

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday 30 January 2020 at 7.00 pm

MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillor Tim Briggs, Councillor Danial Adilypour (Vice-Chair), Councillor Liz Atkins (Chair), Councillor Mary Atkins (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jonathan Bartley, Councillor Stephen Donnelly, Councillor Joshua Lindsey and Councillor Nanda Manley-Browne (Substitute)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Maria Kay and Councillor Lucy Caldicott

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Irfan Mohammed and Councillor Mohammed Seedat

*Action
required by*

1. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 13 November 2019 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. **2019 SAFER LAMBETH PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY REPORT**

Councillor Liz Atkins, Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC), welcomed attendees to the meeting and all present introduced themselves.

Annie Hudson, Strategic Director, Children's Services, and Det Ch Supt Simon Messinger, Borough Commander, Lambeth & Southwark, and Co-Chair, Safer Lambeth Partnership (SLP), introduced the report and made the following key points:

- There were five "responsible authorities" represented on the SLP: the Council, Police, Fire Service, Probation and Health
- The partnership produced an annual strategic assessment which informed its priorities. For the current year these were to tackle serious youth violence, violence against women and girls, and terrorism

- The Met Police was reorganised early in 2019 giving rise to 12 new Basic Command Units (BCUs). This resulted in the merger of Lambeth and Southwark into a single BCU. Systems and processes were being embedded across the two boroughs. The main priorities of the new BCU were reducing robbery, violence and burglary
- The Council's Community Safety Team had been moved into the Children's Services directorate in February 2019
- Lambeth had experienced a significant decrease in serious youth violence in the 2018/19 financial year and was better placed in the current league table of total notifiable offences (TNOs) than at any time in recent years. However, it was noted that Southwark's position with regard to TNOs had worsened in the same period
- In terms of challenges for the SLP in the year ahead, the difficulty of managing long term issues with short term funding streams was highlighted, while it was also necessary to increase the level of co-production with residents when it came to strategies and action plans

The Chair introduced Alan Gadd, Chair, Faiths Together in Lambeth (FTIL), who stated that:

- FTIL had existed for around 12 years and sought to draw together different faith communities in a constructive way
- In relation to counter-terrorism, a Prevent programme manager was in place who had reached out to faith communities. In turn FTIL had organised a series of community question times to increase awareness and engagement around Prevent and enable members of the faith community to raise issues or concerns
- In his view, the Prevent strategy was positive if it worked as it should and the appropriate sensitivities were displayed; however it was also the case that some distrust remained

Elroy Palmer and Olusean Sowole, St Giles Trust, stated that:

- St Giles worked in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to deliver intervention projects aimed at supporting young people at risk. These primarily supported first time entrants into the criminal justice system, females at risk of violence and young people involved in gang activity
- Referrals to the projects were made by the Council's Community Safety team
- One potential gap in provision concerned medium risk individuals; a new case worker was being brought in to address this
- A great deal of weight was placed on lived experience, with around 90% of case workers having experienced traumas similar to those faced by clients
- St Giles operated in custody suites, hospitals, prisons and other locations synonymous with "teachable moments"
- One focus of their work was to help young people find employment,

education, training or some other positive activity to engage with. This helped them to develop a different mindset with regards to criminality

- There was no blueprint for a caseworker to follow; rather, it was necessary to listen, try different ideas, lead by example and generate openness and trust by behaving with consistency and reliability

In response to questions from Members, Det Ch Insp Simon Messinger, Annie Hudson, Alan Gadd, Elroy Palmer, Olusean Sowole, Supt Ian Howells (Neighbourhoods and Partnership Lead), Kristian Aspinall (Assistant Director, Community Safety) and Umar Mahmood (FTIL Board Member and Police Independent Advisory Group [IAG] Vice Chair) made the following points:

- FTIL considered that the Prevent duty on teachers coupled with the behaviour and comments of some young children sometimes led to inappropriate referrals, which could have a lasting negative impact. Adequate training was essential and a “train the trainer” initiative would be beneficial. There was also a lack of grass roots outreach to the Muslim community
- Prevent was a statutory part of the safeguarding process. Referrals came from schools and social workers and cross checking was carried out with the local policing team to identify any outstanding police action. Multi-agency action plans were then developed. Numbers of referrals – which could not be disclosed but were considered to be low – were reported to the Home Office. A reduction in risk levels was the key measure of success
- A number of programmes led by the London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) were due to be rolled out in Lambeth schools beginning in the summer term. These were largely aimed at promoting healthy relationships and resilience, and had been tried and tested elsewhere. Work was currently being done with schools to develop the programmes and initial results should be available in 2021
- The police were subject to a raft of scrutiny and audit activities, including Overview & Scrutiny but also Safer Neighbourhood Boards, the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Members of the public wishing to submit complaints could do so by calling 101; details were then taken and an internal Inspector would make contact with the complainant. Complaints could also be dealt with by the Directorate of Professional Standards – a standalone command – and the Independent Office of Police Conduct would investigate the most serious allegations
- The IAG was not there to hold the police to account but rather to advise on the rollout of policies; for example, in relation to stop and search and the use of spit hoods. The group, which consisted of 10-15 people who represented the local community, also arranged visits and held member events addressing topical issues. Members of the public could make direct contact with the IAG including via Twitter and email
- The Rescue and Response programme, which tackled county lines activity and operated in 15 London Boroughs, had taken some time to get up and running, due in part to the need to establish effective lines

of communication with the regions involved, but was now considered a great initiative. One challenge going forward was to address similar drug-related activity between boroughs

- Improved joined up working with community and voluntary organisations had enabled better identification of those at risk of criminal exploitation. The aim was to help and support such people rather than advocating a criminal justice response, where possible, though challenges remained in terms of breaking harmful cycles

The Chair thanked officers and in particular the invited guests representing FTIL, IAG and St Giles Trust for their insightful contributions. She then moved the meeting focus on to anti-social behaviour (ASB), such as noise nuisance and fly-tipping – which, despite being comparatively low-level crime, nonetheless had a big impact on residents' lives.

In response to questions from members, Kristian Aspinall, Supt Ian Howells and Andrew Eyres (Strategic Director, Integrated Health and Care) stated that:

- The new noise service operated from 9-5 Sunday to Wednesday and 24/7 from Thursday to Saturday. Complainants were called back within half an hour and a case officer assigned to assess the risk and evidence base. A decision was then made as to whether officers could take action on the night. Complainants were contacted again within four weeks of the initial call being logged, to establish whether the issue was continuing, and in some circumstances could be supported through civil proceedings. Satisfaction performance measures were still in the process of being established but data could be shared with the committee at a later date
- A CCTV review was being carried out to ensure a strategic approach across the council and with other agencies such as Transport for London. More deployable cameras were being assigned based on intelligence from the police, which allowed a more flexible approach and was a more effective deterrent. Officers aimed to engage with residents regarding where cameras should be sited. It was noted that Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs) did not always support CCTV on estates, partly due to the cost (both capital and maintenance)
- The police used their enforcement powers in relation to individuals and premises to tackle ASB where appropriate. This included tools such as closure orders and gang injunctions
- Fly tippers could only legally be named and shamed when prosecuted, not in cases where fixed penalty notices (FPNs) were accepted
- It was noted that only illegal traveller encampments should be the subject of action from the Public Protection team and this point should be clarified in para. 7.4 of the report
- Lambeth were working with Westminster to tackle street gambling on Westminster Bridge. The Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was one tool which could be used, but enforcement was key. Work was also done with other boroughs where such gamblers originated to try

to prevent them from setting up on the bridge in the first place, though it was noted that these individuals rotated and therefore a continual focus based on risk assessment was required

- A multi-agency approach was taken when ASB dovetailed with mental health issues
- Police officer training in relation to stop and search was always evolving and included interactive scenarios and advice on body language. A stop and search scrutiny panel existed for each borough and resident workshops had been carried out on estates aimed at increasing understanding of the process from both sides. It was noted that first experiences of stop and search could often set young people's relations with the police for life

Guillotine

At this point in the meeting the guillotine fell at 9.00pm.

MOVED by the Chair and

RESOLVED: That the meeting continue for a further period of up to 30 minutes.

A resident from Tulse Hill estate TRA queried the position regarding fire safety and balconies. She reported that residents had been told to remove plants, furniture and other items – including from ground floor balconies where the fire risk was lower – while at the same time being encouraged to make their estates beautiful under the Lambeth in Bloom initiative. In response to this and subsequent questions from members, Norman Perry (Borough Commander, Lambeth Fire Service) and Bayo Dosunmu (Strategic Director, Resident Services) stated that:

- The fire service had issued guidance on removing barbecues from balconies but plants were not mentioned. Anything on balconies would burn eventually in the event of a fire, and residents needed to be aware of this as well as the composition of their balcony; however, estate balconies were private areas and so were under the remit of the Council rather than the fire service
- Following the Grenfell Tower fire the landscape around fire safety was fast moving and councils were under intense scrutiny from the Health & Safety Executive, social housing regulator and others. The current advice was to clear balconies entirely though it was accepted that the letters sent to residents could have been better expressed in terms of tone. Lambeth in Bloom was very much supported, though this applied to public open spaces
- More broadly on fire safety, the fire service was working with the local authority regarding a protocol under which information could be shared in order to identify vulnerable individuals who would benefit from home fire safety visits. Referrals for visits could also be made by other professionals such as nurses and home help

The Chair drew the item to a close by thanking all contributors and summed up the committee's recommendations as set out below.

RESOLVED:

1. That efforts be made to enhance Prevent training. This should include increasing the amount of proactive engagement and co-production, especially with the Muslim community. Consideration should also be given to a “train the trainer” scheme
2. That the committee requests further details regarding the evidence base for the London Violence Reduction Unit programmes set to be rolled out in Lambeth schools from 2020, as well as evaluation/performance data for these programmes when this becomes available
3. That a flow diagram be provided to the committee setting out the various police monitoring groups which exist, locally and London-wide, including mechanisms to submit complaints and what residents could expect of these
4. To note the importance of providing consistent early support to young people at risk of violence and commend the work of St Giles Trust
5. That more clarity and communication is needed for stakeholders and the public regarding the role of the Police Independent Advisory Group
6. That performance data regarding the new noise service be shared with the committee as soon as it becomes available. This should include information on resident satisfaction
7. That communication is needed with residents regarding how they can contribute to the CCTV review (for example, with regards to the siting of cameras)
8. That the committee supports enforcement action against fly-tipping and requests that the numbers of fixed penalty notices issued be publicised
9. That a review of the success or otherwise of the Public Space Protection Order in operation on Westminster Bridge be carried out and reported back to the committee
10. That the committee notes the in-depth training carried out with regards to police stop and search procedures and requests that ongoing engagement with residents be carried out to inform and enhance the training, particularly with young people
11. That information regarding stop and search procedures should be shared with the mobile police units operating outside of Lambeth and coming into the borough
12. That the committee requests clarification regarding the Council’s policy on fire safety in respect of balconies on estates, including how this has been (and will be) communicated, and timelines for any review of the policy
13. That the committee supports the aim of maximising the number of fire safety home visits to vulnerable individuals in the borough, including through referrals from professionals most likely to visit the homes in question, and requests further information about what is being done to

achieve this, together with any related data

14. That the information on Prevent delivery in Lambeth education settings (Appendix 2) be noted but that further information be requested regarding the views of pupils involved
15. That the committee is concerned at the effectiveness of Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and the risks of pupils attending PRUs being drawn into gang activity, and wishes to refer this issue on to the Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee for further consideration

4. 2019-20 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members discussed the work programme and the following points were raised:

- The primary focus of the next meeting on 26 March would be the Homes for Lambeth Business Plan. Members were asked to notify the Senior Democratic Services Officer of any issues they wished to be addressed in this report as soon as possible in order that officers could take these into account
- It was noted that the response in the work programme (Appendix 1) pertaining to the recommendation concerning the independence of the Homes for Lambeth Ownership & Stewardship Panel (OSC meeting of 6 June 2019) needed to be updated before it could be ascertained whether it had indeed been accepted, as stated. The Senior Democratic Services Officer would raise this with relevant officers
- There were concerns about the way Universal Credit was administered and the impact this had on residents. This could potentially be the subject of a future commission. It was suggested that the Senior Democratic Services Officer liaise with officers to ascertain whether it would be possible for relevant data to be included in the expected Employment & Skills Strategy report at the 26 March meeting in the first instance
- It was noted that clarity was needed with regards to the merger of the six Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in South East London and the establishment of a local Borough Board for Lambeth, and what the scrutiny arrangements would be to oversee this new arrangement. This could form the basis for a future OSC item

RESOLVED:

1. That the work programme as drafted and the status of actions be noted (Appendix 1)
2. That the draft Terms of Reference for the proposed Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) with the London Borough of Southwark on the reconfiguration of Lambeth Hospital Mental Health Inpatient Services be noted (Appendix 2)
3. That the following issues be considered when determining the future work programme:
 - Universal Credit

- CCG merger and related scrutiny arrangements

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

CHAIR
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Thursday 26 March 2020

Date of Despatch: Friday 7 February 2020

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