



City of Westminster

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 Further to my update on the previous committee's report, further discussions have taken place with MOPAC and the Metropolitan Police (MPS), who have expressed an interest in taking over a number of crime and disorder cameras that are due to be decommissioned.
- 1.2 As a result of these discussions with the MPS, I have delayed the deadline for decommissioning to the 1st December 2016. This gives the MPS the extra time they need to re-route the feeds of cameras, which they are interested in, to their own monitoring facility.
- 1.3 The cameras will remain 'up' and recording until the 1st December, however, the cameras will not be monitored. Monitoring of the cameras ceased at midnight on the 31st August and a full handover took place with council officers and G4S staff.

2 Counter Terrorism

- 2.1 The Home Office's Counter Terrorism Strategy has four distinct strands of work, under the headings of: Prevent, Pursue, Prepare and Protect. In response, Westminster City Council has established two sub groups in support of this strategy, coordinating the work and performance monitoring in relation to Prepare and Protect headings. A shared service Prevent Steering Group already exists. The Metropolitan Police are solely responsible for Pursue.

- 2.2 A quarterly report is submitted to the Executive Management Team, outlining the progress of work in each sub group. EMT is accountable for delivery of the council's response to the strategy.
- 2.3 A number of Prevent Projects have been commissioned for 2016/17. All Prevent projects are funded by the Office for Security and Counter-terrorism. The projects are based on an assessment of the local risks in relation to radicalisation and extremism. The projects are also developed with recognition that the factors that might make someone susceptible to radicalisation or extremism are the same factors that may draw them in to gangs or other forms of exploitation.
- 2.4 The Council continues to review, test and refresh emergency plans focused on preparing for any terrorist atrocity. In addition, we are looking at ways to design out vulnerabilities in partnership with other agencies through 'Protect' work.

3 Youth Violence

- 3.1 The discussion at the first Youth Violence Roundtable has now led to the development of two new work streams, involving our Community Safety Team, Family Services and Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU).
- 3.2 The first work stream has led to the creation of a Local Action Group, chaired by the Head of Early Help in Family Services and attended by partner agencies such as the Police, housing providers, public health bodies and youth clubs. The group will work with local agencies to:
- Improve our information sharing practices
 - Improve our early intervention programmes
 - Provide enhanced local parenting offers
 - Strengthen our street outreach opportunities
 - Provide more opportunities for fund raising.
- 3.3 The second work stream has led to improved methods of community reassurance through our Community Safety Team and IGU. Greater emphasis is now being put on communication with local stakeholders, in order to share the excellent work on-going in the Community Safety and IGU teams. A quarterly briefing will be issued to local stakeholders, providing detailed insight into our continuing efforts to tackle youth violence. The first instalment of these briefings has already been issued.

- 3.4 The next Youth Violence Roundtable has been set for Wednesday 5th October 2016.

4 Licensing Standard

- 4.1 Work has been on-going, since the Licensing roundtable, to develop the practical side of the Licensing Standard. Pilot zones have now been identified to analyse the effect of the Licensing Standard in different areas of Westminster.
- 4.2 In each Pilot Zone, Council Officers will consult with operators on how they would like the Licensing Standard to operate in their respective areas. It is hoped during the trial process, premises will see the following:
- Improved working relationships between authorities and premises
 - A lower risk rating, which could then lead to a more flexible inspection regime
 - Positive PR for the area and the likelihood of associated revenue uplift
- 4.3 Once substantial analysis has been collected, I will hold a further Licensing roundtable with pilot operators to discuss how the trials are progressing.

5 Rough Sleeping

- 5.1 To address issues relating to the street-based community during the daytime, an outreach officer from St. Mungo's Broadway has been on secondment to Residential Services, in City Management and Communities, for a 6-month period. Traditionally, these issues have been largely managed by enforcement teams. Having outreach on board during the day to day deployments of City Inspectors and Neighbourhood Problem Solving Co-ordinators has been successful in bridging the gap between social care and enforcement.
- 5.2 Three trial focus areas have been established which are:
- Northbank
 - Baker Street Quarter
 - Victoria BID
- 5.3 These areas have been chosen to fall in line with BID footprints as they are traditionally hot spot areas for rough sleeping, begging and street-based ASB issues. In addition, we seek to align our resources with those of the BIDs i.e.

security teams and ambassadors, in order to effectively address these issues as presented.

- 5.4 Regular weekly deployments with key partners, including the Police and Home Office Immigration Enforcement, have taken place. We aim to achieve a 'business as usual' model that can be recommended and implemented going forward.

6 SPICE (Synthetic Cannabinoid's) Campaign

- 6.1 In recent months, homelessness services in Westminster have reported a steady increase in the number of people using the lethal drug spice, which is said to be as addictive as heroin. Currently, close to 20% of rough sleepers using homelessness services have been identified as spice users.
- 6.2 In response to this growing concern, I will be launching a campaign to raise awareness around the devastating effects spice has on rough sleepers and the staff that work tirelessly to help those affected.
- 6.3 This campaign will see the council take the lead in pulling together key stakeholders from Government, homelessness charities and the health sector to draw up an 'Action Plan' to help tackle the epidemic. Alongside a roundtable in October there will be a concerted effort to raise awareness amongst the media and general public of the deadly effects of spice and the most effective ways for people to make a real change to the lives of rough sleepers.

7 Night Tube

- 7.1 London Underground began running all night services on the Victoria and Central line on Friday 19th August. These lines will operate 24-hours on Friday and Saturday nights. Officers have been liaising with the police and London Underground regarding the potential impact to the areas surrounding stations.
- 7.2 Over the weekend of 19th/21st August, City Inspectors visited the open stations throughout the nights, in order to determine what impact the new service was having, particularly in relation to the noise. Officers visited multiple times over the course of the weekend and the feedback suggested very little impact was being had, as most stations were quiet. The Northern, Jubilee and the Piccadilly lines will open in the coming months and the city inspectors will continue to monitor the potential impact on nearby residents.

8 Street Entertainment

- 8.1 Once again, the good weather in the City has seen an increase in the number of buskers on the streets of Westminster. In order to address this, Public Protection & Licensing has two dedicated officers, covering 12:00 to 18:00 seven days a week, responding to complaints about buskers across the city. The officers are able to respond to complaints, proactively liaise with buskers and work closely with Busk in London. Officers are currently reviewing what further options are available to us and this will culminate in a Cabinet Member Report during the autumn.

9 Starbucks Prosecuted

- 9.1 Two Starbucks on Berkeley Street have been fined over £160,000 after repeatedly leaving rubbish bags on the public highway. Since April 2015, both stores and Starbucks' head office ignored regular warnings to stop putting rubbish bags on the street outside of normal collection times. They also paid a number of £80 fixed penalty notices. However, bags continued to be left on the street for hours, cluttering the pavement and resulting in rubbish spilling out over the street.
- 9.2 Starbucks pleaded guilty at Westminster Magistrates Court to four waste offences and were fined £40,000 for each. Speaking at Westminster Magistrates court, District Judge Coleman said that Starbucks had acted in a "deliberate" manner, ignoring complaints from residents' associations and numerous warnings from Westminster City Council.

10 Joint-working to Address Rogue Landlords

- 10.1 A focussed enforcement approach, involving joint-working alongside services within RBKC, has been established to co-ordinate action against a number of persistently non-compliant managing agents who extensively sublet properties. These rogue companies are all controlled by the same individuals. These properties are poorly managed, present hazards for occupiers, and are unlicensed.
- 10.2 The threat of existing enforcement measures under the Housing Act 2004 does not serve as a deterrent for such agents, given the amount of money being made. A prosecution against a company often results in the creation of a new company, under which the same practices continue. We have joined forces with RBKC to share information and expertise around a new enforcement approach, through the use of Criminal Behaviour Orders under

the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014. Officers from environmental health and community safety services are working together to prepare court cases and bring this about. Currently, there are two cases for failing to licence houses in each borough and applications for Criminal Behaviour Orders, against individuals controlling these companies, will follow convictions.

- 10.3 Conditions will be attached to these Criminal Behaviour Orders to prevent these individuals contravening housing laws in the future.

11 Anti-Social Behaviour

- 11.1 A new set of ASB policies and procedures are being drafted and consulted upon. The documents contain a refreshed ASB Policy and the following procedures:

- Criminal Behaviour Order
- Closure order
- Civil injunction
- Initial response to ASB (Adult)
- Initial response to ASB (Young person)
- Community Trigger
- Community protection Notice
- Public Spaces Protection Order (previously published)

- 11.2 In the period between April to August, the Community Safety Anti-Social Behaviour Caseworkers, working with the police Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) team, have brought two further premises closures to court, in order to disrupt drug activity and associated anti-social behaviour. One in Westbourne ward and one in Tachbrook ward. A previous premise closure (in Queens Park) was extended at court for a further three months, to allow for Network Stadium to take possession proceedings, which they did successfully in June. A further premises closure (also in Queens Park) was avoided by excellent support provided to the tenant by our ASB Caseworkers, who supported the problematic tenant into a supported hostel place and thus reducing the ASB being experienced by neighbours.

- 11.3 Four Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) applications have now been successful on the back of Operation Kamik. Operation Kamik was a covert police operation targeted at those involved in drugs and gang violence in the South. Key individuals were arrested in February 2016; two 5 year CBO's and two 3 year CBO's have been granted with conditions such as exclusion areas, non-associations and mobile phone restrictions. The Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU)

are awaiting the outcome of two further CBO applications, for nominals linked to Lisson Green Men (LGM), in the next month.

- 11.4 City West Homes (CWH) South ASB team has served a Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP) as a result of the conviction and CBO of one South nominal. CWH's North East team is discussing with legal the possibility of an injunction against a LGM nominal, after a warrant found drugs and cash at the address.

12 “Lugging” on South Molton Street and New Bond Street

- 12.1 A large number of complaints have been received regarding the sales practices of some of the businesses in these areas, particularly the use of allegedly aggressive selling techniques. The businesses which sell expensive, “luxury” cosmetics employ people to approach passers-by in order to entice them into the shops to make purchases. In doing so, they are allegedly using unfair commercial practices which “by harassment, coercion (including physical force) or undue influence significantly impair, or are likely to significantly impair the average consumer’s freedom of choice or conduct concerning the product”.
- 12.2 Undue influence is defined as “exploiting a position of power in relation to the consumer, so as to apply pressure, even without using or threatening to use physical force, in a way which significantly limits the consumer’s ability to make an informed decision”.
- 12.3 Complaints received include:
- Promotional staff placed outside of the business are physically escorting customers into the salon, despite being told by customers they do not want to enter.
 - Promotional staff are moving a considerable distance from the entrance of the salon to pursue potential customers.
 - Nearby businesses who have asked for their staff not to be targeted are having their instructions ignored and their staff repeatedly being approached.
 - Prices of cosmetics not being displayed/disclosed
 - Total price to be paid is not being disclosed to customers until the end of the sales procedure and customers debit/credit card is already in the pdq machine, thus limiting their ability to consider whether they should make a transaction.

- Debit/credit cards being taken from customers' part way through the sales process and placed in the pdq machine. Thus, applying undue pressure on the customer to make a payment.
- Cosmetics being marketed to customers as being part of a sales/special promotion. It is alleged these are not true promotions and do not offer a discount.
- Customers suffering from mental illnesses, with a limited ability to undertake transactional decisions, being repeatedly sold cosmetics/beauty procedures.

12.4 Using their powers under the Enterprise Act 2002, Trading Standards officers have gathered a large number of witness statements and written to the companies involved, outlining the alleged offences and requiring them to attend a meeting next week in order to sign an undertaking to desist from these practices. Failure to attend this meeting and/or give such an undertaking or failure to comply with any undertaking given would result in Trading Standards seeking a court Enforcement Order. Breach of such an order could constitute a contempt of court, punishable by a fine or imprisonment.