

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE  
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford  
16 February 2012 (7.30 pm)**

**Present:**

Councillors Ted Eden (Chairman), David Durant, Roger Evans, Frederick Osborne, Linda Van den Hende, Linda Hawthorn (Vice-Chair, in the Chair) (In place of John Wood), Sandra Binion (In place of Georgina Galpin), Wendy Brice-Thompson (In place of Becky Bennett) and Keith Darvill (In place of Denis Breading)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Wood, Councillor Rebecca Bennett, Councillor Denis Breading and Councillor Georgina Galpin

**50 MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**51 LONDON PROBATION TRUST**

The Assistant Chief Officer - Barking, Dagenham & Havering LDU, London Probation Trust attended the meeting and delivered a presentation on the work of the Probation Trust in Havering. The focus of the Trust was to reduce re-offending. There were 780 offenders living in Havering. Of these 54% were community orders or suspended sentence orders,

The Committee were informed that there were 142 persons on licence, having previously been in prison. If they broke the terms of the licence they would be sent back to prison. 250 offenders were currently incarcerated, the majority in Pentonville. Offenders were regularly moved from prison to prison so Probation Officers had to travel a lot.

The Probation Trust work first with the offender then with the family. There was an Offender supervisor in prison who worked closely with the Probation Officer. The Probation Trust work with offenders who were sentenced to a 12 month custodial sentence or longer. No one worked with offenders who received a shorter custodial sentence.

The case load was mainly male (94%) with 60% being white British. This compared with 90% white British in 2000. There were 78 foreign national offenders in Havering.

The Probation Officer recommends the sentence to court trying to balance punishment with rehabilitation. Sentencing was no longer carried out at Havering, it was now done at Barkingside. The aim of the sentence plan is to reduce the chance of re-offending.

The Officer advised the Committee that 38% of the offenders had drink problems and many were linked to Domestic Violence. £2% related to drugs. Because of these numbers the Probation trust worked closely with the DAAT.

The re-offending rate in Havering was 7% this was lower than the London average, which was 8.4%, and better than Barking and Dagenham.

The average age of offenders were as follows:

28% in the age range 18-24  
24% in the age range 24-28  
25% in the age range 31-40.

The figures across London were similar.

The borough had the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of Domestic Violence across London, although there had been a recent 5% increase. This was however linked to one of the highest arrest rates. However, 70% of the top 100 chaotic families were likely to suffer domestic violence.

The Committee **noted** the report and thanked Carina for her presentation.

## 52 **LONDON FIRE AND EMERGENCY PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Chris Drew, Borough Commander, London Fire Brigade attended the meeting and delivered a presentation on the work of the Fire Brigade in Havering. The Committee were advised that the borough benefits from 4 fire stations in the borough. These were based in Wennington, Hornchurch, Romford and Harold Hill. Harold Hill was the newest purpose built station in London.

In 2010/11 the Fire Brigade dealt with 927 fires, 597 special services and 1,109 false alarms in the borough. Whilst the number of false alarms seemed high this was a lot fewer than in previous years. Chris Drew explained a lot of these were generated by faulty alarms, both fire and carbon monoxide alarms.

The Committee were provided with details of the performance indicators against which the fire brigade would be judged. In Havering they would fail to meet the target for primary fires in dwelling and buildings other than dwellings. They would beat their target on arson.

The Committee were provided with details of particular problems faced by the Fire Brigade. These included:

- Fires in new developments, especially timber framed buildings;
- Fires in abandoned cars in country roads – here the news was good because by working closely with the council once an abandoned car had been identified it was removed quickly;
- Fires in outdoor buildings, such as garden sheds;
- Potential arson in unoccupied buildings refused planning permission;
- Potential Arson in business's affected by recession

On the positive side the Fire Brigade were running a number of initiatives designed to reduce the risk of fire. These included:

- LIFE: Local Intervention Fire Education
- CADETS: Community Cadets
- ATF: LFB Arson Task Force working in Borough
- JFIS: Junior Fire-setters Intervention Scheme
- Schools Teams
- Rural Strategy: Reducing Fires in Open Spaces
- ASB Panel

Members of the Committee had visited the LIFE project and were most impressed with the work done. The good news in 2013 the project would move to Romford whilst the Dagenham Fire Station was renovated.

It was brought to the Committee's attention that people stuck in lifts had been a problem. The Fire Brigades solution to introduce call challenge and if the call was not an emergency they could pass the problem over to the Council. If they were called to the same lift more than three times the organisation responsible for the lift would be charged for the Fire Brigades time. Chris Drew did advise the Committee that Homes in Havering had worked well with the Brigade to reduce the problem in their properties.

Finally the Committee were advised that hoax calls were not a serious problem in Havering.

The Committee noted the report and thanked Chris for his presentation.

## 53 **YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE**

The Committee received a report outlining progress in responding to the issues set out in the Improvement Plan drawn up following the Core Case Inspection of the Youth Offending Team. Following on from previous updates the Committee were informed that a full time Operations Manager had now been appointed for statutory cases. She had looked at the criticism from the Lead Inspector regarding management oversight and has modified how information about management involvement in a case was recorded.

On the downside the existing Preventions Manager had resigned her post in November 2011. In a positive response to this resignation a very experienced locum Operations Manager had been recruited to provide both management input to the Team and increase the available knowledge about statutory work to assist in delivering the Improvement Plan.

Details of the on-going work with practitioners was provided giving the Committee a sense that real change was happening. Individual training needs had been identified and these were being pursued through the Children and Young People's training programme. Further training was planned on safeguarding and risk management utilising external trainers.

At our previous meeting concern was raised that staff were unable to access the Council's networks whilst engaged at Redbridge Court. We were pleased to note that through the work of the IT team this problem had been overcome. The Committee were advised of the effects of moving juvenile court work to Redbridge. The Council now shared the Court with Redbridge, and Barking and Dagenham and this meant we were picking up more of their cases. i.e. Havering Youth team was funded to deal with 90 cases, Redbridge 150 and Barking and Dagenham 200. On Havering day we were expected to deal with Redbridge and Barking and Dagenham cases.

The Committee **noted** the report.

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**Chairman**