

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CRIME SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY, 15TH MARCH, 2022

**MEMBERS:** Councillors Lee David-Sanders (Chair & Deputy Leader of the Opposition), Daniel Anderson and Kate Anolue

**OFFICERS:** Ivana Price, Head of Early Help Youth & Community Safety, Julie Taylor, Domestic Violence Co-Ordinator, Stacey Gilmour, Governance Officer

**Also Attending:** Councillor Nneka Keazor, Cabinet Member, Community Safety & Cohesion, Superintendent Chris Jones, Met Police, Chief Inspector Karl Curran, Met Police, Detective Superintendent Marco Bardetti, Met Police, Acting Inspector Jamie Thomas, Met Police, Tim Fellows, Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board, Janet Marshall, Vice-Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board, John Prior, Parent Engagement Network.

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Achilleas Georgiou, Cllr Stephanos Ioannou, Andrea Clemons, Head of Community Safety, Zarko Krickovic, Community Safety Intelligence Officer, A/Chief Superintendent Simon Crick, BCU Commander and Detective Chief Inspector Sebastian Adjei-Addoh, Met Police.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest relevant to items on the agenda.

### 3. PROSTITUTION (OPERATION BOXSTER)

Chief Inspector Karl Curran presented the update highlighting the following:

- Operation Boxster is a dedicated operation in the Fore Street area covering both Enfield and Haringey and has been a full-time operation since June 2020.
- It is an extremely complex matter which requires a long-term strategy and a partnership led approach to try and solve the problem.
- The presence of sex workers causes significant community harm and impacts on confidence in Police and Local Authorities.
- The presence of sex work is linked to organised crime, modern slavery, drug use, violence against women, public issues and anti-social behaviour (ASB) from clients' behaviours.

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- The presentation covered: background and history, changes in policing sex workers, operation objectives, targeting the demand, understanding the reason behind sex work, targeting the right people, working with partners and the blended approach.
- The reduction of sex workers can not be achieved by enforcement against sex workers by itself. Time and time again it has shown that arrest operations do not get to the root cause of prostitution and any reductions are temporary.
- Discussions on new working practices with all partners who provide outreach and diversion has taken place. This has led to a blended approach of enforcement and outreach work to encourage sex workers into diversion away from sex work.
- In addition to the work targeting the problem of street sex workers the unit is also a continuous presence in a high crime area of Enfield. In the last eight months the team has arrested 115 individuals for offences including indecent assault on children, controlling a sex worker, possession of offensive weapons, possession with intent to supply Class A drugs and burglary.
- Operation Boxster has the highest arrest stop and search figures for a proactive unit on North Area. In addition to the above work the unit has been recognised as an example of good practice across the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

### Questions, queries and comments made:

1. In response to a query on the data, which seemed to show the same cohort engaging with sex workers of the same nationality members were advised that this observation of demographic profiles is recognised. The use of sex workers is very much linked to other criminality and organised crime and these areas are where the targeted work is taking place.
2. With regards to engagement with partners/agencies and how effective this work has been, it was explained that the key is to understand the reasons behind sex work as each sex worker has a complex history and specialised needs. This then enables targeted intervention by several different outreach organisations which are fully funded by recognised agencies and charitable organisations. By mutual support and sharing of information between all partners the aim is to reduce the number of sex workers and have consistent and sustainable working practices which can be scrutinised and be compliant with national standards.
3. What is the feeling on the likelihood of making a serious dent in this long-standing problem? Chief Inspector Curran said there is a need to be sensible and recognise that the problem is never going to completely disappear. However, there has already been a reduction in the visibility of sex workers and others are coming forward saying that they are now ready to seek support. He went on to say that there is still a need to get better at finding out what works, and the strategy will be embodied into daily policing. There was also likely to be some recommendations coming the Council's way, for example; cutting back

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of bushes, increase in lighting and alley-gating as these sorts of issues often impacted on the ability to effectively hide in plain sight.

4. Cllr Anolue thanked the Police for their ongoing work and said that Operation Boxster was proving to be extremely effective as there had been a significant improvement and as the Ward Councillor in this area, she had received much fewer complaints from residents regarding this issue.
5. Superintendent Jones said that Operation Boxster will 'follow the problem' if it moves areas as the long-term strategy is to solve the issue rather than just move it from area to area.
6. The Chair said he had been keen to track the process of Operation Boxster and was therefore pleased to see the good work taking place and the positive outcomes and it would now be interesting to see how it continues to evolve.
7. Superintendent Jones said that criminals continually change their tactics therefore it is very much a cat and mouse game. However following investment in Officers there is now a very highly trained team in place therefore moving forward the vision is to radically reduce the number of sex workers operating on the streets of Enfield, mitigate the risks associated with sex work and increase the sense of safety with the local community and local residents. The robust zero tolerance approach will continue.

The Chair thanked Superintendent Chris Jones and Chief Inspector Karl Curran for their presentation and overview on this long-standing issue and the wider impact of this work and was pleased to hear the focus moving forward.

### 4. E SCOOTERS

Acting Inspector Jamie Thomas presented the update highlighting the following:

- The term "powered transporters" cover a variety of novel personal transport devices which are mechanically propelled (propelled by a motor) as well as, or instead of, being manually propelled.
- It includes E-scooters, Segways, hoverboards go-peds, powered unicycles and u-wheels.
- The definition of "motor vehicle" as set out in the Road Traffic Act 1988 is "any mechanically propelled vehicle intended or adapted for use on roads". There is case law confirming that powered transporters fall within this definition.
- As a mechanically propelled vehicle users must comply with various Road Traffic Legislation.
- Information was provided on crimes involving E-scooters. Between July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 and April 30<sup>th</sup> 2021, there were 574 offences such as robberies or assaults carried out by people who were riding e-scooters at the time.
- It is currently illegal to use privately owned E-scooters on public roads, pavements or cycle lanes and anyone caught breaking the law can

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expect a £300 fine or six points on their driving licence, immaterial of age.

- However, the Government is considering whether the law should be changed. As part of this consideration, the Department for Transport introduced legislation in July 2020 to enable rental E-scooter trials to take place on public roads and cycle lanes across the UK. The trial period has now been extended to November 2022 and the Government is therefore awaiting the outcome of these trials before making a decision on whether to change the law.
- E-scooter crashes shot up almost 2,800% in London in the first half of 2021 compared to the entirety of 2018, new figures show. There were 258 collisions in the capital in the first six months of last year, according to Met Police data. Across of all of 2018 there were just nine.
- Speeds on E-scooters are capped at 15.5mph, however they can be modified to go as fast as 70mph.

The following comments/concerns were raised:

1. It was felt that it was a very strange anomaly that E-scooters could be legally sold by businesses yet illegal for users to ride them on public roads, pavements and cycle lanes. It was agreed that this put the Police in an extremely unacceptable position when trying to deal with this issue.
2. Superintendent Chris Jones said that this remains a somewhat 'tricky' area, as the Police do not want start having to criminalise certain users (e.g. a ten year old child or a parent travelling to and from the school drop off/pick up) therefore he felt there needed to be an education piece around this prior to any enforcement phase.
3. Members agreed that there is an issue here for encouraging active travel. However, it was felt that if the use of E-scooters on public roads/pavements etc was to become legal, then the speed of them should be capped at approximately 10mph and their size also restricted.
4. In response to concerns raised regarding thefts using E-scooters (e.g. riding past and grabbing a mobile phone) members were advised that the numbers for this type of crime involving E-scooters were relatively low as mopeds/bicycles are usually the vehicles of choice. However, this was an area which would continue to be closely monitored.
5. In conclusion the Chair said that some sort of Government framework/clear guidance was needed for the Police to be able to successfully manage this issue as the current situation was unacceptable for them.

### **5. DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

RECEIVED the report of Julie Tailor, Domestic Violence Co-Ordinator highlighting the following:

- The report provided an oversight of the work being undertaken to tackle Domestic Abuse (DA) and Violence Against Women and Girls

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(VAWG) in public spaces. It also provided examples of partnership work to reduce risks and support victims of DA and VAWG more broadly.

- Enfield Council had been successful in securing a Perpetrator Programme in the Borough and this project began in November 2020. The programme will address different elements of the identities of domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, rather than just one-like race or gender. It will also help to break down some of the barriers to victims accessing support and help challenge and disrupt the abuse.
- The Enfield Domestic Abuse Hub was officially launched on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020 in response to the emergent concern of increasing domestic abuse incidents in the Borough during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The helpline continues to operate during weekdays between 9am to 5pm. Each victim is provided with tailored advice to their individual needs and can be referred on to other agencies for further support.
- Enfield had funded a Locks and Bolt scheme which launched in June 2020. The Locks and Bolts scheme is available to individuals that have been a victim of crime. The service works with vulnerable clients & their families to enable people to feel safe in their own homes.
- Enfield also has a “Safe Spaces” scheme which was set up by Hestia. UK SAYS NO MORE is working with Boots UK, Morrisons, Superdrug and Well pharmacies, TSB banks and independent pharmacies across the UK to provide Safe Spaces in their consultation rooms for people experiencing Domestic Abuse. They provide a safe and discrete way to reach out to friends and family, contact specialist support services and start their journey to recovery. There are currently 11 Safe Spaces in Enfield.
- Further information was provided on the Resilience Team and DAHA Accreditation, Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) Strategy, Police VAWG Plan, Annual Campaign as well as the 21-bed refuge in the borough which continues to provide support to survivors of Domestic Abuse (DA).

The following comments/questions were raised:

1. In response to a query as to what provision is made for male victims of domestic abuse members were advised that there is support available in the borough and provision provided such as the Locks and Bolt scheme as well as other services.
2. It was recognised that male and same sex domestic abuse is often under-reported therefore Enfield Council regularly run campaigns to encourage victims to come forward to access the support available. The Police are also doing their best to get the message out to the public to assure them that a cohesive, collaborative approach is used for all victims of crime.
3. Hestia had undertaken a massive piece of work to advertise their “Safe Spaces” and Enfield Council are ensuring that this message is reiterated in the Borough by constantly working with and updating all partnership agencies.

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4. It was recognised that engaging with the community is key to identifying and reaching out to victims of domestic abuse, and therefore community events were a great avenue for engaging with some of the hard to reach communities within the borough.
5. Customer Services are developing two community hubs which will employ nine community ambassadors. The aim is to use these posts to reach out, engage and support the communities and signpost them to services which may include DA support. Another ambition is to develop a Family Hub network, with the aim of bringing services into the community rather than expecting people to seek out support. It was agreed that this sort of engagement and support must be the direction of travel moving forward.
6. A programme of conversations with health partners is taking place to improve joined up working and integration in the context of developing Family Hubs ambition, including discussion with North Middlesex Hospital.
7. In response to a question about the distribution of the “Safe Spaces” and whether these are distributed in the borough where the need is, Julie Taylor, Domestic Abuse Co-Ordinator advised that a lot depends on the independent agency themselves, however conversations are always ongoing with the agency to see how we as a Council can enhance the project.
8. Last year’s data had shown Enfield to be the 4<sup>th</sup> highest Borough in London for Domestic Abuse Incidents. Ivana Price, Head of Early Help Youth & Community Safety advised that during the pandemic there had been a significant increase in the numbers of Domestic Abuse Incidents. However, in the year ending January 2022 there had been a decrease of 4% in this crime type and this trajectory has continued.

### **6. ENFIELD CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PERFORMANCE**

RECEIVED the report of Andrea Clemons, Head of Community Safety, highlighting the following:

- The data within the report is sourced from Police records, which can be subject to fluctuations due to record processing. It is optimally accessed at least 5 working days from the end of the required reporting month.
- A summary of the data was provided. There are indications that some crime levels across the capital are returning to numbers last seen pre-pandemic. Total Notifiable Offences in Enfield increased by 4.4% in the year ending January 2022. In London, there was a slightly higher increase of 5.2% in the same period.
- An increasing number of London Boroughs have recorded increases in Serious Youth Violence (SYV) victims in the last year. There was an average 0.4% rise in London equating to 24 more victims than last year across the capital. With a 3.2% rise in Enfield, this was the first year on year increase in victims in the borough since 2020.
- Some crime categories in the borough have maintained a decline or lower levels than those recorded prior to March 2020, such as

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Residential Burglary, Robbery of Personal Property and Gun Crime. In comparison to London there were higher decreases in Domestic Abuse Violence with Injury offences and incidents in Enfield than those recorded in London over the last year.

- There were over a third less Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) calls across both regions in the last year compared to the year before, decreasing by 37.8% in Enfield while in London, there was a 35.1% decrease in the same period.

The following comments/questions were raised:

1. The Police Officers present provided further information on the various crime figures detailed in the report and gave an overview of the work taking place within their teams.
2. In response to Members' queries, officers provided more details on key issues, challenges and comparative data.
3. Detailed information was provided on Police numbers, turnover and recruitment processes.
4. With regards to Estate Teams it was agreed that this item would come back to a future meeting of the Panel for a further update and would therefore be included on the Crime Scrutiny Work Programme for 2022/2023.

**Action: Stacey Gilmour, Governance Officer**

5. Conversations took place regarding the changes to Ward Boundaries in the Borough and how this was likely to affect Policing. Superintendent Chris Jones advised that conversations regarding this are still ongoing, but he would come back to the panel with any further update.

**Action: Superintendent Chris Jones**

### **7. NOTES OF THE INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2022**

AGREED the notes of the informal meeting held on 25 January 2022.

### **8. WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22**

NOTED the concluded work programme for 2021/22.

### **9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

NOTED that future meeting dates will be agreed at Annual Council in May 2022.

The Chair, Cllr David-Sanders advised that this would be his last meeting as Chair of the Crime Scrutiny Panel as he would shortly be stepping down from his role as a local Ward Councillor. He thanked the police, officers and panel members for their contributions and participations in discussions and said it had been a pleasure working with everyone over the past four years.

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Cllr Daniel Anderson thanked Cllr David-Sanders for his efforts in Chairing the panel and wished him good luck and success for the future.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified.