

Adults, Health & Public Protection Policy & Scrutiny Committee

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Briefing of: Cabinet Member for Public Protection

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1 CCTV

- 1.1 CCTV is a non-statutory service which is estimated to cost the Council around £1 million per annum to maintain. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) are the main user of the CCTV network, with 92% of all referrals made by the police.
- 1.2 For the last two years I along with the Leader have held a number of meetings with key stakeholders to find on-going funding to maintain our Crime and Disorder CCTV system. These include the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime, the MPS and the Home Office as well as the New West End Company, London Business Partnership and Oxford Street retailers. Unfortunately no partner has been forthcoming.
- 1.3 There is no significant evidence to suggest CCTV has a major impact on deterring, or reducing crime. In both independent studies and the Council's own recorded data, CCTV is shown to be used for reactive policing and to pursue prosecutions, of which, only 2% of reported crime involves the use of CCTV footage.
- 1.4 The decision is unlikely to have an effect on the overall CCTV coverage of the City. Other organisations, such as: Transport for London (TfL), City West Homes, the Police and private businesses possess their own extensive CCTV networks, which the Police can access.
- 1.5 On top of this I have also held a number of one to one meetings with relevant stakeholders to discuss options. On the 25th May I held a roundtable with key stakeholders to inform them of the recommendation ahead of the report being published. All partners at the roundtable understood the reasons behind the decision and agreed that partnership working is the best way forward to find a sustainable solution. The roundtable also discussed a pan-London approach to address funding for CCTV across the City.

- 1.6 The Home Office, Department for Local Government and Communities (DCLG), Local Government Association (LGA), London Councils and Camden County Council were notified of the report and the recommendation to Cabinet on the 26th May 2016. A decision will be made at Cabinet on the 6th June.
- 1.7 On the 7th June notice was given to G4S that the staffing contract will not be extended and Atec were instructed to prepare for camera decommissioning from 1st September. August 1st is the deadline for our partners to express an interest in taking over management of cameras, feeds and other assets. On the 1st September the G4S staffing contract expires and on the 31st March 2017 the Atec contract expires and decommission will be complete.

2. Youth Violence

- 2.1 A recent flare of violent incidents, involving young residents, has been seen in the North of the borough since mid-March. The Police are continuing to investigate all incidents that have occurred, however, little cooperation is being given by victims.
- 2.2 Levels of serious youth violence in Westminster increased significantly in the years to 2011/12. Since then levels of youth violence have fallen dramatically with numbers stabilising since March 2014 (see figure 1 below).

Figure 1 - Reductions in the number of Youth Violence victims have stabilised in recent year



- 2.3 I chaired an internal roundtable on the 29th April 2016, in order to share information between community safety partners such as the Police and coordinate responses going forward.
- 2.4 I chaired an external roundtable on the 18th May with Karen Buck MP, Westminster City Council (WCC) Officers, Queen's Park and Harrow Road ward councillors. At this meeting, it was agreed that this would be an on-going conversation and other discussions should be held with Third Sector organisations in the area. A briefing on potential work with vulnerable young people, through the Early Help service, will be given to ward councillors in

June. A further briefing will be sent regarding community assurance in the local area.

3 Licensing Standard

3.1 At Full Council on the 2nd March I made a commitment to work with the industry to ensure that a night out in Westminster is a pleasant experience for everyone, this includes residents, businesses and visitors, by developing a Westminster Standard. This is will be new, voluntary licensing framework designed to ensure our licensed premises act responsibly, care for their customers' welfare and are good neighbours.

3.2 Since making my commitment I have met with a number of relevant stakeholders on a one to one basis. These include representatives from SAB Miller, The British Beer and Pub Association, The Night Time Industry Association, Novus leisure, the Portland Group, Mitchell & Butler, Heaven night club and J D Wetherspoons.

3.3 On the 25th May, I held a roundtable with stakeholders in the night time industry to develop ideas on how a Westminster Licensing Standard could work. Key feedback included:

- Focus on vulnerability as premises should improve support for those who may have drunk too much.
- As a possible incentive, there could be a lighter touch to enforcement for those signed up to a Standard. Also, there could be more flexibility around Temporary Event Notices (TENs) or license variations.
- The process for identifying problem premises could be revised, with a move away from pure crime statistics and instead, towards an understanding of the quality given by the operator.
- There should be a clear agreement that a Standard needs to be voluntary and partnership based, rather than delivered through compulsion or conditions.
- The Licensing Standard needs to involve Security Industry Authority (SIA) companies
- There are a number of different schemes already in existence e.g. Best Bar None and the most practical approach may be to introduce more of these schemes and then 'knit' them together more effectively.
- There should be recognition of different types of premises which will require different types of commitments. It may be easier to focus on areas in common, which all premises share in the success or failure of that space e.g. Leicester Square. A pilot can be used to trial this approach.

3.4 There is potential to use the Westminster Entertainment Forum to progress the licensing standard further. This can be done by opening up the membership and creating a focus on practical partnership projects.

4 Rough Sleeping

- 4.1 Street count figures are currently 320 in total. The Council continues to be very grateful for the efforts of the general public and businesses in supporting services to engage with some of society's most vulnerable individuals.
- 4.2 This month I will be launching the 'Diverted Giving Campaign'. The Campaign aims to inform residents and visitors about rough sleeping issues in the borough and where best their donations can be given; in order to have the greatest impact on those rough sleeping. The Campaign will put strong emphasis on channelling support to registered charities. This is a campaign I have wanted to do for three to four years specifically aimed at Middle East visitors given their generosity especially during the Ramadan period.
- 4.3 Westminster Homeless Action Together is building in momentum and details will be released soon regarding how volunteers can get involved. The week long 'call to action' will allow volunteers to meet and talk to rough sleepers in the borough. Volunteers will also be asked to complete a survey with individuals on the street. St Mungo's, The Connection at St Martin's, the Passage & West London Mission will analyse the results with commissioners at the local authority and other key stakeholders, in order to look at new ways we can work with people and find more solutions to issues on-going in Westminster. The Council is excited to be the first local authority in the country to host the event and it is hoped the event will pave the way for more Londoners to support services and rough sleepers
- 4.4 Teams will be conducting a range of joint operations throughout summer to engage with and offer solutions to those that are not eligible for services. It is hoped this will reduce the volume of people on the street, as well as the flow of people coming to the streets. In turn, this will allow our outreach services to engage with complex individuals much more effectively.

5. Foreign National Offenders

- 5.1 We have been working closely with the Police over the last six months on seven strands of work, particularly in relation to foreign national offenders, under the operational name of Unite 16.
- 5.2 These areas include:
- Gambling on Westminster Bridge
 - Prostitution, brothels and sex working in Sussex Gardens and the surrounding area
 - Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) associated with rough sleeping (begging)
 - Pedicabs
 - Floating statues in Trafalgar Square
 - The Strand Underpass and ASB
 - Theft Person

5.3 One of the recent highlights of Unite 16 has been Operation VANADIUM. This was a Police led multi-agency operation to detect, deter and disrupt criminal activity within commercial premises on the Edgware Road. Under the UNITE 16 umbrella, issues such as; the supply of drugs, prostitution, human trafficking, terrorism, child exploitation, VAT/tax revenue evasion and breaches of local authority legislations will be addressed. The operation also included Home Office Immigration Enforcement, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, London Fire Brigade (LFB) and Westminster Officers.

The results of the operation included:

- Three arrests under the Proceeds of Crime Act (money laundering and associated offences)
- Approximately £10,000 in cash seized
- CCTV Hard drives seized
- Three Boxes of fake identity documents relating to immigration status. Suspected links to Human Trafficking pending investigations
- Six arrests, of which four were to be immediately deported, two detained pending further investigation
- Service of a £120,000 fine to the owners of one of the premises for the employment of illegal immigrants
- Summons served on the manager regarding a breach of the Health Act 2006
- 500 shisha pipes and shisha tobacco seized under the Health Act 2006 for prosecution purposes

5.4 There have been a number of successful joint days of action where City Inspectors, Neighbourhood Problem Solving Coordinators (NPSCs), and colleagues from the Police, British Transport Police and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) teams have addressed a range of issues including spice smoking/alleged dealing, large groups causing ASB, piles of belongings/bedding/rubbish left unattended, and a significant increase in begging. Teams are also forging closer links to local social care teams to improve communication channels within information sharing protocols on individuals. This will support a more co-ordinated response towards those who are already accessing services, but who are choosing to act unreasonably out on the street. Focus areas for work so far have been Victoria, Edgware Road, and Charing Cross, aligning to the footprints of the Victoria, Baker Street Quarter and the Northbank BIDs. These areas have been chosen as they are traditional hot spot areas for rough sleeping, begging and street-based ASB issues. All teams have been working really well together.

5.5 A focused partnership approach has been used to deal with these difficult issues and realistic enforcement outcomes are being met. We are engaging with local businesses who are most affected by the impact of rough sleeping and ASB. Much of this work is supported through the problem solving local briefing meetings, where recent intelligence on hotspots is regularly discussed and joint deployments are arranged. Activity is being captured by City Inspectors, and teams are working together to collate impact statements and

enforcement outcomes. We are learning from this way of working, outcomes are positive and the aim is to develop this collaborative approach into a 'business as usual' model for the future.

- 5.6 Concerns had been expressed from many sources that the unknown masked performers in Trafalgar Square may have involvement in criminal activity in the UK or may have been involved in criminal activity in other countries. Over a period of time, the City Inspectors identified mainly foreign national individuals, who have been performing as floating statues on the north terrace of Trafalgar Square. Working with the police and Immigration officers, an operation took place which resulted in four floating statues being served notice papers, giving those caught 30 days to leave the country. Since then, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Busk in London have implemented a scheme which gives us more confidence that those operating as statues in Trafalgar Square are not involved in illegal activity and are entitled to remain in the UK.
- 5.7 The emphasis on Westminster Bridge so far has been predominately police led and there has been on-going operations targeting the illegal gamers on the bridge. Since November 2015, there have been frequent operations resulting in hundreds of arrests and numerous deportations. These operations have included police from both sides of the river and City Inspectors. The police have been following the money trail to identify who is benefiting and we are currently looking at what further options might be available to us to develop a longer term solution.
- 5.8 The police are working closely with the local NPSC from the Residential Service team, in order to identify and target specific issues and individuals involved with prostitution, brothels and sex working in Sussex Gardens. Particular focus will be given on those organising and handling the women and how best to support the women involved. Work has been on-going with Community Safety to map the links between those involved with other criminal activity.

6 The Evening and Night Time Economy

- 6.1 I attended the first meeting on the Night Time Commission on the 12th April 2016.
- 6.2 The Commission has been set up to review London's Night Time Economy and bring together a London wide strategy. The Commission will provide recommendations to the Mayor of London in the autumn and will also commission the music based consultancy, Sound Diplomacy, to reach and develop an evidence based policy.
- 6.3 I asserted the view that Local Authorities are best placed to regulate the Night Time Economy, due to their understanding of the area. I also highlighted that the correct processes to review and scrutinise the Night Time Economy are already based within Local Authorities. Although, viewing the pan London scale will provide some useful insight

6.4 I will continue to keep the Committee updated as to the findings and the discussions of the commission.

7 Street Performers

7.1 Officers continue to work with the GLA and the BIDs to support the Busk in London scheme. In recent weeks, meetings have improved links and methods for sharing information. City Inspectors are responding to complaints about buskers and are patrolling the most problematic areas, proactively engaging with buskers and encouraging them to comply with the voluntary busker code. City Inspectors have also been undertaking enforcement where buskers have repeatedly failed to follow the guidelines or created any problems by the manner in which they have been performing. Since April, the Council has engaged with buskers on 150 occasions.

7.2 A working group has also been set up which includes the council, the GLA and Busk in London, the BIDs, some of the local businesses and the street performers. The aim is to increase the understanding of the issues between all sides. The first meeting took place in May and it is intended that monthly meetings will take place going forward. The meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the issues and concerns being encountered. It will also foster a better working relationship between stakeholders.