

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 23 January 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Gareth Siddorn (Vice-Chair), Abdeslam Amrani, Chris Barnham, Andre Bourne, Suzannah Clarke, John Coughlin, Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Amanda De Ryk, Colin Elliott, Carl Handley, Maja Hilton, Simon Hooks, Sue Hordijkeno, Mark Ingleby, Councillor Joyce Jacca, Stella Jeffrey, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Roy Kennedy, Helen Klier, Jim Mallory, David Michael, Jamie Milne, Hilary Moore, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Pat Raven, Joan Reid, Jonathan Slater, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski, Alan Till, Paul Upex and James-J Walsh

APOLOGIES: Councillors Obajimi Adefiranye, Paul Bell, Bill Brown and Susan Wise

ALSO PRESENT: Kate Halpin (Borough Commander for Lewisham) (London Metropolitan Police Service), Graham Norton (Assistant Director of Operations (South East)) (London Ambulance Service), Philip Powell (Stakeholder Engagment Manager) (London Ambulance Service), Keeley Smith (Borough Commander for Lewisham) (London Fire Brigade), Peter Agent, Geoff Tice, Dave Wheeler, Salena Mulhere (Overview and Scrutiny Manager), Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Andrew Sherry (TfL), Mufu Durowoju (TfL), Nigel Dyer (Thames Water), Sarah Hurcomb (Thames Water) and Alex Nickson (Thames Water)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2016

- 1.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair advised the committee that he had written to Barry Quirk on Friday requesting an independent inquiry into matters relating to New Bermondsey and the Surrey Canal Sports Foundation.
- 1.3 The Chair asked members to agree to note that action for the record. This was agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 **RESOLVED:** That the following declaration of interest be recorded.
 - Cllr Michael declared that he was a member of the Lewisham Safer Neighborhood Panel.

3. Emergency Services Update

- 3.1 The Chair welcomed the guests from the London Ambulance Service (LAS), the London Fire Brigade (LFB) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).
- 3.2 Graham Norton and Philip Powell addressed the Committee. The key points to note were:

- 20,000 more incidents in 2015.
- An increase from 59.2% to 63.3% of calls being category A calls in 2015/16.
- Implications for performance this year: it is challenging to maintain performance with unprecedented demand.
- There are three areas of growth: 111 calls forwarded to 999 where need be, healthcare professionals calling and the Met calling in. These 3 areas represented 27% of call volume in 16/17.
- Efforts to “Hear and treat” (and manage those calls where appropriate on the phone only) have been made, LAS has the highest numbers in the country of “frequent callers”,
- LAS are working with NHS England to improve handover with Accident & Emergency and are also working with the MPS to understand activity.
- LAS has more people and vehicles out this year than last year, are being proactive to help manage demand via social media, and have adjusted staffing plans leading up to winter pressure, working with the wider health system to minimise delays in hospitals.
- There is now a dedicated team helping to manage the pressures and redirect ambulances to hospitals as effectively as possible.
- There was a systems failure with logging calls on 1st Jan 2017 from 12.30 am to 5.15 am. Some callers waited longer than they should have and LAS apologise. An external investigation, carried out by NHS England, has been launched to look at the impact on patients. LAS will share the findings with OSC when the investigation has concluded.
- LAS was previously placed in special measures by the CQC, there are a range of projects in place to address this. There is a process in place now to ensure the right kit is always in ambulances. 140 new ambulances are being built and will start being delivered in March. LAS are also looking at the needs of increasing numbers of bariatric patients to identify if LAS need more specialist equipment, and more vehicles that can transport this group of patients. Governance was also highlighted by the CQC. A new duty of candour has been put in place to support openness. Graduate recruitment been redesigned to give a clear outline of what recruits can expect. There have been improvements in medicines management with enhanced staff training and the encouraging of incident reporting.
- Recruitment was previously a weakness but 700 front line staff were recruited last year. SE London sector is now fully staffed, last time performance was reported to this committee this was not the case.
- There are improved personal development plans for staff development: over 60% have had an appraisal so far this year.

3.3 In response to their questions, Members were advised of the following:

- Previously, lots of paramedics were leaving to go to Australia and New Zealand, but currently the posts are fully recruited to in Lewisham. However, because of demand and handover issues at hospitals, performance was still to be improved.
- Currently the service receives far more calls than ever before, particularly over the last couple of months.
- Handover at hospitals is taking much longer than it should do. Hospitals have a target of 15 minutes from arrival to handover, in south east London that target is a struggle to meet. This does impact directly on LAS performance and hospitals are aware of that. Lewisham Hospital does all it can to offload patients as soon as possible as it is very aware of the risks. The hospital and the LAS are very keen to sort the problems out but this is all against a backdrop of huge demand.

- LAS have been involved in the production of the Sustainability and Transformation Plans in London but officers present cannot advise on any further details as they are not directly involved.
- Although there is a real push to increase recruitment, LAS have found that whilst being an ambulance paramedic previously used to be entered into as a job for life, more graduates were now seeing it as a 4-5 year career. Further recruitment would be carried out in Australia this year.
- The duty of candour policy has had an impact around cases of serious harm: being open and honest with patients and relatives and ensuring that staff understand, and feel able, to come forward and report incidents without fear.
- In response to queries about the diversity of the LAS workforce and efforts to recruit more widely from other countries with more ethnically diverse populations, officers advised that they would send further details about the staff profile and efforts to recruit more widely.

3.4 Keeley Smith, Borough Commander LFB, gave an update to the Committee. The following points were noted:

- A pump was removed from Forest Hill in August 2013 along with other pumping appliances across London to provide emergency fire cover during periods of strike action. Due to budget cuts, these pumping appliance were permanently removed at the end of June 2016. Under the London Safety Plan 5, a number stations closed, including Downham Fire Station and some other stations had a pumping appliance-removed on 9 January 2014.
- Mayor Khan has reviewed LFB services to see how the cuts brought in by the previous Mayor/Plan have affected the service. The review of performance found that, against key targets, response times remain adequate across London. However some response times have worsened slightly as a result of the cuts and the review recommends that the LFB budget not be cut any further. Nonetheless, there is a 23.5 million budget gap inherited from Mayor Johnson.
- Mayor Khan has pledged to keep the budget the same for 4 years, but the LFB will make some cuts because of inflation.
- The new draft London Safety Plan does not recommend further front line appliance cuts, but does outline other possible savings including blue light collaboration and rethinking the way LFB respond to incidents - keeping the target response times of 6 & 8 minutes for pumps but looking at attendance times for the fire rescue units that attend big accidents (and also aerial attendance times).
- In Lewisham there is an aerial appliance at Forest Hill and the fire rescue unit at Lewisham will be included in the review for specialist appliance attendance times. The specialist appliances won't be cut, but LFB are considering if they are at the right stations for quickest response. The draft plan outlines that by assessing whether appliances are in the right places, it has been found that there would be a better attendance rate if a pump was put back in Forest Hill station but this would only improve the second appliance attendance time by a couple of seconds so a pump will not be placed back at Forest Hill.
- There have been no significant changes to attendance times in recent months: LFB aspire for 6 minutes for first appliance and 8 minutes for second and that is currently mirrored in Lewisham although not mirrored through all wards.
- LFB have a new interim commissioner, Dani Cotton, following the retirement of Ron Dobson.

3.5 In response to questions, Keeley Smith advised:

- The new plan sets out plans to explore ways to enable fire stations to be better utilised by and for the local community. Nine PFI stations have been built and, as part of the specification criteria, they included community facilities and this has been found to have worked quite well. LFB are looking at making stations more open, but this does depend on the age and layout of all stations meaning that some will be more open than others. There is a small community room at Lewisham on ground level but Deptford, Forest Hill and New Cross will be more awkward. Each station do community events and open their doors to engage with local people.
- After the decisions in the previous London Safety Plan, Downham Fire Station was sold to a developer for the provision of social housing. Central departments oversee estate matters.
- The removed appliance from Forest Hill was in Croydon. LFB do not own their fleet, they are leased from Babcocks. As a result those removed appliances were put in a central location for emergency fire cover, not needed, and because there is now no threat of industrial action they were returned to Babcocks.
- The number of people injured by fire continues to come down and that is excellent, as prevention is always better than reaction. Previously the focus was on areas, now LFB is looking at where people are vulnerable, rather than postcode. There is an assessment of risk tool that the public can go on to the website to use and see how LFB view their area.
- Although Lewisham has a borough commander, the service is London wide and stations don't mirror or serve solely the boroughs they are located in.
- The LFB borough commander attends the Lewisham Safer Partnership Board along with the MET borough commander and station commanders work in partnership with local stakeholders too.
- The LFB Fire safety department and the fire engineering department look at solutions to make sure all buildings going up comply with fire safety requirements: LFB recommend putting sprinklers in schools and residential homes and commercial buildings. The LFB is pleased to see Lewisham Homes retro fitting some properties with sprinklers.

3.6 Kate Halpin, MET borough commander, provided an update to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- New Mayor Khan is in the process of finalising a new police and crime plan and priorities. The Met previously had *MOPAC 7* under Johnson, to reduce crime by 20%. A 20% reduction in crime was achieved in Lewisham.
- The new mayor's priorities appeared to mirror those of Lewisham SLP: violence against women and girls (VAWG), serious youth crime, hate crime and organised crime.
- The consultation on the new plan closes on 23 February 2017. The MET is also waiting to see who is going to replace the current commissioner. Savings and efficiencies have to be made and it is unlikely that a new commissioner will stop that process.
- London currently has 32 borough commanders and it is now proposed to collapse 32 borough units in to 12 Basic Command Units (BCU). At the moment this would align Lewisham with Greenwich and Bexley, under one Chief Superintendent with borough leads under that position. This is under consultation: the outcome of which can be fed back to the committee in due course by the borough commander.
- Performance - crime is increasing across the country, the MET have bucked that trend, probably because the MET had not cut police numbers the way that others areas had. The Met had cut lots of back office resource

before, but this would not be sustainable going forward. There needed to be better use of IT to increase online reporting.

- The new BCU model still has local policing: by the end of the year each ward in Lewisham will have 2 Dedicated Ward Officers (DWO) and one PCSO as a minimum.
- All secondary school will get a schools officer.
- Crime figures last week included fraud for the first time as crime is changing.
- In October 2016 body-worn cameras on staff were introduced, focused on those more likely to carry out stop and search, which is a very important tool but has to be used correctly. The body-worn cameras have led to complaints reducing and early pleas at court.
- Jo Oakley, the current Superintendent was leaving and Alan Ray would be joining the borough on 6 March 2017 as her replacement.

3.7 In response to questions from Members, Kate Halpin advised:

- Moped crime is a national and London phenomenon. Stopping people on mopeds is difficult as officers can't pursue them if they aren't wearing a helmet, so most involved in moped based crime don't wear helmets. Traffic officers are trialing various initiatives to tackle this. Camden and Islington are the hotspots for this crime. The Police Federation (and the Home Office) are also looking into this as there are currently members facing potential charges of death by dangerous driving charges.
- Communication is key: the borough commander meets with the lead officer and member for the Council and have agreed that all parties will update the other, inclusive of ward officers, if relevant press releases are going out.
- The further roll out of schools officers and working closely with head teachers was important. The first ones were in Southwark after the murder of Damilola Taylor. The Met doesn't want to demonise young people, as most are fantastic. All the cadets are brilliant and help build relationships and understanding. There is also the Trilogy service working with young people in the youth service in Lewisham and the DWO and PCSO work with local primary schools.
- The issue of sirens bothering residents at night is difficult: a speeding police car can be a lethal weapon and they need to get to an emergency quickly, but no officer wants to risk hitting a car or person as a serious incident could see their career on hold for 3-4 years while it is investigated. Senior officers do try to encourage sirens not being used in middle of night unless necessary but it is a judgement call and better to be safe.
- The police work closely with local authorities in relation to LAC and try to not always think of criminal justice options first.
- There has been a purge on mobile phone usage while driving, the message given to officers is zero tolerance.
- There are ongoing discussions about enforcement of the borough wide 20mph limit: most speeding is not enforced by local Lewisham Met officers, but is the Roads Police and Transport Command who have the calibrated cameras etc. They will look at hotspots and complaints and focus on education and advice rather than enforcement to start with.
- The issue of sirens bothering residents at night is difficult: a speeding police car can be a lethal weapon and the police need to get to an emergency quickly. However, no officer wants to risk hitting a car or person. Senior officers do try to encourage sirens not being used in the middle of night unless necessary but it is a judgement call and better to be safe.
- The police work closely with local authorities in relation to looked after children and try to not always think of criminal justice options first.

- There has been a purge on mobile phone usage while driving, the message given to officers is zero tolerance.
- There are ongoing discussions about enforcement of the borough wide 20mph limit: most speeding is not enforced by Lewisham Met officers, but is the responsibility of the transport command who have the required calibrated cameras etc. They will look at hotspots and complaints and focus on education and advice rather than enforcement to start with.

3.8 **RESOLVED:** That

- (a) The Committee receive further information from the LAS regarding staff diversity and handover issues at specific hospitals.
- (b) The Committee receive further information from the LFB regarding the sale of, and plans for, Downham Fire Station,
- (c) Councillor Michael, as chair of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, ensure that all Members see the Council's response to the MOPAC consultation.

4. Thames Water incidents in Lewisham

4.1 The Chair welcomed the guests from Thames Water to the meeting. The officers addressed the committee and provided a handout. The following key points were noted:

- Thames Water apologises for the recent floods in Lewisham, to councilors and to the public. The impact was devastating and Thames Water has been trying to speak to many residents affected as possible to give apologies and make sure they are not out of pocket as a result.
- In the last 6 months there have been a number of similar high profile incidents. An internal review has been carried out and no single cause found. There are a range of issues related to old assets and also access issues.
- A wider strategic external review is being carried out and Thames Water will act on its findings.
- In Lewisham last year Thames Water repaired 1448 leaks equating to 39 million litres of water: 16-18 Olympic pools were fixed in last 12 months in Lewisham.
- In the next 12 months Thames Water are going to invest in 95000 metres of network and continue to work with TfL and highways officers in boroughs.

4.2 Sarah Hurcomb gave an overview of the two incidents in Lewisham:

- On 26 November 2016 Thames Water were notified that a 24inch trunk main had burst in Lee High Road, which resulted in significant flooding and closure of a TFL red route for 11 days. The devastation was awful.
- There was additional media interest as, as a result of a sink hole, a coach got stuck and it was a significant exercise to remove people from the coach.
- When Thames Water were finally able to control and isolate the water supply this resulted in 3000 customers without water for 7 hours, although alternative water supplies were made available.
- This main does not directly feed any customers, but indirectly feeds about 118,000 people and Thames Water had to be mindful of that when closing the supply. This main needs 4 valves to be shut to isolate it, 24 inch mains require a turn a minute to shut them slowly and safely.
- There were additional challenges because the valves were buried under a 4 way traffic junction so engineers had to be escorted onto the junction to do that.

- There were also high voltage cables and gas pipes, so UK power networks had to be on site to facilitate safe access.
- There then followed a complex clean up exercise. Loss adjusters and a flood response team were on site within 2 hours, one of Thames Water's directors was on site for the first day to manage and respond to media requests and a senior manager was on site every day.
- Three residents meetings were held in 11 days after the incident to answer questions and Thames Water did all it could to support customers. The support continues now depending on the needs of the customer.
- Work is still ongoing to return customers' lives back to how they were before the incident, Thames Water don't underestimate the impact of this on people's lives, which is why there is an independent enquiry taking place.
- The second major incident in Lewisham was on Lee Road on 9 December 2016. A 12 inch main burst, which was caused by third party damage to the main. This caused flooding and loss of supply to customers.
- 12 people had to be relocated from their homes, Sarah personally attended the site the next day and was there 3-4 days that week and met with residents the following Friday to help and support them.
- The electricity supply had to be turned off and there was lots of damaged stock for local businesses as basements of commercial buildings were flooded.
- Some people are still not able to return to their homes as a result of this flood so there is a lot to learn: this will be included in the independent review.
- Thames Water will support a celebratory event for the local businesses and support the residents. They found a great community spirit amongst the residents.
- Initially when there is an incident, Thames Water work closely with emergency services to start with (the borough commanders present were thanked for their officers' support and work at such incidents) and then once the location had been made safe: customers become number one priority.
- Thames Water twitter and website communications don't always get things right and they are working to improve that.
- Thames Water need to provide a bespoke service so they respond to individual needs. To achieve this they work closely with loss adjusters and build a long term relationship with impacted customers. This process has been tested a lot in the last five months, some customers use Thames Water loss adjusters, some choose to use their own insurance. This is up to customer and Thames Water provide customers with pros and cons for each option.

4.3 Andrew Sherry and Mufu Durowojo from TfL addressed the committee. The following key points were noted:

- Andrew and Mufu are responsible for works coordination and permitting, so they are involved in all planned and unplanned work on the TfL network.
- As soon as TfL were made aware by emergency services (via the TfL 247 control centre) of the incident, they sent out their contractors, initially to resolve traffic management, and then via further enforcement to make the roads safe.
- A key role was to look at traffic signal timings for a wider area, to implement signals to give more green time in other areas.
- TfL communicate via social media so put information on twitter to get people to avoid the area, they also contacted the local authority to make sure all were involved.
- TfL management were dispatched to site to see if they could assist further with the recovery of the stranded coach, but because of the significant size of the void the coach couldn't be moved. TfL assisted with getting the crane on site to remove the coach the following day.

- Throughout the incident, the response was coordinated by the local authority and Thames Water on site and for quite some time afterwards due to the significance of the void and the mains underneath and the gas and electric cables on top.
- Senior officials met and agreed points for signs to try to ensure a wider range of people were aware of the disruption and to seek alternative routes. In an attempt to minimise disruption, TfL shared information, requested 24,7 working by Thames Water and rapid setting concrete to reduce the time to set from 7 days down to hours.
- TfL worked closely with the Council's emergency planning and highway officers and consulted them about amending the diversion routes where needed.
- TfL manage 5% of London roads, but those roads carry 30% of all London traffic.
- Because of the severity of the numerous incidents over the last few months, TfL commissioners wrote formally to the Chief Executive of Thames Water and followed up with a meeting to attempt to address TfL concerns and try to understand what Thames Water were doing to further invest and deal with the current situation.
- Whilst TfL acknowledge there will be more leaks in winter, they also want to know what more can be done by Thames Water in the medium and longer term to prevent major leaks. TfL want to encourage and support further investment, by Thames Water into their assets and network, and TfL would welcome further discussions as to how the upgrade of the trunk main network will be achieved.
- The recent examples show what happens if there isn't sufficient investment and TfL don't want that to continue, they want to balance the delivery of an upgraded trunk main network with the disruption that will cause, with the disruption caused by unplanned emergency incidents caused by aging infrastructure.

4.4 In response to questions of Thames Water and TfL the following was noted:

- There have been other incidents within Lewisham, the hole impacting on trains through Forest Hill, the sink hole and leaks at Perry Vale causing lots of inconvenience.
- The two major incidents in Lee were not directly related as one was caused by third party damage. There are times where a weakness and leak in one part of the main being fixed can cause further pressures down the main leading to further leaks.
- There is concern amongst members about the magnitude of the incidents happening as it seems as though there are large scale trunk main failures happening more regularly. In Lewisham alone, 33% of permits issued by TfL have been for immediate permits i.e. to deal with leak/incidents on trunk main roads after the event rather than scheduled work which can be planned to reduce congestion and disruption.
- The issue outside Grove Park station was outlined by a member, highlighting ongoing issues at a key traffic junction over the last 5 years, which has had one lane closed at least 4 times in the last month alone. Early attention to a leak that was present for many months was not provided initially. The quality of restorative work was also questioned. In response, Thames Water advised that a number of leaks were detected but were not visible, so this led to three dry holes (where they start to excavate where they think the leak is and then not find it and have to seal the hole back up). There was an issue with a temporary road surface that was put in which was exacerbated by bad weather meaning it took longer to resolve. Work is being done on improving detection methods and a number of trials are being undertaken.
- It was accepted that better communication with local people, councillors and police was needed in circumstances like that outside Grove Park station, and a clearer standard procedure of liaison would help.

- Technology to assist with the detection and resolution of leaks is being investigated and invested in.
- Thames Water have 32000 km of water mains, of which 12000 are trunk mains (bigger than 12inches), 25% of these are more than 100 years old. Age as of itself is not the only predictor of likelihood to leak: some of 1970s mains ones are some of the weakest.
- Thames Water try to predict where mains are most likely to burst and that modelling says where they go to first. The modelling is complex resulting in a “hit list” for replacement. The mains are replaced with 2 inch thick plastic pipes, but London is built on clay so the mains are under stress.
- Thames Water monitor their network constantly, focusing on the high risk mains, and are trying to understand why leaks happen. They also need to provide bigger mains as more people are using more water.
- As part of the strategic review being undertaken, Thames Water are talking to the best experts in the world to see what more they can do and how to drive innovation to go faster with replacement programmes and bring the price down as it currently costs £1000s per metre.
- The two issues in Perry Vale could have been related: one repair increased pressure further down at the bottom of Sunderland Road. When one repair is completed they do check in the wider area to make sure the problem has not been moved further down the pipe. Thames Water officers are not sure where the work still required in Perry Vale sits on their planned list of work: they will follow up with that detail.
- The network is made up of district areas and zones so water can be redistributed where needed via a number of cross connections. This requires a delicate balance to not have low pressure or surges, it is very complex to manage.
- Thames Water do look at drainage capabilities as part of their work, they are often called out incorrectly to surface water area which they believe is related to gullies and there is nothing they can do within their network.
- 30% of residents currently have meters, usage for the rest is guesswork - more meters would give a better understanding of how water is used in homes and in the network. This area is at the bottom of the Thames Water basin so a lot of South Downs water ends up here.

4.5 Peter Agent, Dave Wheeler and Jeff Price gave an overview of the role of local highways officers. The key points to note were:

- They are responsible for non-red route areas and pick up the residual effect of what happens on the red route.
- There were 1000 incidents that they would consider serious in the last 12 months, which gives the local authority a huge amount of work to co-ordinate, also taking into account all the other permit requests.
- Officers have to try to manage the whole network to work together, collaborate with utility companies and TfL, try to ensure companies use the best materials and get the best advice possible.
- 37 permits are issued a week on average for Thames Water – this illustrates the numbers being dealt with – more needs to be done around planning rather than constant reactive work.
- Cuts to local authority budgets have not impacted on the Council’s ability to process permit requests as the process is funded by the permit scheme.
- Thames Water representatives advised that it is incumbent on them and other utility companies to collaborate and work more effectively.

It was agreed to suspend standing orders.

4.6 In further discussions with officers the following points were noted:

- The response of officers in Lee was exemplary, with regular updates to local councilors which was well appreciated.
- Businesses are still feeling the impact of being closed in the busy pre-Christmas period.
- Feedback from those who were flooded has generally been positive in relation to the speed of response from Thames Water.
- Contacting Thames Water can be a challenge for councilors, emails to generic email addresses do not get answered – a clear contact point for local councilors would be helpful.
- The cause of a leak/water pressure issues in the Broadway Theatre was never clarified.
- There is an issue with leaking water in Sangley Road at the junction of access with Lidl.

4.7 **RESOLVED:** That

- (a) Thames Water, TfL and Lewisham Highways officers be thanked for attending the meeting and explaining the causes of, and actions in relation to, the disruption.
- (b) The further information requested within the discussion be provided, including the review reports when they are published.

5. Devolution update

5.1 **RESOLVED:** That the update be noted.

6. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

None

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm

Chair:

Date:
