

MINUTES OF THE SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 8 March 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors David Michael (Chair), James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair), Brenda Dacres, Colin Elliott, Stella Jeffrey, Jim Mallory, John Paschoud, Luke Sorba and Paul Upex

APOLOGIES: Councillor Joyce Jacca

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Janet Daby (Cabinet Member Community Safety), Councillor Joan Millbank (Cabinet Member Third Sector & Community), Councillor Pauline Morrison, Paul Aladenika (Service Group Manager, Policy Development and Analytical Insight), Becky Canning (Chief Officer) (National Probation Service, London Division, Southwark/Lewisham Cluster), Winston Castello (Community Enterprise Manager), Gary Connors (Strategic Community Safety Services Manager), Liz Dart (Head of Culture and Community Development), Paul Gale (Local Assembly Manager), Petra Marshall (Community Resources Manager), Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Cassie Newman (Community Rehabilitation Service), Antonio Rizzo (Library and Information Services Manager), Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney (Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People) and Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2017

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 17 January be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Michael declared a personal interest in item 3 as he is the Chair of Equaliteam and a co-opted Board Member of Marshall Phoenix Memorial Trust representing Lewisham Council.

Cllr Michael declared a personal interest in items 4 and 5 as he is a member of the Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board.

Cllr Upex declared a personal interest in item 9 as he is a Council appointed trustee on Voluntary Services Lewisham.

3. Responses to referrals to this Committee - Main Grants Programme

RESOLVED:

That the response to the Committee's referral on the Main Grants Programme be noted.

4. National Probation Service CRC Update

4.1 Cassie Newman, Head of Strategic Partnerships – South London, London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) gave a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which will be included in the agenda documentation. Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney, Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People and Cllr Janet Daby, Executive Member for Community Safety were also in attendance

4.2 In response to concerns raised by members of the Committee at the results of the recent HMIP (Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons) inspection and the performance of the CRC the following key points were highlighted:

- The HMIP inspection took place in September 2016 but was looking at statistics and performance from December 2015. Improvements had already been made since this time. The London CRC was committed to improvement along with partners, they had been awarded their contract in 2015 and changes would take time to be embedded.
- The CRC worked closely with partners including: MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Police and Crime); Local Authorities; and the National Probation Service. There was a strong commitment to performance improvement and reducing reoffending rates.
- Transforming rehabilitation was very challenging and the Ministry of Justice had reduced funding in this area.
- Legacy issues had an impact on performance. At the time the contract was awarded, 30% of staff were agency. This had now been reduced to 5% creating a more stable workforce, which had brought about improvements to performance.
- The contract for the CRC was managed by the Ministry of Justice and they held the CRC to account and managed the contract framework.
- The HMIP inspection had raised many issues that the CRC had already been aware of and were working on. However the CRC felt that the HMIP inspection had not recognised the timeframe and scale of the transformation taking place.
- There were 800 improvement "packages" in place as a result of the CRC's improvement plan such as "performance and talent management of staff". The CRC would be working closely with all partner agencies but recognised that their partners faced similar financial challenges.

4.3 Becky Canning, Head of Lewisham and Southwark Probation, National Probation Service, addressed the committee and highlighted the following key points:

- Lewisham and Southwark Probation had also been subject to the HMIP inspection and there were four main recommendations for improvement.
- There were two related to improving the partnership working with the CRC including assuring clearer lines of accountability between the two organisations.
- The remaining two recommendations were related to improving the quality of information provided by the court. Performance improvement plans had been put in place relating to the speed of case allocation and pre-sentence reports. Information needed to be more focussed and produced more quickly with a greater focus on public protection.

- The NPS continued to work in partnership with Lewisham, particularly with housing and through the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

4.4 In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- Future closures of courts in surrounding areas posed an additional challenge to the sector as there could be a greater volume of cases through Lewisham courts.
- Prison reforms were also on the horizon; probation officers could be moved with an increased focus on rehabilitation in prisons.
- Additional changes and reforms were likely and this would pose an on-going challenge for service providers to adapt quickly.

4.5 **RESOLVED:**

That a report on the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company be included on the Committee's work programme for the 2017/18 municipal year.

That Becky Canning and Cassie Newman be thanked for attending the meeting.

5. Safer Lewisham Plan

5.1 Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney gave a presentation to the committee, a copy of which will be included in the agenda documentation. During the presentation and in the discussion that followed, the following key points were highlighted:

- The 2016/17 Safer Lewisham Plan focused on 4 priorities: peer on peer abuse for under 25 year olds; violence against women and girls (VAWG); places and people of interest linked to organised crime; and hate crime.
- The priorities for the 2017/18 Safer Lewisham Plan would be tackling violence. This included gender-based violence; peer on peer abuse; and other violence. These priorities were proposed taking into consideration the strategic needs assessment and including the results of the Lewisham Crime Survey.
- Work had been carried out with schools around addressing youth safety and information would be distributed on tips to stay safe.
- There was very strong partnership working between A and E Consultants, the voluntary and community sector, Local Police and the Council. The model adopted would focus on a trauma informed approach to restorative justice.
- Analysis of the data on hate crime was being undertaken including breakdown by type and severity.
- Increasing reporting rates would be a strong focus of the tackling gender-based violence objective. This would include increasing publicity of services such as the Athena Service run by Refuge in Lewisham.

- There had been additional funding from the NHS for support through CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) to victims of assault and rape in London.
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a requirement on Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) (In Lewisham, the Safer Lewisham Partnership) to develop a three year Crime and Disorder Strategy setting out how crime and anti-social behaviour would be tackled – this would be met in Lewisham by adopting the MOPAC Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 as the strategy to meet this requirement for the next 4 years. The Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan was an annual plan that sits alongside the three-year strategy and focussed on local issues.
- Working closely with schools was very important for tackling youth crime. The Council and partners worked closely with Headteachers and governors. Numbers of pupils being excluded in Lewisham were going down.
- The Crime Reduction Service would be looking at disproportionality in the criminal justice system and within homelessness and school exclusions.
- Removing the term “honour” based violence could be important for some groups and this could be investigated further with partners Athena and the Muslim Women’s Group.
- A report produced by Urban Synergy looking at exclusions in Lewisham could be shared to the Committee.

5.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

That an update on the Safer Lewisham Plan be presented to Committee in September 2017 and March 2018.

6. Comprehensive Equalities Scheme - Annual Review

6.1 Paul Aladenika, Service Group Manager, Policy Development, introduced the report to the Committee. In the discussion that followed the following key points were raised:

- The number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system was higher in Lewisham than statistical neighbours and the national average. Across London the numbers were increasing; Lewisham had been focussing on a proactive approach to tackling youth violence.
- Members of the committee requested whether information provided on percentages of young people achieving A*- C across different ethnicities could be further divided to show differences in attainment compared to levels of disadvantage within each ethnic group.
- The ethnic monitoring of lettings showed that there was a high proportion of lets where the ethnicity was not disclosed. It was important to understand why this was high and whether there were barriers to individuals disclosing this information. Forms should be clear and explain exactly how data would be used so people had confidence in completing them.

- New data protection requirements were coming into law in 2018 through GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) which would replace the DPA. Officers were requested to ensure this was being addressed.

6.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

7. **Local Assemblies Review**

7.1 Paul Gale, Local Assemblies Manager and Winston Castello, Community Enterprise Manager, introduced the report to the Committee. Councillor Joan Millbank, Executive Member for Third Sector and the Community was also in attendance. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- Funding through Local Assemblies' grants was able to be awarded to new projects from organisation who had been previously funded but repeat grants could not be awarded for the same project.
- The Local Assemblies Team were working with the Communications team to look at how webpages could be updated.
- It could be useful for Local Assembly Coordinators to provide local assemblies with interesting articles of relevance to the community which could be included in the literature that local assemblies produce and distribute to local residents.
- Members of the Committee reported different experiences with the distribution companies used. Two different distribution companies were used by the Council, any issues could be reported to the Local Assemblies Team.
- It was important to ensure that all the work of local assemblies was measured and quantified. Measuring the number of members of the public attending was not necessarily a holistic measure of success.
- **Standing orders were suspended at 9.20pm.**
- Over the next year, Local Assembly Coordinators would be working more closely with local community groups to consider the potential for different ways of working.
- There were different styles of communication used by different local assemblies and it would be useful for more information on the different options and methods available to be provided to all assemblies so they could learn from each other more successfully.

7.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

8. **Libraries Saving Programme Update**

8.1 Antonio Rizzo, Head of Library and Information Service and Liz Dart, Head of Community and Neighbourhood Development introduced the report to the committee. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- There was an increased investment in e-books and audiobooks across Lewisham libraries with over 600 magazine and 1000 newspapers available on 7 i-pads with 600 titles each.
- New 100mb data lines were being connected at Deptford Lounge, Downham and Lewisham Libraries.
- A decision on the future partner for Manor House Library was due to be made at Mayor and Cabinet Contracts on the 22nd March 2017.
- Statistics showing the success of the community approach to managing libraries could be provided to members of the committee. These could include: numbers of Lewisham residents who were members and users of libraries. The data could be broken down to ward level.
- Library staff continued to work with youth services and school attendance teams and were trained to look out for unaccompanied children and children attending during the school day etc.

8.2 RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

9. Voluntary Sector Accommodation Plan - update on Implementation

9.1 Petra Marshal, Community Resources Manager and Liz Dart, Head of Community and Neighbourhood Development introduced the report to the Committee. The following key points were noted:

- Following a three-month consultation with the voluntary and community sector, a new framework for the Council's use of assets was agreed with four categories of assets.
- Following this an implementation plan was developed and concluded and officers were now delivering the changes required.
- The Executive Member for the Third Sector and Community thanked officers for their work and praised their achievements.

9.2 RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

10. 2017/18 Draft Work Programme Report

10.1 Katie Wood, Scrutiny Manager, introduced the report to the Committee and requested that members considered any matters they may wish to suggest for future scrutiny.

- The draft work programme for the 2017/18 would be agreed at the first meeting of the next municipal year in April 2017.
- Councillors thanked Councillor Michael for his work as Chair of the Committee over the last municipal year.

10.2 RESOLVED:

That Cllr Michael be thanked for his work as Chair of the Safer Stronger communities Select Committee over the last municipal year.

That the report be noted.

11. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

11.1 RESOLVED:

That the following referrals be made to Mayor and Cabinet:

- 1) **Item 4 – National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company Update** - to request to Mayor and Cabinet that the following views of the Safer Stronger Community Select Committee be noted: That the Committee were very concerned about the performance of the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company and concerned at the results of their recent HMIP inspection.

- 2) **Item 7 – Local Assemblies Update** - to request to Mayor and Cabinet that the following views of the Safer Stronger Community Select Committee be noted: The Committee stressed the importance of local assemblies for the local community and welcomed the Mayor’s previous response of protecting funding. The Committee urged the Mayor and Cabinet to maintain the commitment and funding for Local Assemblies in future years.

The meeting ended at 10.30 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____