

Cabinet	
19 September, 2017	
Report of: Denise Radley, Corporate Director, Health, Adults and Community	Classification: Unrestricted
Proposal for Mayoral Growth Funding - Additional Police Officers for Neighbourhoods	

Lead Member	Councillor Asma Begum, Cabinet Member for Community Safety
Originating Officer(s)	Ann Corbett Divisional Director, Community Safety
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	Yes
Community Plan Theme	A safe and cohesive community

Executive Summary

- 1.1. This paper sets out an option for investing (£1m p.a. for three years) in additional police officers through the Met Patrol Plus Scheme. This investment aims to address community concerns relating to community safety, including acid attacks and “future proof” the Borough against the cumulative impacts of savings from the Metropolitan Police. Crime, particularly violent crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) continue to be a primary concern for the Mayor, Councillors and residents in the Borough. Tackling crime and ASB is one of the Mayor’s key priorities. The Borough has the highest volume of ASB (101 and 999) calls across London boroughs and some forms of violent crime incidents (e.g. domestic abuse and knife crime) are unacceptably high. The Borough also receives the highest number of drugs and alcohol related ASB and crime complaints in comparison to similar east London boroughs. In 2015/16, the Borough had c16,000 drugs and alcohol related ASB reports compared to the next highest borough (Newham) which had c10,000

- 1.2. The Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan 2016-19 identifies ‘People feel safe and places have less crime and ASB’ as one of the desired outcomes. It will be achieved only when all the partners work together with sufficient resources. The Police resources in London and the Borough, however, will continue decreasing due to the impact of ongoing austerity. The Metropolitan Police are required to make an additional £400m savings through “One Met Model 2020” which includes a proposal of multi-borough Basic Command Units. The Police’s new draft Public Access and Engagement Strategy indicates a shift from the use of public-facing counters towards online reporting of crime.

- 1.3. An action to “future proof” the Borough against the possible adverse impact of further police savings is required and to offset the risks of an increasingly challenging community safety environment. The investment will help the Council and the Community Safety Partnership deliver on their priorities, protect real neighbourhood policing, undertake crime prevention activities, provide opportunities to design out crime and put in place protective security measures to strengthen resilience to terrorist attack.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree and approve the recommended option of the £1 million p.a. for three years funding (as set out in 3.9 of this report) in additional police officers in the borough under Section 92 of the Police Act 1996 (Grant from a Local Authority) with the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) using the Met Patrol Plus Scheme. This option proposes additional officers to support neighbourhood policing and aligns with the Council’s commitment to neighbourhood management.
2. Agree to fund the additional costs of this measure from its General Fund reserves in 2017/18 and identify this as a funding pressure within the refresh of its MTFS for 2018-2021.
3. Authorise the corporate Director Health , Adults and Community to execute the necessary agreement with the MOPAC and Tower Hamlets Police.
4. Authorise the corporate Director Health , Adults and Community any named officer nominated by her to develop a robust performance management framework for evaluating impact through Key Performance Indicators, to ensure value for money in line with the Council’s approach to outcome-based budgeting.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The decision is required in order to enable invest £1 million p.a. for three years from 2017-18 in additional police officers in the Borough using the Met Patrol Plus Scheme. £1 million p.a. includes the costs of the existing 6 police officers that have been in place under the ongoing three year agreement between the Council and the Police (until December 2018). The additional police officers will help deliver on local priorities, protect real neighbourhood policing, address community concerns relating to acid attacks and other crime and anti-social behaviour (e.g. gangs, drugs, knife crime and prostitution), improve Tower Hamlets performance and “future proof” the Borough against the cumulative impacts of further savings. This will be achieved through use of the Council’s reserves.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Mayor in Cabinet may decide not to fund additional police officers as recommended in this report. This may result in priorities of the Council's Strategic Plan not being achieved. Alternatively, the Mayor in Cabinet could choose another option from the list of considered options (Appendix A).

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Current Council Funded Partnership Task Force (PTF)

- 3.1 The Council currently has a three year agreement under Section 92 of the Police Act 1996 (Grant from a Local Authority) with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) using the Met Patrol Plus Scheme to fund a team of 6 police officers. The MOPAC approved Met Patrol Plus Scheme provides a free Police Constable for every officer purchased through a grant from the authority. The team, known as the Partnership Task Force (PTF) is made of 1 Sergeant and 5 Police Constables. The current PTF started with the Borough on 17 December 2015 and the arrangement will end on 16 December 2018.

- 3.2 Below is the Council's current agreement with MOPAC:

- The Council provide MOPAC with a grant for the supply of 1 funded police sergeant and 2 funded police constables per annum for 3 years. In addition MOPAC provided 3 constables at no charge making it a team of 6.

Officer	Cost	Number	Total
Sergeant	£76,000	1	£76,000
Police Constable	£65,000	2	£130,000
Free Police Constable	Free	3	Free
Total	-	6	£206,000

- The Table below shows that the grant is £206,000 in Year 1, £210,000 in Year 2 and £211,000 in Year 3. This includes the expected increase in salaries as provided by MPS based on inflation.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18*	2018/19*
PC x 2	£130,000.00	£132,000.00	£132,000.00	£134,000.00
PS x 1	£76,000.00	£78,000.00	£79,000.00	£80,000.00
Total	£206,000.00	£210,000.00	£211,000.00	£214,000.00

- Under the current agreement, the Council does not pay for police overtime or vehicles.
- 3.3 The PTF, a team of 6 officers, carries out a series of operations that require collaborative partnership working, including tackling drug related offending. In

2016/17, they have undertaken 185 joint visits with Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs), tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) by working with the existing police neighbourhood teams and supporting the work of the drug intervention programme. Alignment with partnership activities and priorities is achieved via an operational partnership meeting which is responsible for deploying the PTF and THEOs. This operational tasking is being reviewed to ensure that the Council is achieving value for money in its current investment.

- 3.4 In 2016/17, the current PTF have made 155 arrests for a range of offences including supply of drugs and sexual offences. In the same year, they conducted 387 stop and searches, 2,592 stop and accounts and have conducted weapons sweeps in areas of concern, particularly related to gang activity recovering knives, arms, quantities of drugs and money. The Team participate in engagement events and initiatives and joint patrols with the Council's Drug Intervention Programme outreach (prostitution programme). Their dedicated activity on tackling vice has resulted in 10 arrests for public decency offences, 17 warnings to suspected kerb crawlers and 82 interactions with women for either loitering or engaging in sexual activity in public places with subsequent referrals to the prostitution exit scheme.
- 3.5 The performance review of the Partnership Task Force for 2016/17 has made three recommendations:
- 1) The team should focus on ASB as a priority.
 - 2) Consider extending the number of officers to tackle ASB and
 - 3) Provide greater visibility, aligning the team with THEOs once the expected enforcement review in the Council's Place Directorate is complete, ensuring operational tasking activities are properly evidence based and supported by feedback from residents and businesses.
- 3.6 The Council has committed to funding for 14 new police officers to tackle crime and ASB on the Tower Hamlets Homes estates. The new officers will have a particular focus on drug dealing and drug misuse. The new police officers will be in place later this year. There is a need for all these operational resources (council & police) to work in collaboration through robust operational deployments and intelligence led tasking.

Rationale for additional police officers

- 3.7 Whilst the current small team of PTF officers, working with partners, has been instrumental in tackling ASB and drugs, their capacity is limited. As the data (Appendix B) shows, nationally crime is on the increase and in the borough, with some forms of violent crime in London also showing an increasing trend e.g. knife crime, sexual offences, domestic abuse. Increasing the number of neighbourhood police officers will increase the capacity to deliver on the priorities set out in the draft Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2017-21 and the ASB: A Blueprint for Local Action in Tower Hamlets (ASB Blueprint). It will also provide for additional opportunities to deliver on the

Council's commitment to neighbourhood management and geographical service delivery.

- 3.8 Additional police officers will help strengthen real neighbourhood policing at the community level, increasing visibility and tackling those issues that matter most to our residents. Expanding the capacity of the existing team of police officers will help tackle a wider range of issues, including violent crime and the use of offensive weapons like knives and acid/corrosive substance. It is proposed that investment in additional police officers will, therefore, "future proof" the borough against the cumulative impact of savings proposed as part of the One Met Model 2020 and the draft Public Access and Engagement Strategy.
- 3.9 Crime has been one of the most pressed residents' concerns. The Council's Annual Residents Survey 2017 shows that 31% respondents identified that crime is still one of top personal concerns. Consultation with our residents, which took place in the summer of 2016, identified their top priorities for the Community Safety Plan 2017-21 were: 1) drug and alcohol abuse, 2) ASB and 3) gangs.

Recommended option

- 3.10 Below is the recommended option for additional police officers with its costs:

Items	Number	Costs of the first year
Sergeant (PS)	4	£852k (including existing Partnership Task Force officers/contract expiring Dec 2018)
Police Constables (PC)	20	
Crime Prevention Design Advisor	1	£60k
Suitable vehicle cost	-	£86k (first year. This will decrease in subsequent years)
Total		£998k (first year)

As the table above indicates, an unmarked Police Vehicle with covert blue lights and sirens (a Q car) is required due to additional pressures on vehicle fleet. This type of vehicle is ideally suited to plain clothes proactive patrolling and tackling drug dealers in vehicles. The first year's costs (£998k) will decrease by approximately £74k due to lower vehicle costs in subsequent years. The police advise that additional £5k-10k will be required as overtime contingency per year.

- 3.11 This option is considered the most cost effective one among the seven considered options and it also aligns to the Council's commitment to neighbourhood management as set out the ASB Blueprint for Action agreed by Cabinet in June 2017. Details of all options are set out in Appendix A.

Outcomes that the additional investment in neighbourhood police officers will deliver

3.12 The additional police officers will continue focusing on tackling ASB and will be aligned with the Community Safety Partnership and Council priorities, in particular, priority A (ASB including drugs and alcohol) and B (Violence) of the CSP Plan 2017-21 and the ASB Blueprint. Additional police officers will also be tasked to hotspot crime areas, which are aligned with Priorities B and D (Reducing re-offending – focus includes gangs and youth violence) of the Community Safety Plan. The additional investment will deliver the following outcomes:

- Residents will be reassured and victims' satisfaction level will improve
- Visibility of neighbourhood police will improve
- Concerns about crime and ASB will have reduced in the residents surveys.
- Perpetrators will be brought to justices.
- Criminal justice outcomes will improve and those individuals committing drug/alcohol related crime and/or ASB will be required to address their substance misuse issues via the proactive use of criminal or civil orders.
- Joint partnership operations that deliver positive outcomes for residents and improve perceptions and feelings of safety
- ASB, drug related incidents and drug dealings will decrease
- Communications between residents and the partners will improve.

The proposal will:

- Reinforce the neighbourhood policing model to mitigate and manage crime and ASB as a key Mayoral priority and protect front line policing resources in TH.
- Support the Council's commitment to real neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management.
- Provide a ring-fenced resource for the Borough which cannot be abstracted and will be locally operationally tasked on issues that matter to residents through the Partnership Tasking/Operations Group.
- Provide additional police vehicle to allow the considerably increased number of council funded police officers to conduct their day to day business responding to partnership tasked Council priorities.
- Provide opportunities for co-location with Council enforcement officers and statutory partners for greater synergy, improved efficiency, reduction in duplication and savings delivery through Neighbourhood Management.
- The Team will have a focus on delivering the neighbourhood priorities that are critical to the Borough and will be tasked accordingly via the fortnightly Partnership Tasking/Operations Group.
- Provide a highly visible commitment and resource to the community, along with the additional policing resource also being purchased through Tower Hamlets Homes.
- The proposals are based on purchasing constables and a sergeant with oversight from an existing police Inspector. This will strengthen the existing police team and therefore, retain the local knowledge and relationships that have been developed with partners and the community.

- Provide a specialist seconded Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA). This activity will contribute to prevention and demand management with understanding of Environmental design and assessment. CPDA will be of significant benefit to the Borough in light of tasking, prevention, planning and problem-solving in the context of the Borough where significant population growth and demand is increasing around crime and ASB. This activity will also contribute to borough resilience and in particular will provide expert advice on street scene and protecting the borough from terrorist attacks.
- Provide environmental design (e.g. street lighting, CCTV, communal green spaces/shrubbery to design out crime.

Timeline

3.13 The Tower Hamlets Police provided the following indicative timetable:

Timeline	Implementation
8-10 weeks from the Section 92 agreement signed	First unit (1 PS and 5PCs) in place in addition to the existing team
10-12 weeks from the agreement signed (4 weeks from the first unit in place)	Second unit (1 PS and 5PCs) in place
14-16 weeks from the agreement signed (4 weeks from the second unit in place)	Third unit (1 PS and 5PCs) in place

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 4.1 This report seeks approval to fund the recommended option of investment in 4 Police Task Force teams in the borough through a Section 92 agreement of the Police Act 1996. The Council currently funds a single team made up of one sergeant and 2 police constables with 3 constables provided at no charge. However no further resources have been included as part of the Council's latest MTFS 2017 – 2020.
- 4.2 A number of options are set out in Appendix A that details a range of investment opportunities from £500,000, £1m and £2m per annum. In each of the options there is consideration of the different allocations of police teams that could be purchased through the scheme.
- 4.3 In addition the options include the secondment of a Crime Prevention Design Advisor £60,000, vehicle costs, and overtime provision contingency. These additional costs have not been included in any previous agreements and the report sets out in 3.10 (Proposed Option) the benefits from that approach.
- 4.4 In respect of the vehicle costs set out in this report there is a need to ensure that, as the S92 agreement is developed, the type of costs that are proposed to be funded are clear in order to establish whether they are capital or revenue in nature and whether the council will have ownership of the asset(s).
- 4.5 The proposals in this report will deliver 4 teams that will support the Neighbour Policing objectives, each team consisting of 1 sergeant and 5

police constables. In addition to the police teams the agreement will now include the Crime Prevention Design Advisor secondment, vehicle costs and an overtime contingency provision. There is currently budget provision of £213,000 that supports the existing s92 agreement due to end in December 2018, the agreement will need to be extended to coincide with the new proposed s92 agreements, once agreed. The Year 1 costs are expected to be £885,000 followed by £721,000 for both Years 2 and 3. This leaves a funding gap of just over £2.3m over the period to support the scheme.

- 4.6 The costs of the proposed options are set out in the report together with historic performance data (appendix B) Given the Council's approach to Outcomes Based Budgeting it is important that the outcomes set out in 3.12 are sufficiently clear to enable members to understand what benefits can be expected and provide a framework for evaluating the impact of these teams on key performance indicators; this is essential to establishing whether the proposal is value for money.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 On 22nd February 2017 Council agreed the General Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets and Medium Term Financial Plan 2017-20. This is in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. Once the Budget has been agreed then it is the responsibility of the Mayor, the Executive and officers to implement it.
- 5.2 The Mayor, Executive, Committees of the Executive and any officer may only take decisions which are in line with the budget. If a decision which is contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget approved by Council, then that decision may only be taken by Council.
- 5.3 Section 92(2) of the Police Act 1996 provides that The council of a London borough, county, district or parish which falls wholly or partly within the metropolitan police district may make grants to the Mayor's Office for Police purposes. .
- 5.4 Whilst there is no strict legal definition of grant, a grant is in the nature of a gift and is based in trust law. However, grants are often given for a purpose so it is sometimes unclear whether a grant has been made or the arrangement is a contract for services.
- 5.5 There will be many grants which are made by the Council for the purpose of discharging one of its statutory duties. However, as a grant is in the nature of a gift, it is considered there must be some element of discretion on the part of the Council as grantor as to whom a grant is made to and whether this is made. If the Council is under a legal duty to provide a payment to a specific individual or organisation, and cannot lawfully elect not to make such a payment, then that should not amount to a grant.

- 5.6 In this case, the Council is not under a legal duty to make the payments and as the payment is discretionary, it is therefore a grant and as this is a grant then pursuant to the Mayor's Executive Scheme of Delegation the Mayor has delegated decisions in relation to grants to the Grants Determination Sub-Committee. However, pursuant to paragraph 6.3 of Rule 3 of the Executive Procedure Rules, the delegation to the Grants Determination Sub-Committee is subject to the Mayor's prerogative to make decisions on all matters relating to all his statutory powers. The Mayor can therefore make the decision in cabinet notwithstanding the delegation to the Grants Determination Sub-Committee. The reason for the exercise of this prerogative by the Mayor should be stated in cabinet r and a report submitted to the next Grants Determination Sub-Committee for their noting.
- 5.7 Section 92(3) of the 1996 Act provides that Grants under this section may be made unconditionally or, with the agreement of the chief officer of police for the police area concerned, subject to conditions. It is noted that the grant will be subject to an agreement.
- 5.8 When considering whether to approve the grant, consideration should be given to the arrangements in place to ensure that the power that is exercised is consistent with its best value arrangements. The Council is obliged as a best value authority under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (the Best Value Duty). Paragraph 7 below considers this in further detail.
- 5.9 When implementing the scheme, the Council must ensure that no part of the funds issued represents a profit element to any of the recipients. The inclusion of profit or the opportunity of making a profit from the grant or third parties indicates that the grant is really procurement activity and would otherwise be subject to the Council's Procurement Procedures and other appropriate domestic and European law. This would mean therefore, that the Council would have failed to abide by the appropriate internal procedures and external law applicable to such purchases.
- 5.10 When making grants decisions, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (the public sector equality duty). A proportionate level of equality analysis is required to discharge the duty and information relevant to this is contained in the One Tower Hamlets section of the report.

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

Although the direction of travel on ASB volume shows a downward trend the Borough remains at the top of rankings for the highest volume of ASB calls in London, knife crime incidents and gang flagged offences across a number of London boroughs (including Tower Hamlets) are on the increase. The 2017

Annual Residents Survey shows that crime remains one of residents' top concerns. The outcomes by this proposal will help all communities in the Borough feel safer and will improve community cohesion.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Metropolitan Police are the only organisation that can provide this service for the Borough. The performance of additional police officers will continue being contract managed closely and they will be deployed efficiently using a reviewed operational deployment mechanism in partnership with Tower Hamlets Homes.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 There are no direct sustainable environment actions or environmental implications from the proposals in this report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The performance of additional police officers will continue to be contract managed and activity monitored closely and they will be deployed efficiently using the existing tasking mechanism. The existing tasking mechanism and contract management arrangements will require ensuring the Council achieves value for money for its investment.
- 9.2 This proposal will help reduce the Council's reputational risks. It aims to address community concerns relating to community safety in the Borough which has the highest volume of ASB (101 and 999) calls across London boroughs and some forms of violent crime incidents. Action to tackle these problems will reassure the residents.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 This is to reduce and prevent crime and disorder in the Borough and provides for beneficial consequences in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

11. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The investment in additional police officers will provide beneficial consequences for safeguarding ensuring that vulnerable adults and children who are risk of becoming victims of crime are safeguarded from harm.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- Tower Hamlets Community Safety Partnership Plan 2017-2021
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB): A Blueprint for local action in Tower Hamlets (including its Equality Analysis).

Appendices

- Appendix A: Considered options
- Appendix B: Current crime data & performance

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

- List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.
- These must be sent to Democratic Services with the report
- State NONE if none.

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A