



**Executive**  
18<sup>th</sup> March 2008

**Report from the Director of  
Policy and Regeneration**

Wards Affected:  
None

**Petition to protect the Not Another Drop March**

Forward Plan Ref: n/a

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report advises members of the Executive of a petition received from residents regarding the future funding of the Not Another Drop Peace March and advises members of actions that have already been taken by officers to address this issue.

**2.0 Recommendations**

That the Executive:-

- 2.1 Notes the petition and the concerns raised
- 2.2 Notes that it had always been the intention of the Council to prioritise gun and knife crime and the Not Another Drop programme, including the Peace March.
- 2.3 Endorses the actions already taken by officers to secure funding for the NAD Peace March in 2008
- 2.3 Informs the lead petitioner accordingly.

**3.0 Information on the petition**

3.1 A petition has been received from the office of Dawn Butler, M.P. for Brent South asking the Council to secure funding to ensure the continuance of the Not Another Drop Peace March. It contains more than 50 signatures of local residents.

3.2 The specific words of the petition are:

*“Brent residents petition Brent Council to secure funding for the Not Another Drop march from April next year. We note that Brent Council have so far been seriously negligent in not securing funding for the anti-gun crime march or many youth projects in Brent. We demand that Brent Council starts to support anti-gun crime initiatives”*

### **Background to the NAD Peace March**

3.3 Over the last 8 years the name of ‘Not Another Drop (NAD)’ has become synonymous with Brent’s activities to tackle and reduce serious gun and knife crime. ‘Not Another Drop’ or ‘NAD’ is the name that the Council, police, community and other partners give to the programme of work and the campaign to reduce serious violence delivered under that name. Although it is sometimes referred to as a separate entity, NAD is not a separate organisation. The steering group that drives and organises the NAD programme is a sub group of the Brent Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in which the Council works in partnership with others such as the police, the Fire Service, the Primary Care Trust, London Probation Service. The prevention and reduction of gun, or gun and knife crime has been a priority for this partnership since 2002 and this has given the work of NAD its ongoing legitimacy and allowed funds to be committed to it. Currently the NAD steering group is chaired by a senior police officer and comprises senior youth and community safety officers from the Council, the College of North West London, London Probation Service and community representatives.

3.4 Since 2004 the NAD steering group has developed, sponsored and supported the delivery of a community based and community organised Peace March. This has been through the allocation of cash funding plus a significant commitment of officer time from the Council, the police and, this year, the NDC who have supported the volunteer organisers from Brent’s community. The march in September 2007 was the fourth such event. Since its inception in 2004 the cash funding for the event has been provided by Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. Indeed NRF has funded most if the additional activities delivered under the NAD banner. NRF comes to an end on 31st March 2008 and will not be replaced with an equivalent fund that can be used for purposes such as the Peace march. This is well known in the community and has been the source of anxiety about the future of the whole NAD programme.

3.5 However, the future of NAD is not dependent upon one particular source of funding. The more important decision will be those taken by the Council, police and other partners with regards to priorities in the forthcoming Crime, Disorder and Misuse of Drugs Plan 2008-2011 and the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011. In short, if violent crime and specifically gun and knife crime are designated as priorities in these new plans, then funding and resource allocations will follow these priorities.

3.6 External funding to be allocated to crime, disorder and misuse of drugs priorities in 2008/09 will be drawn from a combination of sources including the Area Based Grant, which is linked to the Local Area Agreement, and various

other funding streams controlled by the Drug and Alcohol Action Team in the tPCT and the Metropolitan Police.

- 3.7 Final decisions on priorities and allocations of funding for 2008/09 have yet to be agreed by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnership. The final decisions will be signed off at the meeting of Brent's CDRP on 18<sup>th</sup> March and can be reported to the Executive by the Lead Member at your meeting that evening. However officers of the Council and the wider partnership have identified violent crime as a priority for the forthcoming plan. Specifically they have identified objectives around domestic violence, gun and knife crime and robbery. Officers have also identified prevention as a second priority, with a focus on young people at risk. These priorities have emerged from a thorough process of assessment and community consultation.
- 3.8 The NAD steering group has agreed that the three strands of its work in the next year will be on enforcement, youth support to high risk young people and community engagement. Whilst the exact amount of funding available for the whole programme will not be confirmed until 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008, officers have pencilled in the organisation of the 5<sup>th</sup> Peace March as part of that third strand. .
- 3.9 The decision of the Council and its partners to prioritise violent crime in the new LAA and the new Partnership Plan demonstrates that, far from turning its back, it is maintaining its support for anti-gun crime initiatives in the borough. Moreover, rather than being '*seriously negligent in not securing funding for the anti-gun crime march*' it has always been the intention of the Council to support this event. To that end officers have been working to secure the necessary funding through a recognised process of prioritisation, that takes account of the wishes of local people.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The total cost of the march was £15,000 in 2007. Officers and NAD community members believe this can be reduced by bringing in house some aspects of the organisation that were externally commissioned last year. Therefore officers are confident that the march could be delivered with much reduced costs and within the total sum that has been provisionally allocated to the whole NAD programme for 2008/09.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to "*exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area*".
- 5.2 This is a general duty and in simple language it means that the Council is required to consider all policies, strategies, plans and budgets from the standpoint of their potential contribution to the reduction of crime and disorder.
- 5.3 The authority could be subject to legal challenge if it can be established that it did not have due regard to crime and disorder prevention when making a decision. In the case of the NAD programme and its future there is clear evidence that the authority has taken these issues into account.

## **6.0 Diversity Implications**

6.1 There are no recommendations in this report that will adversely impact upon any particular community or diversity in Brent. Gun and knife crime affects all of Brent's communities, either directly or through raising fear and anxiety.

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

7.1 None

### **Background Papers**

### **Contact Officers**

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