MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CRIME & DISORDER SUB- COMMITTEE
Committee Room 3A - Town Hall
18 September 2014 (7.30 - 9.30 pm)

Present:

Councilllors John Wood (Vice-Chair), David Durant (Chairman), John Glanville, Linda Van den Hende and Dilip Patel

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Garry Pain

11 MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

12 YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillor Keith Darvill addressed the Committee on concerns which had been raised with him concerning the way Barking and Dagenham had provided the Youth Offending Service since October 2012.

Councillor Darvill had indicated that he was happy to support the proposal to bring the management of the Youth Offending Service back in house. However, he wished to highlight one particular area of the service which in his opinion had been poorly managed by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. This was the process around the management of Referral Orders.

When the court makes a referral order the young offender is referred to a youth offender panel. The initial panel meeting, which the young offender is required to attend, and which parents or carers may be required to attend, should be held within 20 working days of the order being made.

Youth offender panels must comprise at least two volunteers who are representative of the local community, plus a member of the youth offending team, who should act as an adviser. The community panel members should take the lead in the panel meeting and one of them will chair; the youth offending team panel adviser should provide background information and advice to the community panel members.

Prior to the move of the service to barking and Dagenham there had been a post of Co-ordinator for Referrals. This post had been removed from the establishment and problems began.

On many occasions only one volunteer was appointed to serve on the Panel and support was provided by either an Education specialist or a Social Worker. Since the move to Barking and Dagenham no training had been made available to keep the volunteers up to date and there had been no attempt to recruit new volunteers,

At the Panel hearings, contracts had been written out in hand writing rather than properly prepared and volunteers had raised concern at the location and security of the premises used for the Panel meetings.

After Councillor Darvill had addressed the Committee, the Chairman invited a member of the public to address the meeting. This member of the public was one of the Volunteer members and he confirmed what Councillor Darvill had said. Prior to 2012 the Volunteer panel members had met on a quarterly basis to discuss issues. After 2012 this never happened.

Volunteers were advised that they needed additional training but this was never followed up.

Since the service moved back in house Panel Meetings had been cancelled if two volunteers were not available.

The Chairman advised the Committee that he did not believe it was the role of this committee to look back and investigate what had gone wrong. The Committee should be looking to officers for an assurance that the problems had been identified and steps taken to rectify matters and ensure the problems do not reoccur.

Officers admitted to the Committee that Barking and Dagenham had failed to provide adequate resources to ensure the Referral Order process had worked correctly. Bringing the service back in-house provided the opportunity to rectify these failings and steps were already being taken to address all the issues. The Council had already initiated a recruitment procedure to identify new volunteers. A comprehensive training programme was being introduced for both new and existing volunteers. Support was being provided to the Panels and the volunteers.

The Committee welcomed these initiatives and asked officers to report back in six months' time on how the process was running once everything was in place.

The Committee wished to receive a report on the entirety of the work of the Youth Offending Service so they could see how the referral order process fitted in with its work and receive an assurance that it was adequately resourced to meet the boroughs needs.

13 METROPOLITAN POLICE UPDATE

1. Rotherham

The Borough Commander advised us of the steps being taken locally and London wide to ensure the errors made in Rotherham do not happen here.

We were advised that in Havering we had been one of the first boroughs to introduce the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and more recently had combined both the Adult and Children's MASH's to ensure an even greater integration. In addition we had introduced the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation meetings to look at in particular Young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

The Police had no evidence locally that any one group was targeting another. However, they were aware of a number of young females who were associated with gangs. The Police and partners were working to ensure the young girls did not get sexually exploited.

Another area being targeted by the police was frequently missing persons. i.e. young people who go missing for a period of time and then return home, only to disappear again. Every morning the police met to identify such persons and priority was given to finding them. Part of the police's role was to find out why the missing persons had left.

London wide the Metropolitan Police were contacting all hotels, licensed premises and cab companies asking them to keep an eye open for any pattern which may indicate the sexual exploitation on young people.

The Police regularly briefed the lead member on their activities.

2. Performance

We have noted that the performance against targets was green across the board, with three exceptions. These were:

- Criminal damage – the increase was confined to the north of the Borough;
- Theft from person – one event the We R Festival had accounted for 103 incidents making it virtually impossible to meet the target;
- Violence with Injury – this was up across London and was down to a great extent to the change in definition.

With regard to resources the borough was short 24 Detective Constables but 33 over strength in Police Constables. Public confidence was up by 5% to 63%.

3. Body Cameras

The Borough Commander advised that he has 52 body cameras available to his officers. It was early days in there use and so far officers had found that the use of the cameras tend to calm people down. It was explained to people that the camera evidence was going to be used in evidence. One of the outcomes so far was less complainants against officers.

When an officer interviews a victim they will turn off the camera if the person does not wish to be recorded. Unless required as evidence in a criminal proceeding the recording is stored for 31 days then deleted.

4. Terrorism

Since the Government increased the Terrorism Threat alert no section 60 notices had been issued in Havering. There had been no direction to increase the frequency of Stop and Search. Officers were being asked to be more vigilant.

The Committee **noted** the Borough Commanders' report.

14 REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD.

Trevor Meers, Chairman of the Havering Safer Neighbourhood Board attended the meeting to give a progress report on the work of the Board since it's' creation. The Board had made significant progress and there had been two meetings of the Board since April. Councillor Linda Van den Hende had been elected Vice-Chairman.

TM advised that a priority for the Board was to re-invigorate the work of the Ward panels. The need is to get local people involved, local people determining local priorities.

Havering was the first borough to receive approval for their funding from MOPAC.

The Safer Neighbourhood Board would be challenging both the Metropolitan Police and MOPAC.

The decision to hold their meetings in private had been taken because they would be asking both the police and MOPAC awkward questions. Additionally they did not have the funds to hold all their meetings in public. They believed that real public engagement should happen at ward level. However, the Safer Neighbourhood Board had agreed to review their decision after the first year.

Finally we were advised that the Safer Neighbourhood Board was answerable to MOPAC.

We thanked Trevor Meers for his presentation.

15 **PROPOSED TOPIC GROUP: ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN CRIME PREVENTION**

We have asked officers to prepare a scoping report and arrange the first meeting of the proposed Topic Group before our next meeting.

16 **COMMUNITY PAYBACK**

Officers provided details of the work of the SERCO Community Payback Team in Havering. In April 2,307 hours had been delivered and in May 1,535 hours.

The Community Payback Team were working with StreetCare, Havering Homes and a number of schools. A number of new projects had been identified.

We have **noted** the report.

17 **ANNUAL OMBUDSMAN LETTER.**

We were advised that the Annual Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) had been received in July. This provided a breakdown of complaints referred to the LGO throughout the year.

The letter had been referred to each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to see if there were any areas which required scrutiny.

Having ascertained that the work of the Community Safety Partnership had not been the subject of any complaints to the LGO we have **noted** the report.

18 **TOWN CENTRE VISITS.**

We have **instructed** officers to make the necessary arrangements for members of this Committee and the Licencing Committee to visit both Romford and Hornchurch Town Centre to see how the various partners were responding to the issues raised by the night time economy.

_____

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank