



MINUTES OF THE PARTNERSHIP AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 25 July 2012 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Van Kalwala (Chair), Councillor Clues (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Hopkins

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Harrison, HB Patel, RS Patel and Krupa Sheth

1. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None declared

2. Deputations

None

3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 June 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2012 were approved subject to the following amendment:

Jenny Reynolds be amended to Genny Renard.

4. Matters arising

None

5. Crime Updates

Genny Renard Head of Community Safety introduced the report which set out how key crime information for Brent is collected and provides a template for the collection of key statistics to be reported to the committee on a regular basis. It also provided an in-depth report on Burglary in Brent. It was explained that the gathering of accurate, relevant data was a difficulty when using police reported crimes as this only showed a reflection of reported crimes, however it was hoped that this would be improved through the data published in the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

The council was currently undertaking the ethical reporting pilot which meant that all crimes that could be a burglary were reported, making crime statistics appear worse than the actual crime rate. It was noted that some areas had seen a decrease in crime through ethical reporting including Camden and Lambeth although it was assumed that this was due to the increased police presence of being an Olympic

borough. The Head of Community Safety reported that the rise in crime had dropped from a 10% increase to 8.9% with two main categories of burglary being reported; professional burglars from outside of the borough from areas such as Essex and Hertfordshire target affluent areas, and local robberies by youths of the less affluent areas such as Harlesden and Stonebridge. It was estimated that the value of items taken compared to income meant that the less affluent areas were losing a higher percentage of their income than the affluent areas. Burglaries had also been broken down into residential and non-residential burglaries. Additionally, there were concerns that loan sharks were operating in the Harlesden area and work was being undertaken with the Police to address this. An action plan was in place which included; an intelligence unit which currently had four undercover operations underway, informing landlords of named burglars in their properties and the powers they have under tenancy agreements to evict, strengthening of communal doors in social housing, targeted work on housing estates and crime prevention day breakfasts with registered social landlords.

The Head of Community Safety reported that a lack of custodial sentencing which undermined police officers although a meeting with the crown prosecution will be taking place to ensure that repeat offenders are picked up and sentenced correctly. Additionally, the police had agreed that a victim impact statement would be produced for each case as well as work being undertaken into community impact statements. Work undertaken to address burglaries included; greater communication with residents, encouraging neighbours to hold contact details in case a robbery takes place and monitoring of post boxes to ascertain where gold stolen in disposed of through gold buying websites.

Details of the sanction and detection rates were given with regard to knife and gun crime and it was highlighted that the number of knife crimes appeared high but included possession and the finding of weapons.

During the discussion that followed, it was clarified that the professional criminals entering the borough tended to use the 29 transport links in Brent and did not commit other crimes as not to attract attention from the Police. It was felt that Brent was targeted due to the larger Asian community and the tendency to have large quantities of gold and portable items such as jewellery. The Head of Community Safety reported that an increase in burglaries in Alperton had been reported, including a valuable painting being stolen. It was felt that the motivation behind burglaries could be the economy, gang initiation and purely because people can. It was highlighted that the team did not have a project budget and had to obtain external funding to carry out projects within the community. A supplementary report would be circulated later in the year informed by the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

RESOLVED:-

that the committee:

- i) note the report and monitor future developments
- ii) agree to develop the targets based on quarter one and two data

- iii) include the report on the next Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) on its work programme

6. Integrated Offender Management

The Community Safety Projects Officer Elly Cook gave a presentation on the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) project. It was explained that IOM was a multiagency led project developed by the Home Office in 2009 to act as an overarching framework in which agencies could work together. IOM was based on five key principles to tackle and reduce reoffending and to allow those who were socially excluded to be integrated into society. A three year strategy had been developed with three strategic objectives and an action plan to ensure that objectives were delivered. The current organisations, services and projects were listed and how IOM would build on the strong foundation that Brent currently had and details of the governance structure highlighted the high level commitment of partners. It was explained that an IOM cohort for the North West London pilot had been identified through the use of OGRS scores of over 71 however, due to the large number, additional criteria were applied. It was explained that a multiagency approach to case managing would be undertaken, with a lead agency and officer identified for each person with a rag system in place. It was noted that youth offenders did not form part of the cohort however it was hoped that the programme would be extended to them in the future and the team continued to work closely with the youth offending team. Details of the "through the gate link service" was given, including the prisoners needs being assessed before leaving prison and links to specialist services being introduced to break the reoffending cycle. With regards to support for women, it was highlighted that the Community Safety Unit had been successful in bidding for a pot of European funding which would fund an exiting prostitution worker who would support women exiting prostitution. -

Members felt that commercial companies should go to greater lengths to employ ex-offenders. Elly Cook informed the committee that a recruitment fare for ex-offenders would be taking place in September, with job centres, companies holding stalls and also training services being available. Councillor Hopkins informed the Community Safety Projects Officer of two volunteer groups/charities that would be beneficial to women. It was clarified that the pilot lasted two years and the strategy would extend beyond the pilot time however, it was hoped that the legacy of the IOM would last much longer and was expected to grow as the scheme progressed. Following queries regarding the OGRS score, it was explained that the score represented the chance of the individual being likely to reoffend, with the score being made up of a variety of factors including; previous offence, age and being in care. It was explained that other boroughs on the scheme were operating a OGRS score of 50 which could skew figures. An additional concern was the lower engagement of mental health facilities however members were pleased with the progress made so far and the inclusion of four gang members in the IOM.

7. Changing the Delivery of Crime Reduction - Local Joint Action Groups

The Head of Community Safety Genny Renard introduced the item and explained that following the reduction of the community safety unit, efficiencies had to be made as it was the smallest team in London and second smallest in the UK. The

team were split into three LJAGs which mirrored the Police areas where referrals were sent to these officers who directly assessed the input required by the LJAG. The officers spend part of their time based at the police station with additional task and finish groups being carried out allowing the LJAGs to focus on complex issues. It was reported that the Home Office approved of Brent's model which was being reviewed however it was felt that there was potential to do more within the model. It was explained that the LJAGs were designed to improve the status of the community with a focus on elderly persons for this quarter and the sexual exploitation of women and particularly girls being addressed next quarter. Genny Renard informed the committee that the police were considering moving to four policing areas rather than three which would require resources to be adjusted, particularly as the crime rates at Harlesden were higher. It was reported that the internal audit had been successful, showing the LJAGs to be value for money and that the team hoped to improve in the future and do more with the limited resources available.

Members queried how under represented agencies such as mental health representatives could be greater engaged. It was explained that only high end mental health was dealt with however, it was felt that the situation may improve with the restructure of the NHS although it would be beneficial if persons were recognised sooner, although it was highlighted that this was a political decision at a national level. It was explained that funding to increase intelligence on gangs was being secured and the team hoped to publicise the LJAGS at team meetings now they were successfully in place. The Head of Community safety hoped that work with the Home Office to mitigate the risks of not having a joint LJAG and hoped to work closer with other agencies in the future.

8. Partnership and Place Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

It was noted that the work programme would be populated following discussions with the chair. It was highlighted that previously a joint meeting of scrutiny committees had taken place where the Leader had been addressed. It was agreed that a similar meeting would be carried out with the potential to invite the borough commanders for the Police and Fire services.

9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of Partnership and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee will take place on 17 October 2012.

10. Any other urgent business

None

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm

Z VAN KALWALA
Chair