

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2011/2012 REPORT NO. 181A

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Council
25th January 2012

REPORT OF:

Council Commission to
examine the August 2011
disturbances in Enfield

Agenda – Part: 1

Item: 8

Subject:

Final report and recommendations of the
Council Commission to examine the August
2011 disturbances in Enfield

Cabinet Member consulted:

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The cross party Commission to examine the August 2011 disturbances in Enfield was established by the Council at its meeting on 21st September 2011 to gather evidence on the causes of the disorder and asked to report its findings and recommendations back to Council.
- 1.2 The Commission has held eleven meetings, including a joint public meeting with the national Riots, Communities and Victims Panel, at which a wide range of written, survey, visual and oral evidence was considered. Demographic, economic and social data was studied and the Commission also reviewed external reports from the Cabinet Office, Metropolitan Police Service and the interim report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel
- 1.3 The Commission's final report brings together the findings drawn from the evidence collected, and makes recommendations for actions that will contribute to preventing similar incidents recurring and improve the life opportunities and wellbeing of Enfield residents.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Council is asked to approve The Commission final report and recommendations for future action
- 2.2 Agree that the report be sent to the national Riots, Communities and Victims Panel to inform their final report and recommendations.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The disturbances that occurred in Enfield on Sunday August 7th 2011 were part of an extensive outbreak of violence and disorder that took place over a number of days across England.
- 3.2 During and immediately after the disturbances in Enfield on August 7th, there was communication and joint working between local councillors and MPs, both Labour and Conservative. At its meeting on 21st September 2011, the Council decided to establish a cross-party Commission to examine the August 2011 disturbances in Enfield.
- 3.3 Its terms of reference were:
 - i. To gather evidence to:
 - a. Examine the causes of the disturbances in Enfield in August 2011
 - b. Understand the reasons which led people to take part
 - ii. To submit findings to the national independent Riots, Communities and Victims Panel and in due course to Council
 - iii. To report back to Council on the outcome of the Commission's review and make recommendations on actions to address its findings
- 3.4 The Commission has held eleven meetings, including a joint public meeting with the national Riots, Communities and Victims Panel, at which a wide range of written, survey, visual and oral evidence was considered. Demographic, economic and social data was studied and the Commission also reviewed external reports from the Cabinet Office, Metropolitan Police Service and the interim report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel.
- 3.5 Copies of the survey analysis will be placed in the members' library
- 3.6 The Commission's final report brings together the findings drawn from the evidence collected, and makes recommendations for actions that will contribute to preventing similar incidents recurring and improve the life opportunities and wellbeing of Enfield residents.
- 3.7 The recommendations listed have been developed as a direct response to the evidence provided to the Commission and to address specific issues raised.
- 3.8 The Commission recognises that the Council and its partners are already engaged in work on the issues and that the delivery of the Council's Business Plan objectives is also contributing.
- 3.9 However the Commission is convinced that reviewing and amending existing initiatives and developing new approaches to service provision

in the light of the evidence from the disturbances is crucial to building resilience and preventing future occurrences.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not to have a Council Commission, thus losing the opportunity to identify the issues that contributed to the disturbances and propose initiatives to address these issues and reduce the likelihood of similar events happening again.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 To take the opportunity of using first hand evidence on key issues relating to the causes of the disturbances and propose projects and initiatives to address them, reducing the likelihood of similar events recurring and improving the life opportunities and wellbeing of Enfield residents

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

The Council Commission makes a number of recommendations aimed at reducing the risk of a recurrence of the troubles. The main focus is on increasing support to young people (up to the age of 25) in the Borough.

Some of the recommendations will be able to be funded from within existing resources. The remainder will need to be built into the medium term financial planning process. A full costing appraisal of all the recommendations has yet to be completed and it is recommended that this is done as soon as possible and a pool of funding is built into the medium term financial plan for an initial two years that can be drawn upon as and when projects and initiatives are approved.

The Council will also seek to utilise any central government funding made available for addressing issues arising from the August disturbances, or other external funding streams.

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 There was no statutory obligation on the Council to set up the Council Commission. However, Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 provides the Council with the power to do anything it considers likely to promote or improve the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of their area or residents. The setting up of the Commission and the findings and recommendations it has made meet the well-being objectives. There is no

express prohibition, restriction or limitation contained in a statute against use of power in this way.

6.2.2 When Councils undertake any activity in pursuit of one or more of the wellbeing elements, the well-being power enables them to incur expenditure, and specifically (section 2 (4) identifies the provision of financial assistance as one means of doing so.

6.3 Property Implications

None

7. KEY RISKS

7.1 Given the nature of the riots there is an inherent risk of not knowing when sufficient initiatives have been put in place and this in turn could lead to spending too much money on the one hand and of not spending enough on the other. To mitigate against this, risks will need to be clearly identified with cost-effective mitigating actions.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All

The Commission has found that inequality and/or perceptions of inequality were a key contributory factor to the disturbances. The recommendations seek to put in place initiatives that will help to address the issue.

8.2 Growth and Sustainability

Lack of employment and opportunity also identified as a key factor in people becoming involved in the disturbances. The Commission's report makes recommendations for increased work with schools, business and public bodies to improve skills and make employment more accessible.

8.3 Strong Communities

Young people, in particular, said that they felt marginalised and not part of their communities. The Commission's report contains recommendations that aim to provide opportunities for greater involvement and participation in community activities.

9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 When the report has been approved by Council arrangements will be put in place to monitor progress against the recommendations and evaluate the outcomes for residents

Background Papers: Commission Report