved.

The Chair informed Members that this was the first Annual Crime and Disorder report that the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee are considering since the change in the scrutiny arrangements in May, as the report had previously been considered by the Communities Review Committee.

The Committee stated that they were keen to work with the Police and Executive Member Community Safety to improve community safety in the borough, and as part of this process in future would welcome a written report from both the Borough Commander, as well as the Executive Member for Community Safety, in order that Members can have more information in advance to prepare any questions that they may have.

The Committee appreciate that in the past Members had been happy to receive presentations from the Borough Commander, but in future years if a written report could be provided this would enable more effective scrutiny and improvements in partnership working.

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

- There had been a reduction of 4% in the overall total notifiable offences recorded by the Police when compared to the previous twelve months. MOPAC offences had fallen by 3%. However the rate of reduction is slowing and some more serious crimes are on the increase
- Incidents of domestic violence and serious youth violence are among the most worrying increases in crime types as they both contribute to long term victimisation and vulnerability
- Whilst Islington has seen fluctuations in the different types of offences committed over the previous year, it is clear that offenders also regularly change the nature of their offending
- A relatively small number of households and individuals represent a significant proportion of crime, with some offenders responsible for multiple offences, including some of the gravest offences
- The Government had introduced new legislative changes to tackle anti-social behaviour and were making significant changes to probation services and the way offenders are managed in the community
- Overall crime in Islington has declined consistently each year since 2010 and public confidence has reached an all time high, but violence against women and serious youth violence is worsening and a long term reduction in these crimes will necessitate a change in strategy and partnership commitment
- Key achievements over the past year include truly integrated offender management service, enabling local practitioners to collectively risk assess offenders and develop responses for them. Although domestic violence remains the most widely reported form of violence amongst women and girls the Council and its partners have been working to address a range of serious violent crime types that predominantly, but not exclusively, affect females
- During the past year the Council has led the commissioning of 3 targeted services to address domestic violence and has also improved working with local partners to address gaps in identification and referrals to provide support

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 10 November 2014

- Key challenges were to combat residential burglary, violent crime, all forms of violence including domestic violence, alcohol etc. theft of motor vehicles, sex offences, sexual exploitation and hate crime offending
- In terms of people challenges 5% of offenders (0.5% of the population) account for about 24% of all crime, also offending behaviour in young people has shifted from theft snatch to drug dealing and theft of two wheeled vehicles and they are also involved on cross borough offending
- The EC gang has an impactful presence in Islington and Camden and younger people are being drawn into group offending
- Through the Safer Islington Partnership the Council is also working with the Whittington Hospital where dedicated staff are available in the accident and emergency department to identify and refer domestic violence victims and those at greatest risk are referred to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing for DV victims. There is a new Police Domestic Abuse Proactive team, to tackle repeat victim rates and a Burglary Pilot involving NPT/CID teams
- Between September 2013 and August 2014, youth violence (24%), and serious youth violence (40%), have both increased. This is believed to be due to a reduction in theft of smartphones with a decrease in year on year comparison of 30.6%. Many opportunistic offenders will regularly switch between different types of offending and there will be the need to build upon the Integrated Offender Management model to ensure all partners work collectively to apply the appropriate balance to bring about change in offending and reducing re-offending
- In July 2011 the Government published a new version of the UK's counter terrorism strategy and in April 2013 Islington was re-designated as a Prevent borough by the Home Office and the partnership is committed to contributing towards the implementation of the counter terrorism strategy
- The Council has a significant role in preventing violent extremism emerging in the community and over the longer term and has begun to discuss this with the Police and security services. Over the coming months, the Council will set out how it will deliver a different approach to this. There were a number of residents who had gone to fight abroad
- The CCTV team had been relocated to 222 Upper Street and located with the Public Protection team and there was a streamlined system where Police could get CCTV footage more easily. In addition, new arrangements for Safer Neighbourhood Boards had been introduced and these were now independently chaired. There has also been more effective enforcement by the out of hours service in relation to anti-social behaviour
- Other issues that needed to be considered were funding issues and reducing budgets, technological advances such as the introduction of the I phone 6 and other smart technologies which made theft more difficult, offender management and issues linked to Islamic State and other forms of violent extremism
- Government and Leadership – needs to focus on control strategy strands, drivers and cross cutting themes, assigning ownership for the delivery of priorities, creation of effective plans for each with multi-agency focus and the need to conduct a full strategic assessment in March 2015
- Councillor Convery stated that there would be a clear strategy put in place to deal with youth violence and persistent offenders and to deal with a small number of intergenerational criminal families
- A Member referred to the fact that there was also a need to look at a more sociological perspective in relation to youth crime. The Borough Commander stated that there was an overlap between prevention and offender management
- In relation to funding cuts and the new Safer Neighbourhood Policing model, the Borough Commander stated that he needed to allocate resources in the most effective manner that he felt necessary and that he was not in favour of desktop

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 10 November 2014

investigation and the vast majority of crimes were neighbourhood based. Anti-social behaviour had reduced by 18% and the Police were working with mental health services in this regard

- Discussion took place as to whether crime on the underground and British Rail was included in Islington crime figures and it was stated that this was not but crimes committed on buses were. Members expressed the view that it would be useful if British Transport Police could give evidence to the Committee in the future
- Councillor Convery expressed the view that whilst Neighbourhood Policing had appeared to improve initially following the introduction of the new Policing model, the current hours may need amending so that cover can be provided at the most appropriate times rather than the 22 hour cover currently provided
- The Borough Commander stated that there was no easy solution to resolving the problem of inter-generational crime and that it required a multi-faceted response part of which is to break off the funding routes to organised crime and seizure of assets from crime
- A number of the smash and grab raids that had taken place across shopping centres and the West End were linked to Islington offenders and there had been 60/70 arrests to date
- There was a close working relationship between the Council anti-social behaviour team and the Police and there were 2 Police officers based at the Town Hall that worked with the anti-social behaviour team and also worked with the gangs team and information was shared
- Neighbourhood teams should be aware of significant events in their neighbourhood as there were regular Police briefings and crime type information was also available ward by ward
- In response to a question it was stated that there was cross gang border activity in Hackney with Mildmay ward and that there was cross border work with Hackney Police
- The gang unit and the Youth Offending service identified serious offenders and regular 'weapons sweeps' were undertaken
- Given the large number of Hackney students attending Islington schools intelligence checks were carried out on all students going to Islington schools
- Operation Trident had seized two firearms and a significant amount of drugs in recent raids as a result of intelligence
- Members congratulated the Police on enforcing the 20mph speed limit and carrying out a number of prosecutions the first Police force to do this.
- Reference was made to the fact that the Police and Council achievements on reducing and tackling crime were not publicised widely enough and this should be done in future. Public confidence in the Police had increased from 40% in 2010 to 70% currently
- Islington was also the first borough to take a case of FGM to Court and established a Domestic Abuse and Burglary pilot
- There was a legacy of organised crime in Islington and there was criminalisation of young people and there was a need to stop inter generational crime and the cycle of offending
- The theft of motor vehicles and mopeds were linked with organised crime and criminal activity and significant resources had been put into this area and theft from the person. Some vehicle damage occurring was also gang related
- There had been a small number of arrests in respect of sexual exploitation and the young people involved had been taken into Police protection and there would be a peer to peer interview carried out with Brent.
- There were a lot young people repetitively arrested as a result of group offending however the Police did not want to criminalise young people unnecessarily and there were diversionary approaches being put in place with the youth offending service

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 10 November 2014

and offender management programme. 180 young people had been the subject of this approach and the 30 most prolific offenders would have more supervised report. The Borough Commander stated that he would circulate details of the offender management programme to Members of the Committee

- A Member of the Committee expressed the view that there needed to be more focus on prevention and not always focus on enforcement
- The Borough Commander stated that by 2017/18 the Metropolitan Police had to find savings of £750million in addition to the £600 million already saved and there would be an impact on the service provided in the borough
- The Borough Commander agreed to ensure his Sergeants were aware of the budget situation and would be able to inform the public about the level of savings the Police would need to make by 2017/18
- A Member referred to the fact that there was work carried out in schools but there was only so much that the school could do in school hours and there needed to be a more joined up approach for the time children were not at school. Councillor Convery responded that a 'twin track' approach was being undertaken and a holistic approach needed to be undertaken
- In relation to Domestic Violence there had been an increase across London but as a borough Islington had been pro-active in dealing with violence against women and repeat offences accounted for 11% to 14% of all offences and a woman would typically be subject to 35 assaults before eventually reporting it. A lot of domestic violence was a result of drug and alcohol abuse and as a result of mental health problems
- It was stated that significant resources had been put into the Bunhill/Clerkenwell areas to reduce crime, especially in view of the night time economy and anti-social behaviour problems. The EC gang were also responsible for a number of crimes in the area and they were currently being targeted by Operation Trident
- Councillor Convery stated that there had been a rise in the level of domestic violence reporting of 25%, albeit from a low base, although of the offences committed only 1 in 20 cases actually went to Court and referred to a flow chart indicating the reasons for this

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the SIP report be circulated to Members and that in future consideration be given to a written report from both the Borough Commander and the Executive Member coming to the next Annual Crime and Disorder meeting of the Committee
- (b) That a fuller updated report be submitted to Members of the Committee in relation to the ASB hotline following the meeting
- (c) That the Borough Commander circulate the latest Offender Management strategy to Members of the Committee
- (d) That a representative of British Transport Police be invited to a future meeting of the Committee
- (e) That the Executive Member (Community Safety) be requested to circulate details of the flow chart on Domestic Violence referred to above

34 EXECUTIVE MEMBER COMMUNITY SAFETY - COUNCILLOR CONVERY (Item 8)

This item was considered in conjunction with item 33 above.

35 MONITORING REPORT (Item)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

36 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 9)**
None

The meeting ended at 10.10 p.m.

CHAIR