



## Partnership and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Thursday 6 December 2012 at 7.30 pm**  
Committee Room 4, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane,  
Wembley, HA9 9HD

### Membership:

#### Members

Councillors:

Van Kalwala (Chair)  
Clues (Vice-Chair)  
Green  
Harrison  
Naheerathan  
HB Patel  
RS Patel  
Krupa Sheth

#### first alternates

Councillors:

Ogunro  
Matthews  
Lorber  
Oladapo  
Al-Ebadi  
Colwill  
Chohan  
Aden

#### second alternates

Councillors:

Daly  
Hopkins  
Leaman  
Ketan Sheth  
Pavey  
Kansagra  
S Choudhary  
Denselow

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020 8937 1354, [joe.kwateng@brent.gov.uk](mailto:joe.kwateng@brent.gov.uk)

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**The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting**

# Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

Item	Page
<b>1 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests</b>	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant financial or other interest in the items on the agenda.	
<b>2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 October 2012</b>	1 - 6
The minutes are attached.	
<b>3 Matters arising</b>	
<b>4 Deputations</b>	
<b>5 Employment programme update</b>	7 - 14
This report provides an update on the current labour market position in Brent and sets out the challenges faced by the Council in relation to rising unemployment and deprivation that are likely to worsen with the introduction of welfare reforms. The report highlights a number of opportunities to tackle the growing problem not least through the establishment of a new "Employment and Enterprise" team within the Regeneration and Major Projects department. An outline of the initial work to be undertaken by this team is also detailed within the report.	
<b>6 Domestic violence (attached)</b>	15 - 22
This report provides members with an update on the latest trend data in relation to Domestic Violence, exploring the outcomes and findings of recent Domestic Violence Homicide reviews. Detail of the new legislation that underpins the Domestic Violence Homicide Review process is also be provided.	
<b>7 London Fire Brigade in Brent</b>	
The committee will receive a presentation from the Borough Commander of London Fire Brigade Brent. The presentation will provide an overview of the service in Brent and the impact of the current economic conditions.	

## 8 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Partnership and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on 7 February 2013 at 7:30pm.

## 9 Any other urgent business

Notice of items raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.



- Please remember to **SWITCH OFF** your mobile phone during the meeting.
- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.
  - Toilets are available on the second floor.
  - Catering facilities can be found on the first floor near the Paul Daisley Hall.
  - A public telephone is located in the foyer on the ground floor, opposite the Porters' Lodge

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## MINUTES OF THE PARTNERSHIP AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 17 October 2012 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Van Kalwala (Chair), Councillor and Councillors Green, Harrison, HB Patel and Krupa Sheth

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Clues and RS Patel

### 1. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

Councillor Green declared a disclosable pecuniary interest that he was employed by Lloyds TSB Bank.

### 2. **Deputations**

None.

### 3. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25/07/2012**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 25 July 2012 were approved as a true and accurate record.

### 4. **Matters arising**

#### ***Crime Updates***

Kisi Smith-Charlemagne, Performance Officer updated members that she would circulate the supplementary report on crime updates to the next meeting in December 2012.

### 5. **Brent Data - The multi-agency data hub with the latest from the census**

Cathy Tyson, Assistant Director of Policy, Strategy, Partnerships and Improvement gave a slide presentation to the Committee. She pointed out that Brent's population had been significantly underestimated as the statistics relied heavily on birth and death rates with little weight being given to inward migration. She updated members that the position had now been rectified in the 2011 census and would be reflected in the figures to be released in future.

In reference to the borough's demographics, Cathy Tyson informed members that the multiple factors of high birth rates, large family sizes and the aging pattern of the population would put pressure on service delivery including preventative health

services, waste disposal, housing, school places and traffic. It was noted that although Brent was still an attractive residential location in London, unemployment which had peaked in the last 18 months was higher than the London and national average. Members were advised that the higher unemployment figures resulted from the fact that most of the borough's employees worked in small companies and self-employed firms which had been squeezed out in the current economic climate through new technology and increased efficiency. Furthermore, it was noted that 30% of the borough's residents received wage levels below the London Living Wage (LLW) level and that the borough was within the top five of boroughs which would be worst affected by the impact of universal credit.

In respect of housing demand, members were advised that currently there 110,300 households in Brent with at least one resident (2011 census) which was projected to grow by at least 6,000 by 2023. With about 25% of all accommodation in private rented sector, decline in social rented sector from 31% to 17%, higher rent increases at 2.9% per year and an average semi-detached house costing about £375,000, the Council had planned to deliver about 1,171 new affordable homes by 2014

The Assistant Director also informed members that a further challenge was that of education and the provision of school places. She drew attention to the slides that showed primary school and Greater London Authority (GLA) projections 2016/17 to highlight the challenge. She continued that the Council had successfully lobbied for funding to address the shortfall in school places in primary schools and had developed a programme to meet projected demand for school places. She emphasised that the real problem would arise when those children reached secondary school levels and when the council would need to identify sites for two secondary schools to meet projected demand.

On health issues, members learnt that the prevalence of obese children in the reception year and year 6 had taken on a rising trend since 2009/10. In addition, the figures for the following group of persons projected to 2030 were alarming: moderate or serious physical disability for people aged 18-64; the population of people aged 65 and over; those over 75 who were predicted to live alone; those predicted to have diabetes, dementia and long standing illness caused by heart attacks. The grim picture on health issues was likely to impact on adult social care in the borough.

RESOLVED:

that the progress report on Brent multi-agency data hub be noted.

## **6. CVS Brent - Progress Report**

Tessa Awe, Chief Executive of 'CVS Brent' presented a progress report that set out the context for infrastructure support for Brent's voluntary sector, the role of a CVS and the background to the development of 'CVS Brent' to fulfil this role for Brent. Members learnt that the total infrastructure stream was £159,249 each year for three years between April 2012 and March 2015 to commission projects which would enhance infrastructure support for the voluntary sector. This included significant elements of the work and projects of CVS Brent to respond to identified gaps in support for the voluntary sector.

The Chief Executive informed members that in the first six months, CVS Brent had recruited staff to deliver key services, nearly finalised their governance arrangements for the medium term and supported a large number of voluntary organisations in planning their financial strategies and developing bids for funding. She added that CVS Brent would recruit to its Board of Trustees through the usual recruitment process based on skills and aptitude assessment. Through the funding secured from Brent Council, Transforming Local Infrastructures and Well London, CVS Brent currently employed a Chief Executive, a Development Manager and a Well London Coordinator.

Tessa Awe then gave an update on the objectives of CVS Brent. She stated that good progress had been in the first six months with structures in place to create the independent body sought by the voluntary, community and not for profit sector. Membership of CVS Brent was available to the whole sector and currently approximately 200 organisations had registered.

Members learnt that good progress had been made to improve the capacity of local civil society to deliver efficient, effective services and respond to needs and opportunities through advice, information and guidance. CVS Brent was working with external funders such as John Lyon's Charity, Big Lottery Fund, City Bridge Trust, Trust for London, Jack Petchey Foundation, Wembley National Stadium Trust, Lloyds TSB and London Community Foundation to secure funding for organisations in the borough delivering services for Brent residents. Each week saw at least four interventions for organisations to support them in planning for fundraising as well as providing support in general organisational development.

In an effort to advance communication and partnership working within local civil society and with local and regional statutory and private sector partners CVS Brent was circulating regular newsletters to the sector and worked with the council to get regular updates from Strategy, Partnerships and Improvement on relevant upcoming events, review and consultation on policy. CVS Brent would feedback issues important to the sector for inclusion at the Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum.

The first 6 months had been used to establish linkages with existing structure, partnerships and groups. CVS Brent was now advising the council on engagement of organisations in the development of policy. CVS Brent had begun work on a Voluntary Sector Strategy and updated Compact in partnership with the council and facilitated a number of events with voluntary organisations looking at planned changes in council service provision. Recent sessions included Health and Wellbeing (focus on mental health) and consultation in partnership with Brent Council (Reviewing Young People's services in the borough).

In response to the Councillor Van Kalwala's enquiry about the main criteria for intervention, Joanna McCormick, Partnership Coordinator clarified that CVS Brent would make use of the community directory and build a picture of the organisation's needs to identify any gaps to be met. This would be revised at the regular council officer and CVS Brent management meetings. She added that the feedback from organisation was positive as so far none had expressed dissatisfaction with the work of CVS Brent.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the role of CVS Brent and its importance in the present policy context to represent and support the development of the voluntary sector to the benefit of Brent residents be noted;
- (ii) that the progress of CVS Brent as the umbrella representative organisation for the voluntary and community sector in Brent be noted.

## 7. Voluntary Sector in Brent

Tessa Awe and Joanna McCormick gave a slide presentation on the voluntary sector in the borough including funding and governance arrangements. Members learnt that there are upward of 1100,000 registered community groups of which 800,000 were voluntary associations which had submitted annual returns and therefore marked active.

### The sector

In Brent voluntary associations were largely small (with funding levels of up to £20,000) and accounted for 84% of the sector. Medium size associations (£50,000-£500,000) accounted for 9% and large associations (funds in excess of £500,000) accounted for only 7%. The service categories were mainly health and social care, people and places, community groups, employment business and economy. The start-up rate since 2002 had been on the rise, peaking at 2009 and 2010 and then declining slightly in 2011. A fair number of organisations in the sector had closed due to political reforms and funding challenges.

### Funding

In terms of funding, members learnt that many nominal Brent allocations held by different trusts and foundations were not taken up relative to the levels of deprivation in the borough for several reasons including the following: bid writing, number of bids submitted; capacity within the organisation to seek funding; timescale within which to submit bids; changes to infrastructure support; lack of awareness of available funding whilst time was spent delivering projects for the benefit of residents.

### Governance

Governance rules differed for voluntary associations depending on whether they had assets of less than or more than £5,000. Under the current governance arrangements, charities with assets of less than £5,000 were not required to register with the Charity Commission. Voluntary associations with assets of £5,000 or more were required to register with the Charity Commission, be properly constituted and governed by a voluntary board of trustees. Acting with integrity and honesty, trustees were charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the charity remained financially solvent and compliant with the law as well as ensuring that the charity used its powers to deliver on its objects for public benefit. The three key roles of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary must also be in place. The provisions for Community Interest Companies (CICs) which differed slightly required that they must be properly constituted, be governed by at least 2 Directors (owners) of the CIC and be registered with Companies House.

It was noted that the Council were maintaining a dialogue with the voluntary sector through the voluntary sector liaison forum meetings and working with CVS Brent to facilitate detailed dialogue on particular issues via newsletters and specific events.



Working in partnership with trusts and foundations, levels of funding brought into the borough had been examined. Advice was being given on funding strategy development, bid writing, feedback on bids. Partnership working had also been extended to looking at alternative models of organisation governance, future models of service delivery and engagement sessions on particular topics.

Members of the Committee were informed that they could help voluntary organisations in several ways; inform community groups about upcoming events; highlight issues for the sector with CVS Brent; signpost organisations to CVS Brent for support and advice as well as emphasise the need for organisations to plan earlier. Members were advised to seek advice if they were asked to be a referee and to remember to declare interest where applicable.

During the discussion that followed, Councillor HB Patel enquired about the total amount of funds that CVS Brent had managed to secure for voluntary associations since its inception. Tessa Awe responded that although CVS Brent had not secured funds for any of the associations as yet, they were expecting funding from bids. The Assistant Director added that a lot of effort had gone into bid submission as it was critical for both the Council and CVS Brent to secure a strategy to target bids for the voluntary sector. She added funding for preventative measures such as "Well Chalkhill" was ring-fenced to public health only.

CVS Brent undertook to provide details of upcoming events to members of the committee.

**8. Work Programme 2012-2013**

In noting the Committee's work programme, members asked that parking be added to the list of items for the next meeting in December 2012.

**9. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on 6 December 2012.


**10. Any other urgent business**

None

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Z VAN KALWALA  
Chair

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 <h1>Brent</h1>	<p><b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p><b>Report from the Director of Regeneration &amp; Major Projects</b></p>
<p>For Information <span style="float: right;">Wards Affected: ALL</span></p>	
<p><b>Employment Programme Update</b></p>	

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the current labour market position in Brent and sets out the challenges faced by the Council in relation to rising unemployment and deprivation that are likely to worsen with the introduction of welfare reforms.
- 1.2 The report highlights a number of opportunities to tackle the growing problem not least through the establishment of a new “Employment and Enterprise” team within the Regeneration and Major Projects department. An outline of the initial work to be undertaken by this team is also detailed within the report.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the challenging labour market environment within Brent and the proposed activities to tackle these issues through the Employment and Enterprise team.

## 3.0 Detail

### 3.1 Employment context

- 3.11 Brent has suffered badly over the last four years of economic storms, with the pressure evident on all its neighbourhoods. This includes spiralling deprivation, with a widening gulf between the most prosperous and socially excluded communities. The Borough is now the 35<sup>th</sup> most deprived in the

country with unemployment and deprivation spreading to the historically wealthier areas of Mapesbury and Welsh Harp.

- 3.12 There are a total of 30,750 benefit claimants in Brent, approximately 20 per cent of the population of Brent. In October 2012 there were 9,980 claimants of Jobseekers Allowance (JSA). Youth unemployment has also reached a peak with the claimant rate for 18-24 year olds standing at 8.4 per cent or 1,970 total claimants - higher than the London rate of 6.9 per cent. There is also a growing trend for this age group to be unemployed for longer (over twelve months).
- 3.13 The number of residents claiming Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Incapacity Benefits is also steadily rising. There are a total of 12,790 ESA and Incapacity Benefit claimants in Brent and again, a widening gap to the levels claimed across London.
- 3.14 Fuelling this growth of poverty across the borough will be housing benefit cap that will be introduced from April 2012. It is predicted that Brent will have the highest number of households negatively impacted by the cap. Around 2600 households in temporary accommodation will see their housing benefit reduced by at least £50 per week and over a thousand of these by over £100 a week.
- 3.15 For working households in Brent the situation is also challenging. On average weekly salaries are some £120 lower than the London average with the jobs taken by residents increasingly likely to be at an entry level.
- 3.16 While there is a plethora of statutory support available to help the unemployed and most deprived overcome their sometimes significant barriers to work (including mental health, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse to name but a few) it is often difficult to access and confusing to navigate around. Budget cuts have seen the specialist provision provided by the local voluntary sector, which would once have supported this group into and through the system, reduced over recent years.
- 3.17 While Brent had a strong history of successfully supporting residents into work through Brent in2Work, this provision was massively scaled back in 2011 with the closure of the London Development Agency and other Government cuts.

## **3.2 Drivers of change**

- 3.21 Unemployment and social exclusion impact on the wellbeing of individuals, their families and this borough as a whole. Rising and spreading poverty levels means potentially greater expenditure by the council as there will be a greater reliance on benefits and services and this at a time when budgets are

being cut by around 50 per cent. The introduction of the housing benefit cap will potentially see a rise of homeless applications to the Council as households find their current rents unaffordable.

- 3.22 But for many households or individuals who are socially excluded (and will be at further risk from the introduction of the benefit cap), our public services can seem a confusing landscape of conflicting demands. Often these services unintentionally sustain this group in poverty rather than come together to find a swift and effective resolution to move out of poverty and it is well documented that finding paid employment is most often the best way to achieve this.
- 3.23 The housing benefit cap, and the introduction of Universal Credit later in 2013, will create a new incentive to find employment for many of the most deprived groups. The cap will not be applied to those households where a member works for 24 hours or more a week (or 16 hours for a single parent family). Work undertaken by the Council has identified that the only other real option for residents facing a shortfall in their benefits is to move out of London. It therefore cannot be understated how important it will be to find work for both Brent's deprived communities and the Council itself.
- 3.24 At the same time, there are opportunities to influence and secure greater numbers of jobs for local people. Firstly, the Council is looking to achieve greater efficiencies from its larger contracts and investigating ways to drive local employment through its sub contracting agreements.
- 3.25 Finally there is a real drive at both national and regional levels to align the education and skills agenda to the needs of business to support future economic growth.

### **3.3 Opportunities**

- 3.31 While the drivers above provide the real push for change and an unprecedented incentive for unemployed residents to move into work, below is an outline of the opportunities and tools available to us to instigate this change effectively and realise an ambitious programme of activity to reduce poverty levels across the borough.
- 3.32 Firstly, the move of the Council to the new Civic Centre is a key component of the on-going Wembley development and is an opportunity to bring Council services together as a cohesive, efficient and effective team. And with the Housing and Regeneration teams now part of the same Regeneration & Major Projects department there is a greater link between housing services and employment provision that is being continually developed and strengthened.

- 3.33 As previously mentioned, there is already a lot of statutory employment provision in the borough delivered through organisations such as Jobcentre Plus, the Work Programme and the College of North West London. The Council continues to offer limited support through Wembley Works with a skeleton staff focused on securing employment opportunities from the Wembley development. There will be significant numbers of jobs generated through the London Designer Outlet in 2013 that need to be linked to local unemployed residents.
- 3.34 The Council is still the second largest employer in the borough. It must look to find ways to ensure its investment in its communities means training and employment opportunities for its residents – local services, for local people, delivered by local people. Again, this can also be undertaken through contracting agreements.
- 3.35 There is growing momentum, particularly at a national level, to work more closely with the borough's schools and colleges to close the gap between education/training and employment. This will mean aligning training more closely with employer needs, and also significantly increasing the number of real apprenticeships. On top of this, the Council already operates three major adult education sites through BACES which has strong links to the most deprived communities. There is a real opportunity to ensure this provision is vocationally focused and related to new job opportunities in and around the borough.

### **3.4 Brent's response**

- 3.41 In November 2011, the Council agreed to fund a three year employment programme starting in the 2013/14 financial year to tackle the rising unemployment and poverty levels in the borough.
- 3.42 In May 2012, the Regeneration & Major Projects department commissioned an external review of employment provision in the borough and inform the development of an ambitious new programme that would optimise the opportunities set out above for local people. Rather than reinvent the Council's old programme of employment delivery, the review has produced a series of recommendations of innovative activity that will compliment and untangle existing provision in the borough to meet local need. It is clear that it is not more support that is needed just better navigation through and better use of what is already available.
- 3.43 Below is an outline of the work that is proposed to be carried forward over the next three years. This will be driven forward by a new Employment and Enterprise team that will be headed by the Head of Employment and

Enterprise. The team will be at full compliment by the start of the next financial year.

### 3.44 **Employment initiatives**

- **Navigators**

A team of 6 'Navigators' have just been recruited and will start work in January 2013. Essentially, the team will trial an approach to engage with the most excluded individuals and families in Brent and will start by working closely with housing teams and those hardest hit by the benefit caps. We know that 2,604 households will be impacted by the benefit caps next April 2013 and these are likely to present themselves at our front line housing services. The Navigators will carry a caseload of families drawn from the group of residents most at risk of homelessness/displacement to mitigate the impact and support families who are likely to have multiple, highly complex needs. Success will be measured by the number of families enabled to stay in their homes, through achievement of employment enhanced engagement and effectiveness with other services.

- **Reducing the impact of welfare reform**

A welfare reform group has been set up that meet regularly to consider how best to reach and assist people that will face shortfalls in benefits. Teams are working very closely with partners at Jobcentre Plus and the Work Programme to agree a process to better connect our services to create and present a strong, unified response to direct support and prevent homelessness. This may involve co-locating employment staff within Housing to provide direct support and a robust performance monitoring process to ensure all partners deliver the right services to this client group. Navigators will also be a key part of this process and the "Working with Families" project is also linked in.

- **BACES review**

A number of steps are being taken to address the gap between training and employment. There is currently a lack of focused vocational training with strong employer links. The curriculum, structure and delivery of BACES will be reviewed. It is likely that there will be a fundamental shift in emphasis, with classes restated in terms of vocational objectives.

A feasibility/scoping study is also being commissioned into the set up of three vocational training centres. These would be along the lines of Intermediate Labour Markets, providing supervised work experience alongside embedded training. They would be social enterprises, delivering real, commercial services but staffed largely by trainees. They will be aligned as closely as possible with major regeneration projects and possibly also the 'meanwhile

use' initiatives, as well as reflecting service gaps and employment opportunities in the Borough.

- **Voluntary sector delivery**

A bidding framework and brief is being set up to identify a group of voluntary sector providers that would be able to support employment provision in the borough. At this stage it is envisaged that experienced providers would be paid on a results basis to support voluntary referrals (those who are unemployed but not mandated) to the Work Programme to gain added value from this existing support in the borough.

Further, the team is investigating ways that small teams of local people could be recruited and trained by the voluntary sector to raise awareness of the benefit changes in local Jobcentre Plus offices and other community meeting points.

- **Brent in2Work**

Brent in2work has continued to deliver advice and guidance to local residents seeking employment and training opportunities from the Wembley Works office. Over 100 local unemployed residents found work through Brent in2work since April 2012. This includes 59 jobs with the new Hilton Hotel. This is as a result of the successful collaborative working of Brent in2work, JCP and CNWL and Wembley City.

We are also continuing work with construction contractors such as Skanska and Wilmot Dixon to ensure S106 agreements are adhered to so that local residents' access opportunities made available through their supply chains, such as jobs, training and apprenticeships. Partnership working with Denne contractors continue to create positive outcomes for the local residents in South Kilburn, with further work being developed with Catalyst Housing as Phase 2 of the regeneration project in the area unfolds.

### **3.45 Enterprise Activity**

- **Business Engagement**

The government's business support simplification programme in 2008 saw an overhaul of what business support should entail and how it should be delivered. As a result much of the funding previously available has disappeared and with it much of the support on offer locally. Activities to encourage and promote self employment to Brent residents have included knowledge sharing and networking events, through the Employer Partnership, and recently a more interventionist approach using unused retail units to deliver Meanwhile start up business.



- **Meanwhile Space**

The regeneration policy team have been actively working with the meanwhile use projects to promote self employment and ensure that local unemployed people, that have an interest in starting their own business, have access to the opportunities available through Meanwhile uses. The opportunities will be shared through Brent in2work where over 60 organisations from the public, private and voluntary sector to meet on a quarterly basis. Self Employment was the theme at the latest forum held last week. We have also linked in with our statutory partners such as the Job Centre and the College of North West London, to buy into the approach ensuring that suitable customers are referred and made aware of these opportunities.

- **Employer Partnership**

The Employer Partnership will continue to provide the Council's main interface with local businesses. It is aimed at supporting economic growth and enterprise in the borough and maximising benefits for business. The EP is chaired by a local businessperson and is open to all businesses based in Brent including those outside of the borough but with a large Brent workforce and delivers three main services to local employers:

- *Quarterly Business Breakfast events* open to all business in Brent giving employers the opportunity to network with other businesses and hear from speakers from the public and private sector, regulatory bodies, service buyers and training providers.
- *Distribution of quarterly e-newsletters* to local businesses, containing business related information relevant to local employers
- *A contact point* at the Council for businesses needing assistance or advice on council related matters. Businesses have often complained that they find it difficult to get in contact with an appropriate member of staff in the Council. Through the EP, businesses have access to a member of staff who can assist and point them in the right direction.

- **Supply Chain Project**

This initiative seeks to identify and maximise opportunities for local businesses and residents on construction projects within and outside of the Borough and has developed alongside the Civic Centre build. Supporting this has been the creation of the Supply Brent web portal has been created to match construction and employment opportunities with local businesses and residents. It advertises construction tendering, employment, apprenticeship and training opportunities which can be accessed by local people who have registered for the service. The project

recently won the LGC Business Partnership Award for Innovation for its community engagement, community legacy and supply chain longevity work, with Skanska. It will be continued within the new team expanding to capture opportunities from other regeneration construction projects in the borough including Wilmott Dixon, John Sisk, Quintain and Countryside Estates on their projects in South Kilburn, Elizabeth House and the London Designer Outlet.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The employment programme will be funded for three years through the General Fund at a cost of £1million each year. Additional funding to support the programme will be sought through other sources including European Social Fund, London Councils and Jobcentre Plus.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 None

#### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 A full impact assessment will be undertaken once the full employment programme has been agreed.

#### **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

- 7.1 A new Head of Employment and Enterprise will be recruited in early December and following this a full staffing complement will be recruited to the new Employment and Enterprise team. The size and roles of the team will be determined once the Head of Employment is in post.

#### **Contact Officers**

Andy Donald  
Director, Regeneration & Major Projects

 <b>Brent</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Partnership and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6 December 2012</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Report from the Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Improvement</b></p>
<p>For Information</p>	<p>Wards Affected: ALL</p>
<p><b>Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews</b></p>	

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report briefly looks at the process, terms of reference and limitations of Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews. It goes on to give an insight into the lessons learnt from the first two inquiries to be held in Brent.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee are asked to note the report
- 2.2 That the Committee notes the correlation of weak points between the two reviews, particularly communication breakdowns
- 2.3 That the Council through the Committee note the financial burden imposed by this additional statutory duty.

## 3.0 Detail

### 3.1 Current Domestic Homicide Review in Brent

- 3.1.1 The first fatality occurred within days of the legislation coming into force. The second sadly happened six weeks later.
- 3.1.2 These reports are both in their final draft stages. One has been approved by the Home Office. It now awaits clearance from partners before an executive summary is published.

- 3.1.3 The second is ready for submission to the Home Office.
- 3.1.4 The third case relates to an interfamily fatality and work is continuing in this instance. In this instance the case involves an uncle and a nephew, the initial information trawl, indicates that they had no contact with agencies; other than for very run of the mill age related health matters.

### **3.2 Legislative Framework**

- 3.2.1 Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) established the requirement on Local Authorities to conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews where a domestic homicide had been committed pertinent to its area. This provision came into force in April 2011 and it is under this provision that this review has been conducted.
- 3.2.2 There was no real guidance in place; and those boroughs like Brent with cases immediately after the enactment of the legislation, had to test and probe every step looking at legality, practicality and ethically. For example what could be discussed pre trial in a forum bound by confidentiality, but quite large with agencies sometimes sending different representatives.
- 3.2.3 For many years the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) have conducted Domestic Violence Murder Reviews, whilst the central focus is Police conduct, they also look at other agency input where it overlaps with the work of the Police services. Their reviews focus almost exclusively on possible misconduct or dereliction of duty and hence have a very different ethos and framework to these reviews. ACPO investigators attended the meetings and offered invaluable advice, however marrying the two outlooks proved problematic at first. The considerable time spent resolving this dichotomy enabled information to flow in a blame free environment. The caveat to that is, had wrong doing or gross failures been found participant knew this information would have passed on to the relevant authorities or senior staff.

### **3.3 Purpose of Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews**

- 3.3.1 The purpose of a domestic homicide review is to consider the circumstances that led to the death and identify where responses to the situation could be improved in the future. In so doing, the lessons learned will be taken on board by the professionals and agencies involved, such as the police, social services, councils, and other community based organisations.

### **3.4 Domestic Violence Homicide Review Process**

- 3.4.1 Appendix one maps out the process.
- 3.4.2 A review panel, led by an independent chair, is commissioned to undertake the Domestic Homicide Review and a panel overseeing the review is made up of members of local statutory and voluntary agencies. This panel reviews each agency's review of their involvement in the case and consider

recommendations to improve responses to domestic violence in the future. This is a peer learning not a judging process. They will also have the chance to hear from family, friends and work colleagues who may be able to help the panel understand the impact of agency's involvement with the victim or the perpetrator.

3.4.3 Domestic homicide Reviews are not inquiries into how someone died or who is to blame; they are not part of any disciplinary process. They do not replace, but will be in addition to, an inquest or any other form of inquiry into the homicide.

3.4.4 In this way, it is intended that agencies will improve their responses to domestic violence and work better together to prevent such tragedies occurring in the future.

3.4.5 To find out more detail about Domestic Homicide Reviews, follow these links:

1. [Home Office Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews](#)
2. [Support for families involved in Domestic Homicide Reviews](#)

3.4.6 Both reports are nearing their conclusion, the panels drew together information from all organisations that were potential sources of support for the victims. These organisations were:

- The Metropolitan Police Brent, Ealing and Harrow Borough
- Ealing Hospital NHS Trust (including Ealing Community Services, Harrow Community Services and Brent Community Services)
- Brent Council's Housing Department
- Brent Social Care
- North West London Hospitals NHS Trust
- NHS Brent, Harrow and Ealing (relevant GPs)
- London Probation Service
- Advance (domestic violence project)

3.4.7 Agencies gave chronological accounts of their contact with victims and perpetrators prior to the murder. Only agencies that had relevant or significant contact with the victims or perpetrators were a part of these reviews. From these accounts, an overall chronology of interactions with these families was created.

3.4.8 Each agency was then required to produce an Independent Management Review which must incorporate the following:

- a chronology of interaction with the victim, the perpetrator and/or their children
- action regarding the family unit
- whether or not internal procedures were followed

- conclusions and recommendations for improvements from that agency's perspective

3.4.9 The various accounts of involvement with these family units covered different periods of time prior to both women's death. Some of the accounts proved to be of more significance than others.

3.4.10 All agencies responded in both reviews. No agencies invited to respond returned a nil response. There was openness and co-operation among the agencies involved in the two reviews. At meetings, participants were ready to identify areas demanding attention within their own organisation and there was, predominantly constructive questioning and overall a lack of defensiveness.

3.4.11 Throughout the process, the families were kept updated by the homicide case workers at Victim Support. On two occasions, Victim Support facilitated an extended visit by the chairs to meet the two families. This was to gain insights into their perspectives on what had happened and make the review more humane for the families at this difficult time.

### **3.5 Key Issues Arising from the Reviews**

3.5.1 Victims of domestic violence are, for a range of reasons, often reluctant to report or reveal their circumstances. This places the onus on agencies to make the connections and draw out a wider picture where possible. Being able to do that depends on three factors:

- staff awareness, skill and experience at noticing any indication that domestic violence might be an issue underlying the presenting issues
- communication within the organisation, in particular between departments
- communication between organisations

3.5.2 In these cases these factors were variable in quality (at some points very good but at others in need of improvement).

3.5.3 Turning to the perpetrator, some criminal charges and interaction with Police were not set in context of a pattern of repeated and escalating criminal behaviour where violence was becoming more and more a key feature.

3.5.4 Shortfalls in information sharing were highlighted in both cases. For example the perpetrator in the one case was accused of a rape offence. This triggered a referral to the Barnet MAPPA panel and the case was discussed in January 2010. Although this case did not involve his partner who he eventually killed, there was no evidence that this additional information was passed to Brent Social Services so that they could re-assess the risk to his former partner.

## **4.0 Terms of reference**

- 4.1 The full terms of reference for these reviews are available on request. In summary, the overall aims of the review were to:
- establish whether there are lessons to be learned about the way in which local professionals and agencies worked together to safeguard domestic violence victims and their children
  - clarify what any lessons are, how they will be acted upon and what is expected to change as a result
  - improve inter-agency working and improve protection for domestic violence victims and their children

4.2 The principle responsibilities of the review panel were to:

- establish the chronological order of events
- analyse organisational links within the partnership
- assess the quality and quantity of available information from across the partnership
- examine the effectiveness and suitability of relevant protocols
- critically evaluate partnership working practice
- remain a paper-based review

## **5.0 Financing Domestic Homicide Reviews**

5.1 Whilst this is a statutory requirement there are no additional funds attached to this work. In Brent the part time officer has been financed through additional funds gained from the European Daphne fund.

5.2 This particular source of money will not be available in the next financial year. The Integrated Community Safety Team will, through job realignment and some restructuring seek to incorporate this additional work. Including implementing the recommendations and monitoring and driving the action plan within the current staff budget.

5.3 The Community Safety Partnership Board will hold the corporate responsibility for implementing the recommendations.

5.4 As Brent has successfully worked and almost completed three such reviews the Home Office are funding a programme here so we can develop the national guidelines. Our first step is to host a day in December 2012. At this all councils and Police services who have overseen Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews will come together to share experiences, tips, knowledge and highlight pitfalls.

5.5 From this information we will develop the “How To” pack which will incorporate the excel workbook we developed to assist with the complex chronologies we have had to undertake.

## **6.0 Legal Implications**

6.1 None

**7.0 Diversity Implications**

7.1 None

**8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

8.1 None

**Background Papers**

None

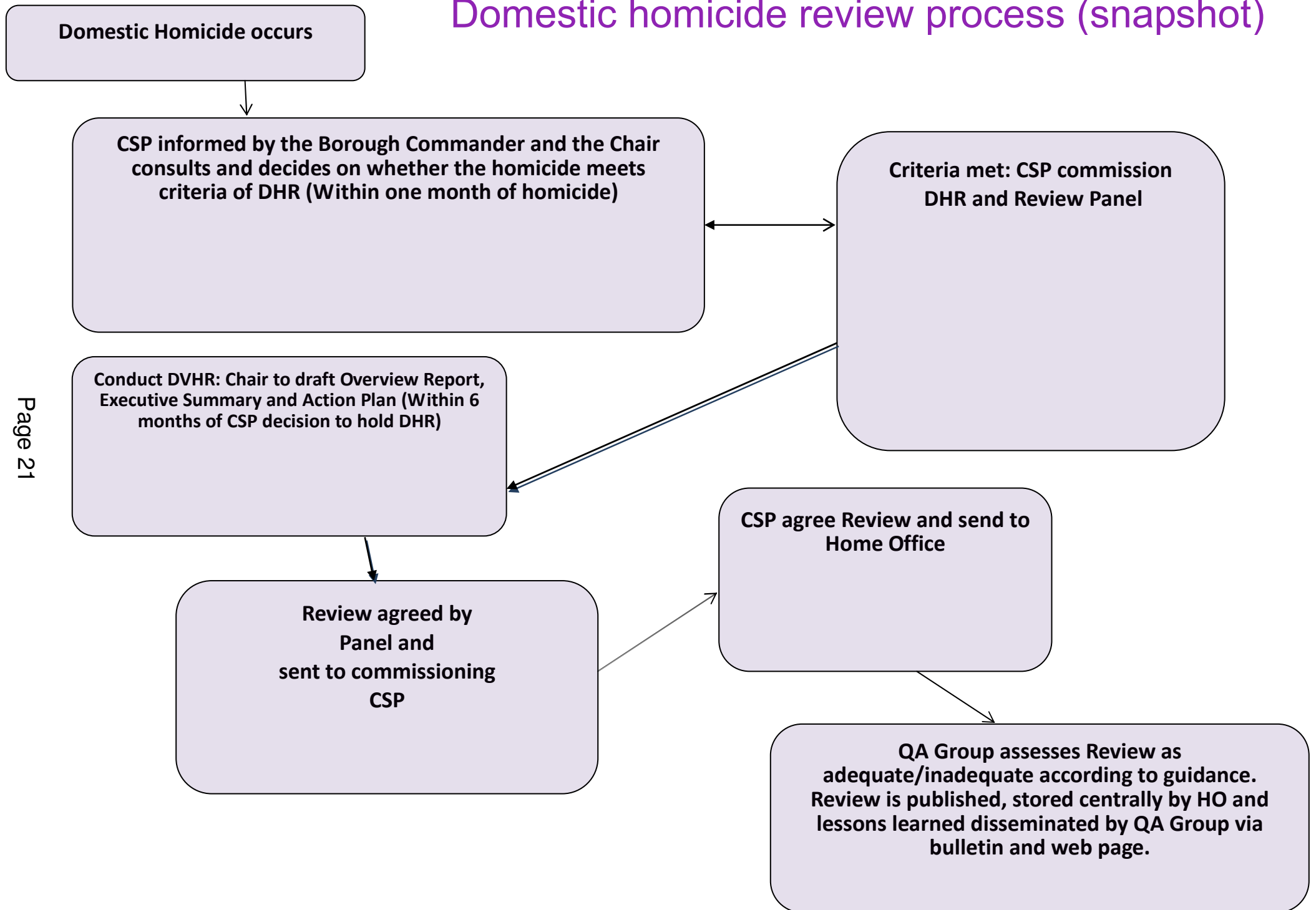
**Contact Officers**

Genny Renard

Head of Integrated Community Safety



# Domestic homicide review process (snapshot)



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