

Minutes

EXTERNAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 February 2018

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



HILLINGDON
LONDON

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors John Riley (Chairman), Ian Edwards (Vice-Chairman), Mohinder Birah, Tony Burles, Brian Crowe, Eddie Lavery (In place of Teji Barnes) and Michael White</p> <p>Also Present: Barry Drake, Heathrow Fire Station Manager, London Fire Brigade - Hillingdon Colin Wingrove, Borough Commander, Hillingdon Metropolitan Police Service</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Dan Kennedy (Deputy Director, Housing, Environment, Education, Health & Wellbeing), Jacqui Robertson (Service Manager for Community Safety) and Nikki O'Halloran (Democratic Services Manager)</p> <p>Press and Public: 1</p>
42.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Teji Barnes (Councillor Eddie Lavery was present as her substitute) and Councillor Phoday Jarjussey. On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman wished Councillor Jarjussey a speedy recovery.</p>
43.	<p>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That all items of business be considered in public.</p>
44.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 11 JANUARY 2018 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman noted that the meeting on 11 January 2018 had been a single meeting review of the provision of GP services in Heathrow Villages. The meeting had enabled Members to gain an understanding of the issues faced by residents in the area. The Chairman advised that this issue would be revisited by the Committee in future to ensure that action was being taken to provide sustainable health services in Heathrow Villages.</p> <p>It was anticipated that a final report on the Committee's findings and recommendations would be presented to Cabinet on 19 April 2018. The Chairman thanked those witnesses that had taken part in the review.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2018 be agreed as a correct record.</p>
45.	<p>SAFER HILLINGDON PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE MONITORING (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. Mr Dan Kennedy, the Council's</p>

Deputy Director, Housing, Environment, Education, Health & Wellbeing, advised that the report included on the agenda had set out key indicators for the Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP). Some Q3 data had not yet been received so had not been included in the report but would be reported to the next SHP meeting on 13 March 2018. A copy of the report would be forwarded to the Committee Members who would then be able to pose supplementary questions. It was noted that some police data was available online.

The key indicators included in the report were reflective of the priority areas identified by the SHP. Actions in response to the two Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), such as risk assessment tools and the provision of training for partner agencies, had also been included. Progress on these actions would be reported to the SHP.

Ms Jacqueline Robertson, the Council's Service Manager - Community Safety Team, advised that training sessions had been taking place on a bi-monthly basis for Domestic Abuse Sub Group members as well as other professionals. These sessions had included training on the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Identification, Assessment and Management Model and mental capacity.

The DHR reviews had highlighted the fact that reporting instances of domestic abuse was not someone else's job. As such, it was important that anyone who came into contact with a victim (for example, school staff, police, fire) needed to know how to refer a victim to support services. London Crime Prevention funding had also been secured to strengthen the MARAC in Hillingdon.

Mr Colin Wingrove, Borough Commander of Hillingdon Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), advised that Safer Schools Officers had a presence in all schools in the Borough. Programmes such as *Operation Sceptre* (the prevention and pursuit of knife crime offenders) and *Your Life, You Choose* (to educate young people about the consequences of crime, not only for the offender but their family and friends, victims and the wider community) were taking place in schools. In addition, knife arches had been taken to some schools where follow up talks also took place.

The MPS offered a supporting hand to any school in the Borough to help reduce knife crime. Conversations had taken place with those schools that wanted to provide a safer environment for their pupils and the MPS would continue to work with schools around all crime. More schools had been working with the MPS than ever before.

The SHP *Access* project had been in effect for about three months and looked to identify those at risk of knife crime by compiling a profile of what someone felt when they carried a knife. As well as reinforcing the fact that carrying a knife was socially unacceptable, the project also looked to identify the drivers for young people to carry a knife.

Mr Wingrove noted that there had been around 14,500 knife crime incidents in London in the last year (an increase of 27%) and 328 offences in Hillingdon in the same period (an increase of 16%). 26.2% of offences in Hillingdon had been detected which was one of the best detection rates in London. Although rates of knife crime had increased in the Borough, MET had been actively engaged in a joint working approach with other boroughs to address this and knife crime levels were stabilising.

The knife bins in Hillingdon had been very successful. Approximately 350 knives had been emptied from the bin in Uxbridge and this initiative was set to continue. Mr Wingrove had initiated two or three press releases with photos of the knives to promote positive messages.

Robbery was a local crime priority in Hillingdon. Many of these offences involved the use of a knife (or implied the presence of a knife) or were drug related. There was a correlation between knives, gangs, drugs and robbery. *Operation Starbrook* had been a Yeading-wide joint initiative between local police and Hillingdon Council to drive out crime and improve the area. It had become a community effort which had yielded positive results. Mr Wingrove advised that weekly meetings continued to take place, focussing on reducing knife crime in the Borough.

Mr Kennedy advised that the Council funded a drug intervention programme which provided very good outcomes and fitted with the MOPAC priorities, providing strong intervention and prevention processes. A range of alcohol misuse prevention and support services were available in the Borough.

It was noted that the Mayor of London and the Home Secretary had supported an increase in the use of Stop and Search. However, although Hillingdon was on an upwards trend in terms of Stop and Search, the Borough seemed to lag behind other London boroughs. Mr Wingrove noted that Stop and Search was often driven as a result of intelligence from the public and that Tasking Teams could be deployed to hot spots to undertake Stop and Search. Mr Wingrove had attended a number of public meetings where residents had indicated that they would like to see more Stop and Searches undertaken, which then gave the police a mandate for increasing the number. However, he advised caution in setting targets for a specific number of Stop and Search actions as this power should be used in a targeted way which produced outcomes. Stop and Search was a good tactic but results should be analysed in terms of there being a broad spread and good outcomes and this should be compared to the London average. Although Mr Wingrove wanted to drive improvements and Hillingdon would continue to do more Stop and Searches, he was aware of resource limitations. It was suggested that consideration needed to be given to making it clearer to residents that Stop and Search was intelligence driven (rather than random) and to publicising the results of this action.

Members were advised that some instances of anti social behaviour (ASB) were dealt with by the Council and some were dealt with by the MPS. 8 Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) had been issued by the MPS in Hillingdon which was the highest number issued within London. Mr Wingrove advised that officers always called back regarding reports of ASB to get more information about the offence. As well as increasing contact and presence in the community, the Community Risk MARAC Coordinator post had been filled. The MARAC looked at referrals on a multi-agency basis to deal with repeat and long term issues.

Whilst, in comparison to the rest of London, Hillingdon was generally doing well in terms of burglary, there seemed to be Ward variation with Yiewsley seeing a significant increase over the last 12 months. Mr Wingrove advised that there had been a month on month reduction in burglaries in the Borough over the last five months with Hillingdon producing the best results in London and excellent detection rates. This had been helped by initiatives such as the Council providing free burglar alarms for those aged over 65. Burglary was a priority that had been agreed with MOPAC so was a key issue for Hillingdon MPS. Hot spots and Ward data was regularly reviewed where trends and practices were linked to offenders. 'Cocooning' (a reactive strategy to protect against the reoccurrence of residential burglary) was undertaken by local officers and forensic opportunities were being maximised.

It was noted that February/March 2017 had been a challenging time with regard to the increase in burglaries in the Borough. However, the increase was now down to 2%

and it was expected that Hillingdon would be back on trend by next year (which would buck the London trend).

The 'use of force' figures included everything from the use of handcuffs to the use of a taser or baton. Although the figure for Hillingdon was high, Commander Twist had deemed that this was a recording issue rather than Hillingdon figures being extreme. It was anticipated that the figures would even out over the next twelve months.

Mr Wingrove extended an invitation to all Committee Members to accompany police officers on patrol.

With regard to the Basic Command Unit proposed for Hillingdon, Ealing and Hounslow, it was suggested that the test of the effectiveness of this merger would be how much change was noticed by the general public. It was noted that the changes were expected to take effect from June 2018 and would be predominantly structural, with each borough retaining its own parade site and its own radio channel. The merger would enable the boroughs involved to share and learn from each others' good practice. This would work particularly well with issues such as knife related crime which could cross borders.

For effective policing outcomes, it was important to ensure that a good operating model was in place. It would also be important that the existing localism of the police was not lost. Concern had been expressed in the north of the Borough regarding the possibility of coverage and response times getting worse and the need for a consistent presence and service provision. The perception was that residents of Hillingdon would not be getting a very good deal with the new arrangements. Mr Wingrove assured Members that the two Dedicated Ward Officers would be retained in each Ward and that bases would be retained in Ruislip and Hayes (there were ongoing issues with regard to the Uxbridge site). In addition, the Response Teams and their roles were getting bigger with officers taking responsibility for visible tasking. It was not anticipated that Hayes police officers would be patrolling Acton High Street. Officers' 'normal place of duty' would be Hillingdon but there would be flexibility to earmark officers to go to one of the other boroughs if needed. As there were buildings in the Borough with security and front desks, it was suggested that consideration be given to approaching these businesses regarding the colocation of the police.

Concern was expressed that the new tri-borough arrangement would result in a downgrade of the service received in Hillingdon and assurance was sought that the main driver for the change was an operational one. It would be important to ensure that the changes were reasonably expedited and that communication and reassurance to residents about the changes were robust. Members were assured that the communication about the changes would identify the need to make savings and operational efficiencies (for example, in relation to management and the use of the fleet) but also the MPS's ambition to improve the service. Consideration would need to be given to a public information event and a briefing for Councillors prior to the 'go live' date in June 2018.

It was noted that this was the first time that the MPS had looked at this structure and every effort would be made to ensure that the service was as stable as possible with minimal disruption. The effectiveness of this transition would be reflected in whether or not members of the public noticed any difference in the service provided. It was noted that a lot would be learnt from those boroughs that had acted as early adopters.

Members requested that they be regularly provided with firm statistics on local response and detective teams to compare the current situation with the post merger

situation in due course. Mr Wingrove was not aware of team numbers currently being published but could see no reason why this information could not be provided to the Committee. However, it was important to note that team numbers would fluctuate to meet demand, shift patterns, etc. It was also noted that the three boroughs (Hillingdon, Ealing and Hounslow) differed in population, size and crime numbers.

Mr Wingrove was responsible for monthly intelligence meetings where tasking decisions were made. It was important that an even handed approach was taken with regard to resource allocation. Regular meetings were held with the police services in Thames Valley, Hertfordshire and Heathrow Airport and it was thought that Hillingdon might attract more resources than other boroughs as a result of things such as protests against a third runway at the airport. It was noted that innovation, collaboration and smart partnerships made the MPS greater than the sum of its parts.

Mr Barry Drake, Heathrow Fire Station Manager at the London Fire Brigade (LFB), provided an update. He advised that the cladding used on Grenfell Tower had been different to that used on buildings in Hillingdon. Although not the same material, the LFB was working with the Council to replace the cladding on four tower blocks in the Borough as well as working with two hotels in Hillingdon near the airport to replace cladding and fire doors.

LFB had been working with the MPS with regard to Home Fire Safety. This initiative looked at home security, fire risks, safeguarding and health and wellbeing. Fire officers had been trained to identify, flag up and refer those at risk so that further action could be taken by the most appropriate organisation/s.

Beds in sheds could cause the LFB some issues as fire officers were not able to enforce these buildings. However, fire officers were mindful of the whole footprint of properties that they visited and worked collaboratively with housing officers and other partners to flag up possible beds in sheds.

The Junior Citizens event would be held at Brunel University between 5 March 2018 and 25 March 2018. During this period, approximately 3,800 students were expected to participate and nine strategies would be covered. Resilience work had also been undertaken recently through a multi agency simulation exercise. This training had been very successful, particularly with regard to the expectations of local authority officers. Officers from RAF Northolt had also attended and participated in this incident training exercise.

Mr Drake advised that there had been a recent spate of fake acid attacks which had prompted the need to identify the difference between real and fake incidents. Work had been undertaken elsewhere in London which highlighted the need to use copious amounts of water to rinse the affected area/s and the need to cut off a victim's clothes. Mr Drake was not aware of any action being taken by the London Ambulance Service in relation to acid attacks.

It was agreed that fire stations would be ideal for the colocation of services. Members were supportive of the colocation of services and believed that the fire and ambulance service were a good fit. However, it was noted that there had previously been some resistance about ten years ago regarding colocation at Ruislip fire station as the London Ambulance Service (LAS) preferred to have its own space. Action had been undertaken with MPS motorcycles being located at Hillingdon Fire Station and the LAS sharing the Heathrow Fire Station site. However, logistical challenges had arisen with regard to issues such as shift patterns. In addition, events such as carol concerts for the elderly had been staged at the station.

Mr Drake advised that there was one aerial ladder (ALP) in Hayes and another in Wembley. When this equipment was available, it was able to get to the required destination quickly. The apparatus could reach six floors but there were times when its effectiveness was restricted as it had to be placed within 12 metres of the base of the building. Dry risers were used in buildings that were over 12 metres high. Although the ALP equipment would be automatically dispatched as a matter of course, risk assessments were undertaken and, if the unit was not needed, it would be returned to base.

It was noted that blocks of flats should have approximately two hours fire safety time and the policy was still to tell residents to 'stay put'. Any information from callers reporting a fire within their block would be relayed directly to the crews attending the fire to ensure that they knew the callers' exact locations.

It was suggested that the fire cadet opportunities be targeted at looked after children and those children that wouldn't usually be offered this type of experience. Mr Drake advised that the cadets provided a taste of the work undertaken by the fire service and a career insight with the opportunity to use things like breathing apparatus. This opportunity was open to anyone from any background with no barriers. A recruitment drive was due to start in March 2018. Mr Drake would be happy to come back to a future meeting with additional information.

It was noted that the London Fire Brigade had the ability to undertake urban search and rescue. These resources, technology and equipment could be mobilised in the UK or abroad to help with overseas disaster activity. The team comprised specialist officers and could be mobilised very quickly.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

46. **COMMUNITY SENTENCING WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT** (*Agenda Item 6*)

The Chairman praised Liz Penny, the Democratic Services Officer that had supported the Working Group, for producing such a great report on a review that had faced significant challenges. The Vice Chairman advised that the review had been a non event where the chief witness, the London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), had refused to engage in terms of attendance at meetings or providing written answers to questions. The Working Group's findings suggested that the CRC had not been working as well as anticipated and problems had been identified with the service provision nationally.

It was noted that the Vice Chairman had attended a workshop set up by a Select Committee that had been looking into the effectiveness of local government scrutiny. This review had highlighted the inability of scrutiny committees to hold external organisations to account in terms of there being no legislative requirement or enforcement. The Select Committee determined that councils needed to be able to 'follow the pound'. Its report and recommendations had been passed to Government for a response.

The Vice Chairman advised that the Working Group had not been able to conclude that the London CRC was not working effectively as representatives had not attended any of the meetings. However, it was suspected that the London CRC had not been working as well as anticipated and the report recommended that Cabinet engage with the NPS, HM Inspector of Probation and the Ministry of Justice to highlight the lack of engagement and the Council's inability to hold the body to account. It was hoped that

additional powers would be afforded to local government scrutiny committees to enable them to scrutinise those external organisations that delivered public services.

The Chairman acknowledged that this had been an interesting review which had highlighted the need to scrutinise the work of publicly funded organisations on behalf of residents. It was important to have an effective non-custodial system where prison was an absolute last resort. The report highlighted the value of what could be done by local authority scrutiny and provided a good example of detailed local work that could be clearly translated to other areas. It was noted that other organisations had expressed an interest in this review and the Working Group's findings.

The Committee was advised that the Working Group had been unable to conclude that the London CRC was not doing its job. However, after some discussion amongst Members of the Working Group when reviewing the draft final report, it had been agreed to strengthen the wording. As the London CRC had not engaged in the review, the report could not be overly critical or conclusive and there was no information or evidence to support this. It was thought that, if the experience of other councils was not dissimilar, it was likely that action would be taken by the appropriate authorities to resolve the issue.

The Chairman thanked those Members, officers and external witnesses that had been involved in the review.

RESOLVED: That the Community Sentencing Working Group final report be agreed and forwarded to Cabinet.

47. **WORK PROGRAMME 2017/2018** (*Agenda Item 7*)

Consideration was given to the Committee's Work Programme. It was noted that the local Trust Quality Account reports were likely to be submitted to the Council at some point in April 2018. It was agreed that the Democratic Services Manager would draft responses to each of the reports and circulate them to the Committee for comment. It was hoped that this would be completed before the election but that this would depend on when the reports were received from the Trusts.

At the External Services Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 January 2018, Hillingdon CCG had advised that a procurement exercise was underway in relation to the provision of GP services in Heathrow Villages which was expected to conclude in early to mid March 2018. The CCG would be asked to provide an update at the Committee's next meeting on 14 March 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting, which commenced at 6.00 pm, closed at 7.55 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Nikki O'Halloran on 01895 250472. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.