

SAFER CITY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY GROUP

Tuesday, 7 July 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Safer City Partnership Strategy Group held at the Guildhall EC2 at 10.00 am

Present

Douglas Barrow (Chairman)
Claire Dumontier-Marriage
Peter Lisley (Deputy Chairman)
Gupta Renu
David Bulbrook
Bob Benton
Don Randall
James Thomson

Tim Wiseman
Sophie Anne Fernandes
Deputy James Thomson
Trish Adams
Patrick Brooks
David Evans
Tijs Broeke

Alex Orme	- City of London Police Authority
David MacKintosh	- Head of Community Safety
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services Dept
Rachel Pye	- Markets & Consumer Protection
Jillian Reid	- Town Clerk's Department
Helen Isaac	- City of London Police
Ray Marskall	- City of London Police
Chris Rumbles, Clerk	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Stuart Webber, Marvin Bruno and Gavin Stedman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

Resolved, that the minutes of the meeting on 12 February 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Group received a report of the Town Clerk providing Members with a summary of outstanding actions from previous meetings. Updates were noted as follows:-

SOS Bus – Recent visit to Soho to place to witness a scheme already running. City of London Police are in discussion with St Bultoph's Church considering alternative options to an SOS Bus. A progress update will follow at the September meeting.

Partnership Data Review – Lack of progress remains an ongoing problem. Progress has not been made as have would been hoped owing to a Data Analyst working on the project having now left the City Corporation. The Chairman stressed the issue had been raised on a number of occasion and asked for an update at the September meeting. The Chairman stressed SCP required analytical support.

Park Guard Patrol – Ran until Christmas. An increase in reporting was seen, which was seen as positive. Increased visibility and reporting has seen reassurance go up but it has proved difficult to measure the success. The Chairman suggested this area of work could be looked at as a non-policing model and stressed that any statistics that can be brought to the September meeting would be helpful.

RECEIVED

5. **CITY OF LONDON POLICE UPDATE**

The Group received a report of the Commissioner providing partners with an update on the activity of City of London Police since the last meeting. Updates were provided on various elements of policing including:-

- Impact of Covid-19 having seen crime in the City drop significantly. Shoplifting and bike theft had continued, with incidents of anti-social behaviour also having fallen. Over a rolling year a considerable reduction in crime had been seen in the City.
- Mental Health Street Triage professionals have remained in support of City of London Police and not returned to support the National Health Service. City of London Police now consider Mental Health Street Triage to be a necessary service.
- Prevent delivery and engagement now being done in a different way with a new officer working on Prevent. An update to follow in September.

A Member welcomed that crime in the City had come down, whilst also referring to relaxation of lockdown restrictions and people returning to the workplace and questioned what can be done differently to keep crime levels down.

The Commissioner explained that pro-active work would be taking place looking at serial offenders and removing these individuals from the streets. Also, through a restructuring the Force as part of the Transform Programme and putting in place dedicated officers looking at crime prevention. City of London Police were also working on a number of other innovative plans and measures looking to avoid the City returning to pre Covid-19 levels of crime.

The Chairman acknowledged that crime prevention was better than detention, whilst also stressing that where a crime was committed that detention would need to remain as a deterrent. The Chairman stressed that City of London Police were not able to police the City alone and that a partnership approach was needed, with this Group and the City Corporation having an important role to play.

A Member, also Chairman of Police Authority Board, accepted the important point of broader engagement and questioned if there were any areas where City of London Police would welcome greater engagement or where they were not getting the necessary support. This is the moment to drive the prevention agenda and for City of London Police to come forward with any big asks so the City Corporation can be clear on these.

The Commissioner referred to the earlier update relating to the Data Analyst and stressed a crucial element for better decision making was receiving better information. The Commissioner suggested there would be benefit in a permanent full-time crime co-ordinator at the City Corporation to link up the ambitions of the City of London Police and City Corporation. The Chairman suggested this could be considered as part of the resourcing of Safer City Partnership Group.

The Chairman remarked on the begging and vagrancy numbers having dropped and questioned how this could be prevented from re-escalating. The Commissioner highlighted key areas being a government funded post to support this area of work, good joint working with the City Corporation having a real impact and also the work on Operation Luscombe helping.

Resolved, that the update be noted.

6. RESPONSES TO ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE CITY OF LONDON: SECOND UPDATE REPORT

The Group received a report updating on activities of the two-year funded post of the Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator and Strategy Officer.

The Chairman questioned why the new ward-based and 'partnership hub' to community policing would not be going live until September and the Commissioner explained this was a result of changes to community policing moving to a ward-based approach in September and this element being included as part of a wider policing model being put in place.

Resolved, that the report be received and its content noted.

7. THE CITY OF LONDON COMMUNITY TRIGGER RECOMMENDATIONS JANUARY 2020: UPDATE ON ACTION PLAN REPORT

The Group received a report providing an update on progress in adopting and implementing recommendations developed during the January 2020 Community Trigger Review.

The Chairman welcomed the update. The Head of Community Safety referred to the complexity of this incident and the many lessons that had been taken from it and were being actioned. The Chairman asked the Head of Community Safety to provide an update on outstanding actions before he departs the City Corporation next month. This would then allow for the monitoring of the actions moving forward. The Head of Community Safety agreed to this and referred to two officers within the Community Safety Team who were very keen to progress work in this area.

Resolved, that the report be received and its content noted.

8. **LONDON FIRE BRIGADE**

The Group received a report of the Borough Commander providing an update on activity of London Fire Brigade since the last meeting.

The Borough Commander remarked on the full service that London Fire Brigade had continued to provide during the Covid-19 pandemic. London Fire Brigade currently has a significant amount of work taking place in assisting as the City returns back to business as normal.

The Borough Commander referred to the number of false alarms the City's Fire Crews had been called out to attend and the unnecessary amount of disruption these incidents cause to the highway and surrounding area. The Borough Commander referred to a conference engaging with the business community in an effort to reduce the number of preventable false alarms the London Fire Brigade has to respond to. The Borough Commander confirmed the target was to bring callouts down to zero with London Fire Brigade focussing on preventative measures rather than putting fires out.

Resolved, that the report be received and its contents noted.

9. **DOMESTIC ABUSE VULNERABILITY AND RISK POLICY UPDATE**

The Group received a report providing an update on the VAWG Strategy 2019-2023, the City Corporation's response to domestic abuse since the beginning of lockdown and the post Covid-19 recovery plan.

The Head of Community Safety took the opportunity to thank London Fire Brigade publicly for their support in assisting with the distribution of posters to businesses and shops, having recognised a lack of digital messaging for this campaign. The Chairman thanked London Fire Brigade for their support.

The Chairman remarked on how it was positive to see this issue being reported and accepted the difficulty in measuring success. The Chairman questioned how incidents can be stopped from happening.

The Head of Community Safety explained that it was very much a live London issue with a significant number of people contacting the helpline. It would take time to make sense of all the data and was an area that would benefit from good critical analysis.

Resolved, that the report be received and its content noted.

10. **COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE**

The Group received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update of relevant data and activity.

The Director of Community and Children's Services highlighted the success of partnership working with commissioned homelessness and rough sleeping

providers when reducing the number of people rough sleeping on the streets in response to the Covid-19 crisis. It was hoped this would lead to a success story in keeping people off the streets moving forward. The Director referred to other areas of work through offering support to shielded individuals once ongoing support from Government ends and looking at continuing to work with support groups e.g. Dragon Café and mental health triage and support.

The Chairman welcomed the report acknowledging it offered a very good example of partnership working and organisations working together. The Chairman questioned the plans being put in place to prevent a return to the streets for those currently being accommodated.

The Director assured the Group that a recovery plan was in place looking to maintain the current position and to keep people off the streets, whilst acknowledging there would always be challenges with not everyone accepting the offer of accommodation. The offer would continue for those wanting to take advantage of it, but there are a unique set of circumstance that make it difficult for some e.g. drug use. The Head of Community Safety acknowledged the unique set of circumstances for many on the streets, with it proving hard to engage. It was accepted that lessons would continue to be learned with services being provided to meet the individual needs of those requiring support.

The Chairman acknowledged the importance of data analysis in assessing requirements moving forward. The Chairman thanked the Director and his team for all the work they continued to do.

Resolved, that the report be received and its content noted

11. PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE (ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, LICENSING AND TRADING STANDARDS) UPDATE

The Group received a report of the Port Health and Public Protection Director updating on the work of Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards since the last meeting.

The Director provided the group with an update on a number of areas including work supporting businesses throughout this period, Legionella risk assessments when looking at bringing buildings back into operation, food advice, Covid-19 secure risk assessments and also working with HSE and issuing notices to construction sites regarding a lack of social distancing being maintained. The Director highlighted a difficult balancing act of extending working hours on construction sites and addressing concerns of the resident community. The Director confirmed an al fresco dining policy had been prepared for presentation at Planning and Transportation. The proposed policy would allow for table and chairs outside City businesses, with this having the potential to lead to increased street drinking and requiring managing.

A Member, also Chairman of Police Authority Board, referred to the extension of hours on construction sites and stressed a need for flexibility to be offered to constructions sites, with the presumption being to extend hours. Extended

hours would be important to allow social distancing and the spreading out the working day for justifiable health and safety reasons.

The Commissioner referred to al fresco dining and the increased level of security that would be needed around this. A freer environment for trade would be created, but with increased risks being created through crowded spaces and potential for atrocities. City of London Police has finite resources and the Commissioner took the opportunity to highlight this point.

The Borough Commander referred to concerns around impacts on other public safety measures when putting tables and chairs out on the streets e.g. fire escape routes and means of escape from premises. The Borough Commander stressed the importance of not undermining other wider safety implications when putting out tables on the City's streets.

The Deputy Chairman acknowledged a need to balance all areas, with public safety the number 1 consideration in addition to other considerations e.g. terrorism, fire safety, Covid-19.

Resolved, that the report be received and its contents noted.

12. COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM UPDATE

The Group received a report of the Head of Community Safety updating the Group on activity of the Community Safety Team.

The Head of Community Safety referred to the POCA fund and reminded the Group of the £70k that remained available and could support relevant areas.

The Commissioner referred to a potential bid in the pipeline to support a Vulnerable Victim Advocate following withdrawal of funding from MOPAC.

The Head of Community Safety referred to the Serious and Organised Crime Board in the City being ahead of other areas. The Borough Commander referred to a meeting planned later in the month that would look at options to make the Board more representative of the City. The Borough Commander agreed to update further on the Serious and Organised Board at the September meeting.

The Head of Community Safety took the opportunity to thank the Community Safety Team for all their hard work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic in maintaining all the important areas of work.

13. QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE GROUP

There were no questions.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman thanked partners for their combined work in responding to Covid-19 and in providing a pan-London response during the crisis. The Chairman stressed that it was not possible for one organisation to ensure the

safety of the City and it was the contribution of key partners and working together that allowed the difficult issues to be worked through.

The Chairman concluded the meeting and thanked the Head of Community Safety and his team for all the good work they continued to do in supporting a range of key areas. The Chairman wished the Head of Community Safety well in his new position, acknowledging a sadness to see him leaving but with thanks from the Group for all he had done.

The Chairman assured the Group that resources would remain in place to continue and build on all the good work of the Safer City Partnership Group.

The meeting closed at 11.17am

Chairman

Contact Officer: Chris Rumbles
tel.no.: 020 7332 1405
christopher.rumbles@cityoflondon.gov.uk