



CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE AGENDA

7.30 pm

**Tuesday
16 July 2013**

**Town Hall, Main Road,
Romford**

Members 9: Quorum 3

COUNCILLORS:

Osman Dervish (Chairman)
John Wood (Vice-Chair)
Becky Bennett
Denis Breading
David Durant

Roger Evans
Georgina Galpin
Frederick Osborne
Linda Van den Hende

**For information about the meeting please contact:
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What is Overview & Scrutiny?

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

They have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers;
2. Driving improvement in public services;
3. Holding key local partners to account; and
4. Enabling the voice and concerns of the public.

The Crime and Disorder Committee considers issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners, particularly the Responsible Authorities, i.e. Metropolitan Police, Metropolitan Police Authority, Fire and Rescue Authorities, and Primary Care Trusts, to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations.

Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups typically consist of between 3-6 Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research and site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Committee that created it and it will often suggest recommendations to the executive.

Terms of Reference

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are in exercise of the functions conferred by the Police and Justice Act 2006, Section 19-22 and Schedules 8 & 9.

AGENDA ITEMS

1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) – receive.

3 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Members are invited to disclose any pecuniary interest in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting.

Members may still disclose any pecuniary interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as correct the minutes of the meetings held on 21 May 2013 and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5 TRANSFORMING REHABILITATION

To receive a presentation from Lucy Satchell-Day, London Probation Trust.

6 REVIEW OF NATIONAL POLICY - ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (Pages 7 - 14)

Report attached.

7 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (Pages 15 - 22)

To consider the revised report prior to submission to Cabinet.

Report attached.

8 COMMUNITY PAYBACK SCHEME

To receive an oral report.

9 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other item in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specific in the minutes that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

**Andrew Beesley
Committee Administration
Manager**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE
Committee Room 2 - Town Hall
21 May 2013 (7.30 - 8.25 pm)**

Present:

Councillors Osman Dervish (Chairman), John Wood (Vice-Chair), Becky Bennett, Denis Breading, David Durant, Roger Evans, Georgina Galpin, Linda Van den Hende and Frederick Thompson (In place of Frederick Osborne)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Frederick Osborne

33 MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 April, 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

34 BURGLARY

Further to minute 27, 'Report from Police on Burglary', the Borough Commander advised the Committee that since the last meeting he had met with his colleagues in the North East cluster to discuss the issue of cross-borough burglaries. He re-affirmed that of those arrested in the borough 54% were from Havering.

The Master class on burglary had been held and he had taken the opportunity to acquaint himself with his local cohort. As a result of this, in co-operation with Barking and Dagenham a local burglar who operated in both boroughs had been identified and arrested.

The report was noted.

35 WORK PLAN 2013/14

The Committee noted that there were 5 meetings of the Committee scheduled over the next 12 months. The Committee had considered what areas of work they would like to review over the period and agreed the following provisional programme. They accepted that it might be necessary to amend the plan if any issues require their attention.

The Committee **agreed** the following Plan for 2013/14.

Meeting 1 (16 July, 2013)	Meeting 2 (17 October, 2013)	Meeting 3 (21 November, 2013)	Meeting 4 (4 February, 2013)	Meeting 5 (10 April, 2014)
Report from CCG re Mental Health issues in prisoners and ex-offenders	Update report on MOPAC funded projects	Burglary	Update report on MOPAC funded projects	Annual report
Review of National Policy changes on Anti-Social Behaviour	Reducing Reoffending – presentation from London Probation Trust	Review of locality groups model	Review of Youth Offending Services	Work with Public Health
Draft Alcohol and Drugs Strategy	Review of draft Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime policy	Review of progress on the Troubled Families Project	Safer Neighbourhood Boards	Review of services for the victims of Domestic Violence
Transforming Rehabilitation – Government response to the consultation				

At the next meeting the Committee would give consideration to areas of work which it might wish to consider for review by a Topic Group.

During discussion on the work plan the Borough Commander was asked about the on-going national debate about the naming/non-naming of suspects. The Borough Commander advised the Committee of the position within the Metropolitan Police Service.

36 ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

A draft of the Committee's Annual Report had been circulated for approval. The report covered the activities of the Committee during the period May 2012 to May 2013.

The Committee indicated their **approval** for the report, but asked that it be brought further up to date to include the response of the Lead Members to the recommendations of the Domestic Violence Topic Group, the outcome

of the applications for funding from MOPAC and a paragraph relating to the seminar attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman earlier this year.

37 HAVERING COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN -REPORT ON MOPAC FUNDING 2013/14

Officers advised the Committee of the outcome of the applications for funding submitted to MOPAC under the auspices of the Crime Prevention Fund.

In 2012/13 MOPAC allocated a number of funding streams inherited from the Home Office. These were:

- Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) - £12.8 million (part of which was provided directly to the Metropolitan Police to undertake compulsory drug testing);
- Community Safety Fund - £5.3 million;
- Youth Prevention - £2.2 million; and
- CAGGK (communities against guns, gangs and knives) - £1 million.

After March 2013 these funding streams ceased to exist, and in their stead the Home Office allocated un-ring fenced 'Community Safety Fund' monies to each Police and Crime Commissioner. MOPAC had decided to combine this with other funding streams (the Police Property Act Fund and Partnership Fund), into the London Crime Prevention Fund.

The key principles for the new fund were:

- A first step to drawing together disparate national and regional funding programmes to produce one single pot that Local Authorities could access through a relatively light touch 'challenge fund' mechanism.
- MOPAC was committed to funding activity that was able to demonstrate impact and was, therefore, encouraging outcome-based commissioning to generate a strong evidence base.
- Funding decisions for each Local Authority would be determined by both the potential impact (i.e. likelihood of making a difference on the ground) of their proposals and local demand (levels of crime).
- Boroughs were in the best position to commission and deliver local interventions that would achieve the right outcomes, therefore, individual commissioning decisions would be taken at as local a level as possible. The assumption was that boroughs could deliver better outcomes given sufficient freedom, flexibility and resource.
- MOPAC must deliver value for money and would, therefore, ensure any funding was used to complement existing spend. MOPAC was looking to pay for outcomes. Local Authorities should look to develop Payment by Results (PbR) arrangements for any services that were commissioned. The precise nature of the PbR arrangement was for Local Authorities to determine.
- Providing boroughs the time and assurance to deliver meaningful results through opportunity for longer term funding (up to four years). This

longer term funding commitment could offer a useful foundation for tackling complex and ingrained crime and offending problems.

- Expectation of partnership (and ideally matched) funding from boroughs to ensure greater impact.
- MOPAC was committed to improving the evidence base for what works in London. Local Authorities would, therefore, be required to show that they were engaging with Project Oracle for any youth programmes.
- The funding process should be simple and as non-bureaucratic as possible. But the funding should ensure there was clear accountability in terms of spend and outcomes.

Local authorities had been able to bid for monies under the categories of drugs and alcohol, gangs, violence against women and girls, reducing re-offending and local priority. The Havering Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) had submitted fifteen proposals under the following priority areas.

- Alcohol and Drugs
 - Proposal 1 – Street Triage
 - Proposal 2 – Project Weekend
 - Proposal 3- Substance Abuse Education
 - Proposal 4 – Drugs and Alcohol Service Provision
 - Proposal 5 – Caught Out Kept Out
 - Proposal 6 – Substance Misuse and Young People
- Gangs
 - Proposal 7 – Havering Gangs Prevention
 - Proposal 8 – Youth Crime Prevention
- VAWG
 - Proposal 9 – Domestic Abuse Perpetrators
 - Proposal 10- Improving Support for Domestic Abuse
 - Proposal 11- Domestic Abuse, Children and Young People
- Reducing Re-offending
 - Proposal 12- Working with Male Offenders
 - Proposal 13- Working with Female Offenders
 - Proposal 14 – Rent Deposit Scheme
- Other - Addressing Serious Acquisitive Crime
 - Proposal 15 – Localities Based Approach to Crime Prevention

MOPAC had advised the HCSP in April that the following bids had been successful:

1. Street Triage - £30,000
2. Substance Misuse and Young People - £40,000
3. Domestic Abuse Perpetrators - £20,000
4. Improving Support for Domestic Abuse - £35,000
5. Rent Deposit Scheme - £32,400
6. Drugs and Alcohol Service Provision - £56,000

The amount of funding awarded was £213,400. Funding for these bids would be subject to conditions, such as outcomes being more specific and measurable (for example). Officers were still in discussion with MOPAC around these.

In addition to the funding received by the HCSP Barking and Dagenham had received £120,000 for work with gangs and as we work together on Youth Offending issues the Council would benefit from this funding.

The problem for the HCSP was that in previous years it had a small amount of funds available to tackle emerging trends, this was no longer available. The partnership needed to be smarter and they would be looking for sponsorship from local businesses to run specific projects.

The Committee **noted** the report and asked for further information on the matched funding which was being made available.

Chairman

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CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE

16 July 2013

Subject Heading:

REVIEW OF NATIONAL POLICY CHANGES
ON ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Report Author and contact details:

David Garment
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Policy context:

Anti-Social Behaviour

SUMMARY

This report details proposed changes to Anti-Social Behaviour Legislation as proposed in Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill 2013-14.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report.

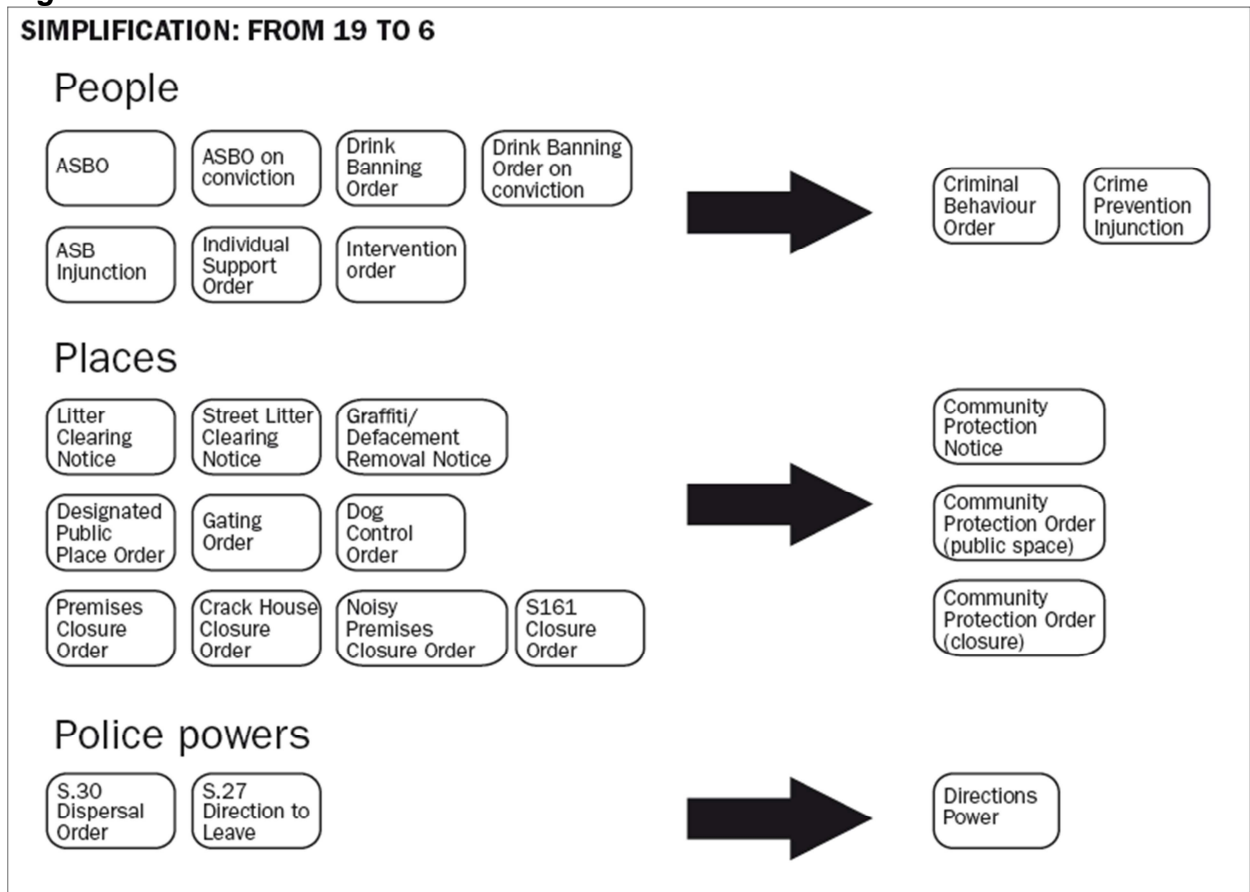
REPORT DETAIL

The Queens Speech outlined the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill 2013-14. The bill details proposed changes to Anti-Social Behaviour Legislation with a focus on the needs of the victim, enabling communities to play a bigger role in tackling ASB and simplifying and speeding up the process for dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour.

The bill looks to reduce the current powers used to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour, such as Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO), Crack House Closures and Section 30 Dispersal into 6 Orders.

Figure 1 breaks down existing powers and new powers that will replace them.

Figure 1:



Source: *Putting Victims First: More Effective Responses to Anti-Social Behaviour* (Home Office May 2012)

Below is a brief summary of the proposed new powers:

1. Injunctions to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance:

- Civil injunction available in the County Court for adults and the Youth Court for 10 to 17 year olds. (If under the age of 18 must seek the views of Youth Offending Team).
- Range of agencies including the police, local authority (including housing) and social landlords will be able to make applications.
- Requires proof 'on the balance of probabilities' rather than 'beyond reasonable doubt'.
- Can prohibit activity and require positive activity.
- Power of arrest can be attached to an injunction in cases of violence (use/threats) or there is a significant risk of harm to others.
- Breach of injunction would not be a criminal offence but persistent behaviour could result in imprisonment (civil contempt of court).

2. Criminal Behaviour Orders:

- Courts can grant these orders on application by the prosecution where an offender has been convicted or been given a conditional discharge.
- Only to be granted where the offender has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to people outside their household and making the order will prevent them doing it again.
- Can prohibit activity and require positive activity.
- Breach of order will be a criminal offence.

3. Community Protection Notice

- Designed to deal with particular, on-going instances of environmental anti-social behaviour. (Behaviour is detrimental to the local community, is unreasonable and is having a persistent effect).
- They can be used against individuals, businesses or organisations, and can be issued by the police, council officers or staff of social housing providers.
- Impose a requirement to stop or start specified activity to achieve specified results.
- Power to issue will be available to police officers, police community support officers, authorised persons within the local authority and staff of registered social landlords (if designated by the relevant local authority).

4. Public Space Protection Orders

- Designed to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a particular area and apply to everyone.
- Impose a requirement to stop behaviour or carry out a specified activity.
- Only the Local Authority can make these orders: if activities in a public place have had or are likely to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of local people and are likely to be of a persistent or continuing nature, unreasonable and justifies the restrictions of the notice.
- Local Authority must consult the police and appropriate community representatives before issuing these orders.
- Breach of the order would be a criminal offence, subject to a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

5. Closure of Premises Associated with Nuisance and Disorder

- A closure notice prohibits access to the premises for a specified period up to a maximum of 48 hours. A closure order prohibits access to premises for a maximum of 3 months.
- Police or Local Authority can issues a closure notice if it believes that the use of a particular premises has resulted or is likely to result in nuisance to the public, or there is or likely to be such nuisance nearby.
- Appropriate bodies or individuals must be consulted. (Including owner/landlord/licensee and anyone who appears to be residing in premises).
- Police or Local Authority must then apply for closure order which must not be heard any later than 48 hours of service of the notice. (Unless the notice is cancelled within the 48 hours period).

6. Dispersal Powers

- These will allow police officer/PCSO to direct people to leave a public place and not return for a specified time where they suspect their presence or the behaviour of the person will result in people being harassed, alarmed or distressed, or will lead to crime and disorder.
- There would be no advance designation or consultation but an officer of at least Inspector level must approve the use of the power in a particular area.
- The direction would be given in writing, unless not reasonably practicable.
- Officers would be able to confiscate any item that is likely to be used in the behaviour.
- If a person is under the age of 16 officer can take them home or to a place of safety.

The bill also makes provision for the following:

Recovery of Possession of Dwelling Houses: Anti-Social Behaviour Grounds

The bill looks to amend possession proceedings and where Anti-Social Behaviour has been proved against a tenant the court will have to evict that tenant.

Landlords can seek to evict tenants involved in anti-social behaviour or criminal activity on the basis that if it proves the involvement of the tenant in this behaviour the courts will have to order the eviction of the tenant. (Currently left at the courts discretion).

The bill also looks to give more accountability around complaints and how they are being addressed (Community Trigger) and a say to victims of Anti-Social Behaviour in the punishment of offenders (Community Remedy).

Community Trigger

This will allow a member of the public to request a review of an ASB case where a person makes 3 separate complaints in a 6 month period or 5 individuals have complained in a 6 month period and they consider no action has been taken. (As set by London Borough of Richmond in recent pilot).The mechanism for carrying out a case review will be set locally. There is a requirement to decide and publish the thresholds, criteria, process and reporting mechanism for the community trigger in the area.

Community Remedy

The community remedy will give victims of low-level crime and anti-social behaviour a say in the punishment of offenders out of court.

There are four key elements:

- a) Police and Crime Commissioners will be required to consult the public on a range of sanctions that can be used to deal with low level crime and anti-social behaviour outside of the court system ensuring the final menu is proportionate.
- b) Police Officers will work from the resulting menu of sanctions when using existing types of out of court disposal (informal community resolutions and conditional cautions).
- c) Victim must be consulted on the sanction to be offered to the offender and given the option to choose from menu.

d) Police Officer will give the offender the choice to accept the sanction chosen by the victim or potentially face more formal action.
The menu may include mediation, acceptable behaviour contract and unpaid work.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: This report concerns proposed changes to ASB legislation. The bill is currently being discussed in Parliament with no date as to when it will come into effect.

The full financial implications of the Council's potential statutory responsibilities are not yet clear but could range from legal costs applying for injunctions through to staff time spent dealing with people appealing against orders or notices.

There will also be costs associated with the Community Trigger as there will be a requirement to publicise the process as well as potential costs around the publicising of an area that has been granted a Community Protection Order (Public Space).

At this stage officers are unsure as to the cost implications of imposing positive conditions such as attending drug treatment. This may be undertaken by existing services or there could be an additional cost.

Currently the post of ASB caseworker in Community Safety is funded through reward grant monies which is due to end in March 2014. Failure to secure funding for this post will impact on the Councils ability to respond to ASB cases for private tenants.

In summary then, there are cost pressures. Current intelligence is that Councils will not receive additional central government funding to meet the cost of these pressures (confirm or otherwise?). Such additional costs will need to be contained within the spending service.

Legal implications and risks: New powers will mean changes in legal process and subject to challenges which will result in stated cases etc. There will be a risk that people may challenge orders, notices and public space orders which may result in lengthy court cases. The bill will repeal some existing legislation, e.g. Litter Notices, that the Council currently uses, and the proposed new procedure is lengthier. This will impact on the ability of the Council to deal with littering.

Human Resources implications and risks: Consideration will need to be made by service areas including, Community Safety (Community Trigger), Licensing (Community Protection Order Closure), Street Care (Community Protection Notices) and Housing (Recovery of Possession of Dwelling Houses on Anti-Social Behaviour Grounds) Other powers will be available to the Local Authority such as Injunctions to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance and Community Protection Order

(Public Space) which will have an impact on the Local Authority including Community Safety as there will be a requirement to consult between agencies when using certain powers.

Equalities implications and risks: The report outlines key changes to Anti-Social Behaviour Legislation as proposed in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill 2013-14 (The Bill). It is envisaged that several provisions of the Bill will have positive impact on victims of ASB, crime and forced marriage cases, will potentially improve crime prevention and public protection, as follows:

- a) Simplifying and improving anti-social behaviour powers that will reduce bureaucracy and will enable professionals to focus on the needs of victims;
- b) Empowering the public to hold agencies to account, and providing respite to victims, particularly the victims of persistent anti-social behaviour who will have a say in the way their complaints are dealt with;
- c) Introducing new approaches to crime prevention and community remedy where police officers will be required to consult victims and the community on the menu of sanctions for those committing low-level crime and ASB;
- d) Enabling forced marriage cases to be dealt with more effectively;
- e) Further reform the policing institutions to support professional standards, integrity and efficiency.

Once the bill is passed into law it would need to be applied by appropriate authorities adhering to P.L.A.N (Proportionate/Legal/Appropriate/Necessary).

As there are a number of caveats identified with regards to the costs and benefits of the proposed changes, the equalities implications for people with protected characteristics from the implementation of certain provisions cannot be fully assessed at this point of time. For example, the introduction of the absolute ground of possession will have a positive impact on and bring faster relief to victims and witnesses will benefit landlords and will reduce burden on courts. However, if the evicted tenant presents to the local authority as homeless and due to their circumstances and protected characteristics is found to be in a priority need, the local authority has a duty to provide them with temporary accommodation and if required, signpost the person to relevant social or other services. It remains to be seen if the total number of evictions will increase as a result of the proposed changes and if yes, the impact on Council services needs to be fully assessed.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Sources of Information:

1. Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill 2013-14
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/antisocialbehaviourcrimeandpolicingbill.html>
2. Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill (Website) Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill
 - Overview of Anti-Social Behaviour Factsheet
 - Replacing the ASBO Factsheet
 - Environmental Anti-Social Behaviour Factsheet
 - Recovery of Possession of Dwelling Houses on Anti-Social Behaviour Grounds Factsheet
 - Community Empowerment Factsheet<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/anti-social-behaviour-crime-and-police-bill#publications>
3. Putting Victims First: More Effective Responses to Anti-Social Behaviour (May 2012)
<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm83/8367/8367.asp>
4. LGA Briefing - Draft Anti-Social Behaviour Bill (December 2012)
http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/briefings-and-responses/-/journal_content/56/10171/3820552/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE
5. The Anti-Social Behaviour Bill, A London Councils Member Briefing (February 2013)

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Under the Police and Justice Act 2006, s. 19, Cabinet is required to consider and respond to a report of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee within two months of its agreement by that Committee. In this case, Cabinet is required to do this by (.../...) at the latest. Cabinet is also required to give reasons for its decisions in relating to the report, particularly in instances where it decides not to adopt one or more of the recommendations contained within the report.

**REPORT OF THE
CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE:
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TOPIC GROUP**

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting on 8 May 2012, the Crime & Disorder Committee agreed to establish a topic group to
- review the level of services delivered locally in respect of the effects of Domestic Violence on Young People and Children both as victims, witnesses and/or perpetrators;
 - look at what steps the Community Safety Partnership were taking to tackle the problem in the future;
 - identify good practice in other boroughs; and
 - make recommendations to the administration on areas which could be improved, if appropriate.
- 1.2 All members of the Committee indicated a desire to serve on the Topic Group. These were: Councillors Osman Dervish (Chairman); John Wood (Vice-Chairman); Becky Bennett; Denis Breading; David Durant; Roger Evans; Georgina Galpin; Frederick Osborne and Linda Van den Hende.
- 1.3 The topic group met on four occasions including two visits. The first visit was to the Annual General Meeting of Havering Women's Aid, the second to look at the work of the Partnership Triage in Hackney.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

2.1 The Topic Group decided to look at:

- how effectively services were co-ordinated to meet the needs of children and vulnerable adults who were living with Domestic Violence;
- what specific interventions were available;
- the impact of current policies and procedures including reporting and detection of Domestic Violence; and
- whether anything could be learnt from other borough's approaches to Domestic Violence.

2.2 This report sets out the findings of the topic group review.

3.0 How effectively services were co-ordinated to meet the needs of children and vulnerable adults who were living with Domestic Violence.

Housing Services

3.1 The victims of Domestic Violence are dealt with by Housing under the statutory Homelessness provisions. In 2011/12, 38 households were accepted as homeless because of violent relationship breakdown.

3.2 Individual Domestic Violence cases are dealt with in different ways, depending on whether victims own their own property, live in private rented accommodation or live in social housing.

3.3 If a person does not live in social housing and fears they could become the victim of Domestic Violence they can approach the Homelessness and Housing Advice Service. If staff feel there is a risk of violence the potential victim will be removed to a place of safety, which would normally be a place in a refuge. Once a place of safety has been found the victim has a choice as to whether to continue with the application to the Council or make an application to another authority.

3.4 The Council can only secure accommodation within the borough, therefore, an approach to another authority was sometimes in the best interests of an applicant in cases where there was a risk of further violence if resident in the borough.

3.5 If that local authority is satisfied that an applicant is eligible, homeless and in priority need they will then look to see if the applicant has a local connection with them. A local connection could be established by residence in the borough, immediate family residing in the borough or by employment in the borough, for example.

Cabinet, 2013

- 3.6 If the local authority were satisfied that an applicant was eligible, homeless and has a local connection they would be offered on-going accommodation. This would ordinarily be a private sector property leased by that Council.
- 3.7 The topic group found that where the person fleeing violence is a secure tenant of Havering Council, the authority will always attempt to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by losing their tenancy. This would normally be done by arranging a management transfer to another property as long as that is a safe option for the tenant.
- 3.8 Under the New Allocations Scheme which came into effect in April 2013 the victim would not need to participate in the Choice Based Lettings Scheme and instead the case would be deemed an emergency requiring an assisted, direct offer of accommodation.

School Admissions

- 3.9 The topic group also looked at the issues of re-housing domestic violence victims and access to school places, which was a key issue for many victims. When a woman and child(ren) were placed in a Woman's Refuge in Havering they sometimes needed to apply for a place at a school using the Local Authority's In-Year Common Application Form. Members found that staff at the Refuges were familiar with this process and were able to provide good assistance to mothers in going through this process.
- 3.10 If a place was available at the requested school this was granted. However, if a primary school place was required it could well be that no place was available within a reasonable travelling distance. In those circumstances the request would be considered by the Fair Access Panel who would take into account exceptional social circumstances. Given the shortage of places at reception age and in the primary sector generally this was likely to be a common occurrence.

Conclusion

- 3.11 The topic group was satisfied that the co-ordination of Council services to meet the needs of Domestic Violence victims was working well. Members questioned whether anything further could be done to improve the linkages between Housing Services and School Admissions, in terms of Housing Services checking if suitable school places were available in reasonable proximity to accommodation being offered to victims of Domestic Violence.

4.0 What specific interventions were available?

Havering Women's Aid

- 4.1 Havering Women's Aid provide refuges for the victims of Domestic Violence nationally, and they run two refuges, one in Romford and the other in Hornchurch.
- 4.2 The Council currently has commissioning arrangements in place with Havering Women's Aid, this includes almost £300k from Social Care and Learning to support both Domestic Violence schemes and provide a floating support service. In addition Community Safety provides a further £15k, including £4k for a Domestic Violence Support Group and £11k for the Domestic Violence advocacy project. The Community Safety team also apply for additional funding throughout the year to provide Domestic Violence awareness raising and other support services.

Family Mosaic

- 4.3 Family Mosaic are a Housing Association who provide care and support to families in need. They provide a floating support system to provide support where it was needed. They work closely with, and are commissioned by, the Council.
- 4.4 A key area of support was the provision of money for a rent guarantee scheme to help victims of domestic violence find suitable accommodation.
- 4.5 Family Mosaic help find out-of-borough accommodation and have a good relationship with Housing Benefits. They worked closely with the Police, and both Adult and Children's services. The £40,000 they have available for the rent deposit scheme helped up to 100 families a year. They received around 20 referrals a week.

5.0 The Impact of current policies and procedures including reporting and detection of Domestic Violence.

Troubled Families

- 5.1 The Council had begun, in May 2011, to identify and work with high need, high contact families, across all agencies. Approximately 350 individuals had been identified at risk from Domestic Violence (DV).
- 5.2 The Troubled Families Team had adopted the following approach when dealing with DV:

- Lead professionals allocated to DV families;
- A team approach to working with the family;
- Specialist DV support and capacity in front line teams;
- Introduced SMART Plans and Common Assessment Framework
- Young male Adolescent Perpetrators are put in Anger Management courses, although the topic group noted that places are limited.

6.0 Lessons to be learnt from elsewhere.

Partnership Triage

- 6.1 The Chairman and officers visited Hackney on the 6th March to look at how their Partnership Triage Scheme worked and see if there were any lessons Havering could learn from this model. The model had been introduced 2 years ago because there had been a lack of coordinated response to Police Merlin referral reports in Hackney.
- 6.2 During the past year, the Partnership Triage's role had been broadened to take more than police referrals. Referrals were now accepted from schools, Health Visitors, School Nurses, Children's Centres and Parenting Service. Partnership Triage dealt with more than just Domestic Violence, it also worked with missing children and Children Missing Education. Much of the work undertaken by the Partnership Triage was similar to the MASH arrangements in Havering.
- 6.3 In a typical month approximately 4% of case referrals to partnership Triage were Domestic Violence cases and a further 4% Domestic Dispute. Members noted that approximately 30% of cases referred related to male/parents as victims of domestic violence.
- 6.4 Partnership Triage had developed a strong relationship with Health, and a representative from Health worked in Triage. They also had a good working relationship with Homerton Hospital (maternity unit) and school nurses. Links with housing services were not working as well in Hackney as they do in Havering.

Conclusion

- 6.5 Although the Partnership Triage approach was innovative, given the Council's work on the Multi Agency Sharing Hub, there did not appear to be much for the Council to learn from this approach and indeed in terms of the breadth of Havering's MASH, we are leading the way in this area. Members noted however that some innovative work had taken place in Hackney with young people which could be replicated elsewhere. In Havering, we already commission engagement work with young people in schools to help increase awareness of domestic violence.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To recommend the Lead Member with responsibility for Housing and Public Protection to review, possibly in 12-18 months time, how the new Allocations Scheme is supporting victims of Domestic Violence;**
- 7.2 To recommend the Lead Members for Housing and Public Protection and Children and Learning to ensure that wherever possible school placements are taken into account before an alternative housing offer is made**

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the course of its review, the topic group met and held discussions with the following people:

Vicki Nicholson – Havering Women’s Aid
Sarah Thomas – Troubled Families
Neil Keylock – Manager, Additional Education Needs Service
Alexander Szantal – Housing Options Manager
Jonathan Geall – Housing and Public Protection
James and Kelly – Family Mosaic
Jeanne and Katherine – Hackney Partnership Triage

The following comments are submitted by members of staff:

Financial implications and risks:

The recommendations have no specific financial implications.

The level of services provided in the borough impact services across a range of Council services, as highlighted in the report. Resource implications are managed from within existing budgets.

Legal implications and risks:

No implications or risks identified

Human Resources implications and risks:

No implications or risks identified

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