

Transformation & Improvement Board 9 December 2019	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Ann Corbett	Classification: Unrestricted
Title Community Safety Transformation	

Lead Member	Councillor Begum, Cabinet Member for Community Safety
Originating Officer(s)	Ann Corbett, Divisional Director of Community Safety
Wards affected	All wards
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Priority 2 - A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in Outcome 3 - People feel safer in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled

Executive Summary

This report focuses on the progress of seven areas of priority set out in the letter from the Mayor to the Chief Executive on 6 June 2018 under the heading 'Safer communities and ASB'. These are:

- Rise in youth violence
- Reassuring the community about wider crime and ASB
- Close working with police
- Violent Crime Summit
- The council funded police officers
- Neighbourhood Management Pilot
- The chairing of a Crime and ASB Board

Within this framework, the report covers the transformation journey that the council has undergone within the community safety service, the achievements and the challenges the council faces in responding to community safety concerns.

Recommendations:

The Transformation & Improvement Board is recommended to:

1. Note the report and comment on the progress made to date in relation to the Mayors community safety priority areas.
2. Comment on how the Transformation and Improvement Board can best support the ongoing work of these community safety priority areas.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Transformation and Improvement Board are asked to comment on the report in order to influence how community safety services are delivered and communicated in future.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 N/A

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 *Background information*

The ASB Blueprint was produced in March 2017 following a 6 month independent review of how the borough dealt with ASB. The Blueprint identified a new, victim centred approach for the Council and partners to adopt in order to better respond to anti-social behaviour and the impact on residents' quality of life and set out an ambitious programme of change in terms of how the council would tackle ASB. It set out 3 priorities and a targeted approach to be taken over the following year to address the issues of ASB.

In 2018, the Mayor set out his clear priorities for community safety in a letter to the Chief Executive. The council's response to the seven areas mentioned in the Mayors letter is outlined below.

- 3.2 Rise in youth violence

In order to understand and address youth violence in the borough, a **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** into violence was conducted in 2019. This will inform a Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation strategy, which is set to be completed in 2020.

In response to rising levels of knife violence in the borough, the **Knife crime action plan** was produced which reflects a shift from a criminal justice to a public health approach, looking at the long term solutions. The Plan commits to delivering 65 actions. Since commencement of the knife crime action plan, police crime data shows a downward trend of offences compared on a rolling year and between 2018-2019 Tower Hamlets experienced the biggest decrease in knife crime injury victims of all London Boroughs.

The **Exploitation team** is a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team that brings together both police and children's social care with a dedicated focus on addressing exploitation and gang affiliation, having an overview of serious youth violence and supporting children who are most at risk.

3.3 1. Reassuring the community about wider crime and ASB

The **Gold Standard 'Safer Together' Campaign** was developed in 2017 as a brand to highlight the work the council is doing with partners including Tower Hamlets Police to address criminal and anti-social behaviour. So far, this campaign has included:

- No Laughing Matter campaign - which gave residents information about nitrous oxide and cleared away in excess of 1.2m canisters.
- Operation Continuum – An ongoing partnership strand of the campaign focuses on disruption of the drugs market
- No Place for Hate – continued promotion of a long standing campaign
- Mayor's Acid Charter – Pledge for retailers to sign up to
- Prevent – highlighting the ongoing work of the prevent team
- Other day to day activity such as the seizure of cars, neighbourhood walkabouts and lobbying against the InLink phone booths

A **new ASB delivery model** focused on locality working includes geographically based ASB officers, a Neighbourhood Management approach to ASB in the North-West of the borough and the reintroduction of Neighbourhood Walkabouts with follow up 'Action Days'. This new approach has resulted in better engagement and co-production with residents, panels and local police, better understanding of how to report ASB and increased confidence and trust that the council and policing are taking actions to tackle ASB.

3.4 2. Violence Crime Summit

On the 21st September 2018 the Mayor hosted a summit to discuss violent crime in the borough and its impact on the local community. Around 80 people attended the summit with attendees from across a broad range of local statutory, voluntary and community sector partners.

An evaluation exercise was conducted at the end of the summit which revealed key findings, including the importance of partnership working, the need for targeted support for hard to reach young people and a preference for enabling the voluntary and community sector and faith based communities to be part of the solution. In response to this, the Council drafted a 'Statement of Action' which set out the partnership approach to violence in the borough. All of these five actions have now been achieved.

3.5 3. Close working with police

There is a strong working relationship and intelligence sharing between police and community safety. These are shared through the Rapid Response Team, gangs unit and the exploitation team, as well as through Operation continuum.

Operation Continuum was launched in December 2017 to promote closer working with the police and in response to ongoing reports of drug dealing, drug use and associated criminality. It involves the council coordinating

council teams and partners including the PTF, THH, CCTV team, clean and green, Police Safer neighbourhood Teams, Trading Standards and Licencing and the ASB team. Between 2017 and July 2019:

- 129 people charged with a total of 243 drug supply charges
- 125 people referred to drug treatment
- 57 weapons sweeps conducted (39 weapons recovered)
- 421 ASB warnings issued
- 625 stop and searches conducted

The **Rapid Response Team (RRT)** works with young people (both as victims and perpetrators) to reduce knife crime and group violence. An innovative project funded by the Council was set up in January 2019 with the Royal London Hospital. A Violent Crime Reduction (VCR) Officer is now based at Royal London Hospital to work with people aged 10-26 who have been victims of weapon enabled violence including knife crime to support them through preventative work either in their position as a perpetrator or a victim.

3.6 4. Council funded police officers

In September 2017 the Mayor in Cabinet agreed to invest £3m to fund additional police officers for Tower Hamlets under Section 92 of the Police Act 1996. The Section 92 agreement for the PTF includes a suite of key performance indicators that reflect the priorities of the Council and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). They range from the number of drug supply arrests, stop and search for drugs and weapons, knife recoveries, and the measure of public perceptions of crime and ASB.

An initial complement of 1 sergeant and 5 constables was made immediately available from 1st April 2018 and this was increased to 1 sergeant and 10 constables from the 5th September (still only 50% of the MPS commitment). A new commitment was made in September 2019 by the new borough commander to increase the allocation to 2 sergeants and 20 constables by November 2019. Under the same scheme, THH has a full complement of 2 sergeants and 11 police constables.

Despite operating at 50% capacity during the full year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, the Partnership Taskforce made 356 arrests, stopped and searched 460 individuals, issued over 350 anti-social behaviour warnings, seized 30 vehicles and confiscated over £25k cash (Proceeds of Crime Act).

3.7 5. Neighbourhood Management

The Neighbourhood Management Pilot began in May 2018 in the North-West of the borough. The primary aim was to respond to ASB concerns in a way that is tailored to the needs of the local area and as a result, increase community satisfaction with ASB services. A recent evaluation of the pilot found that in a short space of time, there have been a number of positive impacts. Although rates of ASB have not decreased in the Pilot area, interviews revealed a perception of reduced ASB, increased feeling that the

council and police are tackling ASB and in turn, improved trust in these organisations. Other impacts include better understanding of how to report ASB, more feedback in relation to the progress of an ASB report and better joint working between partners.

3.8 6. Crime and ASB Board

Following the Mayor's request for a Board that oversees the work to reduce ASB in Tower Hamlets and increases pace and delivery, the Mayor's Crime and ASB Board was set up in December 2018. A review of the board found that members felt there was a good mix of relevant agenda items and saw benefits of having cross-cutting services present at meetings together with political portfolio leads and that this provided effective challenge during discussions.

Achievements include cross departmental working to achieve community safety outcomes such as overseeing implementation of the ASB Blueprint and the Partnership Knife Crime Action Plan. The Board has also provided a forum for decisions to be made about the running of Community Safety Walkabouts in a way that involved the council's partners and gave consideration to community engagement. As a result of meetings there is also now commitment on key issues like CCTV.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct statutory implications arising from this report

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 N/A

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 N/A

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- Community Safety presentation

Appendices

- NONE

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Or state N/A