

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015/2016 REPORT NO.225

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Cabinet – 27 April 2016

REPORT OF:

Director of Regeneration and
Environment

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Agenda - Part: 1

Item: 8

Subject:

**Contract with MOPAC for the provision of
additional Police Officers within Enfield**

Wards: All

Key Decision No: 4248

Cabinet Member consulted:

Cllr Brett

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to award a new contract to the 31 March 2019 with the option for a further one year to MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) for the provision of sixteen (16) Police Officers to form both a Safer Estates team (10 officers) and a tasking team (6 officers) to replace the existing parks and estates PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) provided by MOPAC under a previous contract agreement. It should be stressed that the responsibility for policing lies with the MPS and that this is additional resource, funded by the Council to supplement the allocation of police officers by MOPAC to the borough.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet agree that:

- 2.1 The Council employs sixteen (16) police officers to support crime and disorder reduction work on housing estates and elsewhere. This would consist of a Safer Estates team (10 officers) and a tasking team (6 officers) that would be used to tackle other local authority issues as identified. Both teams would be line managed by an appropriate officer from the Metropolitan Police but directed by the LBE Head of Community Safety and via the joint tasking process.
- 2.2 As the safer estates team is aimed at housing estates, this should be funded by the HRA (Housing Revenue Account) as per the existing safer estates PCSO team. This will represent a cost increase on the previous contract. The remaining team should be funded from the general fund using existing budgets. This will still provide a saving to the council as the safer parks team will not be re-commissioned.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The council has had a contract with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and previously the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) for the provision of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). The previous contract ran from 2010 to 2014.
- 3.2 Due to a delay in the provision of prices from the Metropolitan Police and whilst the council reviewed its options, the current PCSO contract has been extended repeatedly. This was to allow for appropriate assessments of need to be carried out, but mainly for the London Mayor and the MPS to make a decision as to the future of PCSOs in London.
- 3.3 The current contract has provided up to fifteen PCSOs for the parks team and nine PCSOs for an estates team at a current cost of £26K per officer per annum. The new prices offered by MOPAC to all London Boroughs are more expensive than this which will necessitate either a reduction in the number of contracted officers or an increased budget. It should also be noted that both of these teams are additional resources to the Policing service already provided by the Metropolitan Police and are not statutory functions for the Council. Due to various factors such as uncertainty around their future whilst the Metropolitan Police made a decision, many of the PCSOs have now left their jobs and the levels remaining are very small. With shift patterns the parks team could have as few as 2 council funded officers on duty in parks, the impact of which is extremely limited.
- 3.4 We have been reviewing the options around this team and have looked at the locations and demands on these officers. Analysis of crime figures from previous years have highlighted that around 3,000 crimes are recorded on estates per year which represents 14% of the borough total. By contrast in 2014, the twenty-four parks with the highest crime levels (e.g. Pymmes Park, Town Park, Albany Park, etc) only recorded just over 140 crimes between them.
- 3.5 This disparity in numbers highlights that the current estates team need a more enforcement based approach, whereas the parks team have been a more reassurance based role, providing support limited by low availability to what are relatively low crime areas.
- 3.6 In light of this, it is proposed that the council enters into a contract with the Metropolitan Police for the provision of sixteen police officers.
- 3.7 Ten of these officers will form a safer estates team to tackle the ongoing community safety issues on estates. Employing police officers will have a higher unit cost, but will provide a greater enforcement and deterrent options than the existing PCSO's.
- 3.8 This safer estates team should continue to be funded by the HRA as per the current safer estates team. Due to the changes in numbers and the use of

Police officers rather than PCSO's, this will represent an increase in costs to the HRA, which are detailed in the Part 2 report.

- 3.9 The remaining six officers will form a tasking team that can be used to tackle other key issues for the local authority. This could be work in parks given the loss of the existing parks team, but also elsewhere such as estates and other problem areas/venues. It should be noted that we have previously used Parkguard (a private company with extensive experience across London) who advise owners of status or dangerous dogs about safety and inappropriate use. It is proposed that this regular use will cease given budget constraints and specialist dog services will only be commissioned when needed. This would be subject to a separate procurement exercise if required as per procurement regulations.
- 3.10 The Metropolitan Police are the sole providers of Police officers to London Boroughs. MOPAC have provided a price to all local authorities for these officers, but have stated that for every officer 'purchased' by local authorities, MOPAC will provide an additional officer free of charge (Police officers only). This represents good value for the local authority, especially given the specialist nature of the services provided, as there will be a contract cost of seven officers to obtain the fourteen officers recommended within this report.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The council could cease to provide any additional Police officers or PCSOs as these are not statutory services. However, the council is committed to improving community safety and have prioritised work in those areas of higher crime and disorder. Work has already begun to focus more strongly on deterring crime and ASB on estates and the agreement for a council funded police enforcement team will ensure that improvements continue.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The provision of a safer estates team is considered to be the most effective way of providing a service in this area. The safer parks team provided a reassurance role in relatively low crime areas and the impact of this team which has been significantly reduced by successive recruitment drives by the MPS and British Transport Police is now harder to justify retaining at a time of severe financial pressure and budget reductions.
- 5.2 The existing safer parks team will no longer exist and the reassurance work provided by the current safer parks team will continue with police dedicated ward teams and the additional tasking officers if required. The safer estates team (10 officers) will also go into parks near estates when it is felt that an issue there is detrimentally impacting upon the estate itself.

The (6 officers – Tasking Team) will form a tasking team that can be used to tackle other key issues for the local authority. This could be work in parks given the loss of the existing parks team, but also elsewhere such as estates and other problem areas/venues (part 1 paragraph 3.9).

- 5.3 The proposed contract arrangement is both cost-effective and allows these roles to link in with the other services provided locally by the Metropolitan Police. It also has the additional benefit of Enfield Police providing at least one sergeant to manage these teams.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

Please see Part 2 report.

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 The Council has a duty pursuant to the Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006) to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it can to prevent (i) crime and disorder in its area including anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment; (ii) the misuse of drugs and other substances in its area; and (iii) re-offending in its area.
- 6.2.2 MOPAC have the exclusive right to provide Police Officers to the Council, as such the proposed contract for these services is excluded from the Public Procurement Regulations 2006 (Regulation 6(l)(i)). Any contract arrangement would be formalised with an agreement pursuant to Section 92 of the Police Act 1996 and would be for an initial term of three years although there is ability for either party to terminate the contract with 6 months' notice at any time.
- 6.2.3 The Council must comply with its obligations with regards to obtaining best value under the Local Government (Best Value Principles) Act 1999.
- 6.2.4 As the extent of the total value of the proposed contract/s is £250k or above the Council must comply with Key Decision procedure.
- 6.2.5 Any procurement process to select and appoint a specialist contractor for tackling anti-social behaviour linked with the use of dangerous dogs must be carried out in accordance with the Councils Contract Procedure Rules.
- 6.2.6 All contracts required in accordance with this report will be in a form approved by the Assistant Director Legal and Governance.

6.3 Property Implications

None, as these officers will work out of Metropolitan Police properties. However, the Council's Strategic Property Services team will continue to work closely on Asset Management Planning with the Metropolitan Police to ensure that accommodation needs for both organisations are economically met as and when these change.

7. KEY RISKS

- 7.1 This contract will provide for the continued additional deployment of Police Officers into estates and other areas to help detect crime and ASB and support and reassure residents of Enfield.
- 7.2 We will continue to monitor risks throughout the contract.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All

The additional Police teams will deliver services to keep residents and visitors to Enfield safe.

8.2 Growth and Sustainability

This contract will allow us to continue providing an additional service in estates. There will also be continued support for other public areas via a tasking team. This will support their usage and encourage more residents and visitors to use these areas.

8.3 Strong Communities

- 8.3.1 The provision of a safer estates and tasking teams will support work to make our communities safe and feel safe.
- 8.3.2 It will aid and assist use of public spaces by all members of the community by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) whilst also assisting in providing protection and reassurance to vulnerable members of the public.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There is an obligation for the contractor to comply with the Council's relevant policies and codes of practice in relation to employment and equal opportunities. However, it is neither relevant nor proportionate to undertake an equality impact assessment / analysis purely for the award of the contract.
- 9.2 As part of the process of redesigning the service the current council budget consultation asks residents which services they should prioritise, and includes security and safety services as an option. There has also been some discussion about this via the Council scrutiny process.

10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

This contract will be monitored by the Community Safety Unit. A wide range of performance management and analysis will be used to ensure that these officers are delivering services and are effectively tasked as required.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

As a contracted service, the Metropolitan Police will undertake and provide all required risk assessments, training and personal health and safety equipment to their employees. We will ensure that this meets our Health and Safety standards. The council's Community Safety Unit will provide funding for vehicles for the service to operate effectively around the borough.

12. HR IMPLICATIONS

None as contracted service.

13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 Evidence has shown a link between reducing public fear of crime and the amount that people walk in an area. The continued use of a safer estates team and a tasking team will help to reduce crime and fear of crime and encourage residents to use public areas more, benefitting the health of our communities.

Background Papers

None.