

## **HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the Housing, Environment, Transport and Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Monday 21 October 2013 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Gavin Edwards (Chair)  
Councillor Michael Bukola (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Claire Hickson  
Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE  
Councillor Graham Neale  
Councillor Wilma Nelson  
Councillor Martin Seaton

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Richard Livingstone

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** John Daley - Private Sector Accreditation Manager  
Paul Langford - Head of Operations  
Jonathon Toy - Head of Community Safety & Enforcement  
David Lewis – Head of Maintenance and Compliance  
Shelley Burke – Head of Overview & Scrutiny  
Fitzroy Williams – Scrutiny Team

### **1. APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cris Claridge and Mr Orey co-optee members of the sub-committee.

### **2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

2.1 There were no additional items of business.

### 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

### 4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the sub-committee held on 10 September 2013 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

### 5. CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEW - COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTON - COMMUNITY SAFETY

5.1 The cabinet member for Community Safety councillor Richard Livingstone updated the sub-committee on the success of work carried out on the reduction of violent crime over the last 3 years in the borough, it was reported that :-

- Violent crime (violence with and without injury) has been decreasing since 2009/10 and as at 30 September 2013 was down 28%, 2,204 fewer crimes (from 8007 to 5793).
- Violence with injury (most serious violence and assault with injury) has been decreasing since 2009/10. As at 30 September 2013, down 30%, 1070 fewer crimes (down from 3567 to 2497).
- Most serious violence reduced by 40% in 2012/13 compared to 2009/10, 292 fewer offences (down from 726 to 436).

5.2 The sub-committee were informed that this year's highlights' was the opening of the new CCTV control centre in June/July 2012 and that officers were halfway through the replacement programme on estates and that the CCTV replacement programme on estates was 50% complete.

#### **CCTV data table:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>CCTV detections</b>	<b>Arrests associated with CCTV</b>
2010/11	743	7,312
2011/12	1301	14,168
2012/13	1025	17,517
2013/14 (Apr to Sep)	466	12,218

5.3 Members were informed of the housing update which involved CCTV on estates and the fact that students from Walworth Academy had been invited to the control centre to observe the set up and hopefully to get a sense of safety in their community.

- 5.4 The cabinet member reported that hate crime awareness week would be taking place week beginning 14/10/2013 and a full schedule of events would be available. Members were also informed that the Stop Hate UK reporting line had funding until the end of the year; 30 calls from Southwark residents were received in 2012/13 and 9 so far in 2013/14.
- 5.5 The chair asked how CCTV on estates was progressing? The cabinet member reported that in June 2013, control recording and monitoring of CCTV at Draper House was transferred from concierge office at the site to the central CCTV control room. Following a serious incident and a meeting with local residents, it was agreed that concierge staff on site would also continue with a local monitoring role after undertaking appropriate training and licensing. The CCTV unit is in the process of procuring IT and software to facilitate this.
- 5.6 The sub-committee were informed that the following estates had been refreshed and had new CCTV installed and brought back to the control room for recording and monitoring Castlemead, Wyndham & Comber, Perronet, Newington, Abbeyfield, Hawkstone, Osprey and Bramcote & Bonamy estates, Brandon, Elmington, Rockingham and Tabard estates.
- 5.7 CCTV had been deployed to the following areas and brought back to the control room for recording and monitoring were Aylesbury estate, Manor estate, Nunhead Green, Spa Road/Neckinger and Adams Gardens.
- 5.8 Members were informed that the next phase of refresh projects would involve the following :-

Arnold Estate scheduled completion 01/11/2013	Longfield Estate scheduled completion 30/11/2013
Rouel Road Estate scheduled completion 30/11/2013	Silverlock Estate scheduled completion 30/11/2013

- 5.9 The Chair asked what were the main areas of concern? The cabinet member reported that theft from persons had been on the increase since 2008/09 and as at 30/09/2013 was up 117%, 1,611 more crimes (from 1381 to 2992).
- 5.10 Theft from motor vehicle and motor bikes were a concern as these now seemed to be more organised criminal gangs where bikes were lifted off the road and driven away in lorries.
- 5.11 Domestic violence offences seemed to be on the decrease since

2007/08 and it was unsure if this was due to increased reporting or actual decrease in crime.

- 5.12 A member stated that Southwark were still quite high on the table in comparison with other London Boroughs? The cabinet member explained knife crime was getting better and that we were now on the same level as Lambeth. It was also reported that the Police were working very hard to tackle violent crime and gang activities but the figures were still high even though there were reductions of 18%.
- 5.13 The sub-committee were informed that the Home Office had provided funding to the authority to address gun crime and gangs and this would be used to try and find ways to engage with these young people. It was also reported that the Ben Kinsella Trust in association with Millwall Football Club and Southwark would be working with young people to address knife crime in the borough.
- 5.14 The vice-chair asked if there was more local schools could do? The cabinet member explained that initially Foundation and Academy schools did not really want to get involved, but with time were slowly starting to get on board but it had taken a lot of very hard work.
- 5.15 A member asked could councillors do more to support community safety initiatives? The cabinet member requested that if councillors could raise community safety issues such as knife crimes with head teachers, this could possibly help with officers getting the message into schools for young people.
- 5.16 The chair asked how the council could protect the policing of the borough? The cabinet member reported that £250,000 funding had been set aside from savings elsewhere towards the function of a police base, which would be situated at Seven Islands . Rotherhithe would be closing down in the north east of the borough and the police would be operating out of Southwark Police Station for the time being.
- 5.17 Members were informed that the council had invested in the Police by providing contact points for the public. There were also 5 victim support units placed within the borough. The cabinet member also reported that the Mayor's new model for policing divided Southwark into 4 sections covering different areas within the borough. Concerns were raised regarding the Dulwich area so far but no concrete issues have arisen or been reported, members were advised that resources were available if needed for police presence in Dulwich.
- 5.18 A member of the sub-committee asked how the Community Safety presentation to Walworth Academy go? The cabinet member

reported that the headteacher was very supportive and parties worked well together. Officers undertook to invite Faraday councillors to next meeting.

- 5.19 The member then asked what was being done about known drug addresses on estates? The cabinet member reported that if a address was proved to be supplying drugs, the premises would be reclaimed by the council.
- 5.20 What is happening regarding policing of Seven Islands? The cabinet member reported that the front counter at Rotherhithe station is closed but police officers were operating out of that building until the move to Seven Islands.
- 5.21 A member asked if community wardens would be bought back to Rotherhithe? The cabinet member stated that officers can reconfigure warden services to the area for a short time, but not on a permanent basis due to budget cuts.
- 5.22 A member asked what could be done about anti-social behaviour, drug crime, dog fouling and rubbish left out on the Adams Estate? The cabinet member advised that joint working would probably be the best way forward, this would include housing officers, officers from the public realm, community wardens and the police this would be the most effective means of addressing this problem.
- 5.23 A member asked how collaborative working was progressing with regards to domestic violence? The cabinet member reported that Solace were performing well and hitting agreed targets, the contract was in its second year, it has been agreed to extend it for a third year into 2014/15.
- 5.24 The service has expanded considerably in the last few months having now additional counselling and legal advice services, incorporation of the sanctuary scheme as well as a robust programme of services user engagement and peer support groups.
- 5.25 The cabinet member also assured members of the sub-committee that there was a male officer in place who can assist male victims of domestic violence. Members were also assured that the recommendations contained in the report produced last year were in place and moving forward. He also recommended that all members should attend the domestic abuse awareness course.
- 5.26 A member asked if the fear of crime had risen or is in decline? The cabinet member stated that was an interesting question, if you look at the police survey it is on the decline, but the council tracker performance would indicate it is on the rise. Members could access this information in the annual performance report.

- 5.27 A member asked how do we test for minors purchasing alcohol and tobacco? The cabinet member reported that shops were tested by arranging for underage youngsters and younger looking staff being sent to purchase tobacco, statistics on alcohol and tobacco are held on a community council area level.
- 5.28 A member asked if the alcohol saturation zones were successful? The cabinet member reported that we presently have 3 zones in operation which were working well and officers were looking at 3 new areas Walworth Road, Old Kent Road and Dulwich. Licensing would be in a better position to provide more information.
- 5.29 The chair thanked councillor Livingstone for providing the sub-committee with the answers to their questions.

## **6. PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR**

- 6.1 Paul Langford (Head of Operations) and John Daley (Environmental Health & Trading Standards Manager) introduced the report to the sub-committee regarding the update on the Private Rented Sector (PRS) project plan.
- 6.2 The officers explained that after considerable analysis it was proposed that the project is built up in a number of stages.
- Firstly the adoption of a Southwark Rental Standard, a document which clarifies and advised landlords on our minimum expectations for the management and repair of Private Rental Property.
  - Secondly the Southwark Rental Standard would be used as a basis for the accreditation of the temporary accommodation Southwark procures in discharging its duty as the Local Housing Authority.
- 6.3 The officers reported that there will then be a review of the operation of the PRS in Southwark and proposals to introduce areas of selective licensing and accreditation may be put forward. This review will gather evidence to support any licensing proposals.
- 6.4 This was a growing sector and gathering profile, the GLA rental standards have given us a steer to approach voluntary accreditation and forming a clear relationship between the three parties (the authority, landlord and tenant). Officers have established what is required and have added to what is expected by law.

- 6.5 The chair would like to know who would be responsible for the scheme? The officer reported that this scheme involved joint working between Housing and Environmental Health directors. It involved a lot of work and effort but the officers stated that good landlords would want to sign up but there would always be some that will not want to be involved, and the authority will not use them.
- 6.6 There was some discussion about the merits of a borough-wide scheme and it was noted that the scheme requires a administrative process and a check to maintain standards but the scheme would be ready to move forward in January 2014.
- 6.7 Officers reported that standards needed to be delivered to resident, landlord and authority as this would be a three way partnership.
- 6.8 Members were informed that both the landlord and property would be licensed, but the landlord would be awarded the certificate.
- 6.9 A member asked why would landlords want to co-operate with this scheme knowing they would have to pay for it? The officer responded that the private sector are in the driving seat and officers are aware of this but will be looking for £25/50 for a license from the landlord, but landlords with a large portfolio would be charged more.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Southwark standard be considered at the the next meeting of the sub-committee on 25.11.2013.

(2) That a summary of what other boroughs are doing with regards to private rented sectors.

(3) That councillor Mark Williams be invited to the next sub-committee meeting on 25.11.2013.

## **7. COMMUNITY WARDEN - VALUE FOR MONEY**

- 7.1 Jonathon Toy (Head of Community Safety and Enforcement) introduced the item to the sub-committee and stated that Southwark Community Warden Service (CWS) started in 2001 when the Bermondsey scheme was formed in response to rising crime, hate crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 7.2 Despite changes in staff numbers, geographical cover and emphasis, the main ethos of the service remains intact, to ensure that Southwark is clean and safe for residents, businesses and visitors.

- 7.3 The officer explained that since 2007 there has been a greater emphasis on taking forward the enforcement agenda. This was in response to feedback from local communities that they wished to see a greater focus on addressing environmental issues and anti-social behaviour that blighted certain areas.
- 7.4 The officer reported that the service had taken substantial budget cuts year on year and as such the service had changed and officers had to manage the best use of the warden service.
- 7.5 The CWS has taken a scaled approach to enforcement, in line with the council's enforcement policy, of education, compliance and enforcement. Wardens have a range of delegated police powers under the Community Safety Accredited Scheme (CSAS) in addition to enforcing local authority bye laws and legislation.
- 7.6 Since its establishment in 2001 the warden service has seen a number of significant changes from 2006 the total team was 146 and cost £6,609,137 per annum to 2012/13 the total cost was £2.3m. However the direct general fund contribution to the service is just over £1m with the remaining funding from the Better Bankside bid area, Public Realm for Parks Service and the Housing Revenue account.
- 7.7 The officer further reported that the warden service was part of the Community Safety & Enforcement (CS&E) Division, and alongside other council departments and external agencies work together as part of the Safer Southwark Partnership (SSP). The SSP brings together a range of statutory, voluntary and community sector service to work together to reduce crime and disorder, the fear of crime and improve health outcomes. The SSP aims to make Southwark a safer and healthier place to live, work and visit.
- 7.8 Key internal partners include the Southwark Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (SASBU), Housing, Safeguarding, Street Population Outreach Team, Drugs & Alcohol Team, Environmental Health & Trading Standards, Night-Time Economy Team, Emergency Planning, Events Team, Environmental Enforcement and the Market Team.
- 7.9 The CWS is an intelligence led service with the ability to react positively to emerging situations. Wardens are tasked through the fortnightly Warden Intelligence Management Meeting (WIMM) process.
- 7.10 The sub-committee were informed that the people who use the service value it and feel that the service is very good and the opposite can be said for people who have not used the service.
- 7.11 The officer reported that the wardens were very hard working and would like to focus on estates and patrol more often to build on this



service and develop it with additional powers, but there are only 31 officers and resources are limited.

- 7.12 The sub-committee heard that Southwark has a unique service and with the changing profile of the police, we should look at the advantage we have and how best to use it for the future.
- 7.13 In response to a question regarding a day as a Warden the officer replied, that each and everyday is different, during the summer the officer would start at midday and work until anywhere from 8 p.m. to 10.30 p.m.
- 7.14 The day would start with a briefing with team leaders followed by a patrol of highlighted estates. Wardens would then patrol around the schools from about 3 to 4 p.m. then back to the estates before final checks of the area and possibly visit to vulnerable people that are known to officers.
- 7.15 The Chair asked how the wardens were supervised? The officer stated that the supervisor would patrol with wardens or would check where they were and what they were doing from the Warden Control Centre.
- 7.16 A member asked how big was the response team? The officer responded that the team consisted of 8 officers and was intelligence lead, to deal with chronic problems such as drug dealing and taking. If a address is noted for selling drugs it will be closed and vacated, recent a drug haul of £84K worth of class A drugs was found at such a address.
- 7.17 A member of the sub-committee asked if the wardens would be coming to the Rotherhithe area regarding reports of anti-social behaviour and dog fouling? The officer stated that the service would need to be flexible to see if wardens, housing and the police could operate in the area in a joint effort. The response team has been used in the past to get the best result in situations like this, the officer advised the member to contact himself or the team with regards to this problem.
- 7.18 A member reported that there had been a large number of bike thefts in the Canada Water area? The officer advised the members that there was a need to make the best use of wardens working partnerships in the area and informed the member that the request would be welcomed.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That views outside the warden service from councillors, friends of the park, officers and working teams to gather information for a survey.

(2) That the Chair and Vice-Chair spend a day with street wardens

on patrol.

## **8. HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAJOR WORKS ACROSS THE BOROUGH - PERFORMANCE**

- 8.1 David Lewis (Head of Maintenance and Compliance) introduced the item to the sub-committee and reported that Southwark Building Services (SBS) performance and service was moving in the right direction however, the service still has a long way to go before it is truly delivering the service residents deserve.
- 8.2 Members were informed that there would always be a need for sub-contractors, to deal with non-specialist work beyond repairs such as scaffolding, joinery or window replacement. Both SBS and Mears have been set targets to limit the use of non-specialist sub-contracted work to 10% by volume. The target in the new long-term contract is for this to be achieved by the end of the first anniversary of the new contract i.e. October 2014.
- 8.3 The officer reported that since June 2012 complaints and member enquires have been kept open until the repairs have been resolved. This has significantly reduced the number of complaints escalating to stage 2.
- 8.4 The number of repair complaints received has fallen by 42% (April to August 2012 compared to April to August 2013) so open complaints have fallen slightly faster.
- 8.5 The sub-committee were informed that the Contact Centre had been taken in-house since the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013. New IT systems were in place and 40 apprentices had been recruited and extensively trained.
- 8.6 The emphasis is dealing with all issues right first time avoiding the need to repeat or chase up calls. This emphasis on improving the quality of the service delivered is undoubtedly the correct approach, this does however, need to be balanced with services that are easy to access.
- 8.7 The officer reported that performance was assessed by the following five measure which were, overall satisfaction with repairs, repairs completed right first time, appointment kept, all repairs completed on time and emergencies completed on time. The performance indicators showed an year on year improvement.
- 8.8 The chair asked why £4.7m was annually paid to contractors? The officer reported that this payment was a lump sum to cover overheads such as salaries, fleet, depot costs etc and was fixed and not influenced by productivity. The contract lump sum was a

feature of the repairs procurement awarded in June 2009 to Morrison and replicated to Southwark Building Services when they won the contract. Anything left over from the lump sum was recycled back into the Housing Revenue Account.

- 8.9 A member of the sub-committee stated that there was a problem with boilers that were constantly requiring adjustment because they were not providing hot water, the plumber would top up the boiler every 6 weeks or so, the reason for this fault was due to a leak in the heating system, and the problem would keep re-occurring until the leak was repaired.
- 8.10 The officer reported that OCO and Brown were responsible for plumbing work and a repeated problem should have been flagged up and reported for attention. The officer assured members that the contractors performance has improved significantly over the last 18 months. The officer undertook to take the details of this problem from the councillor and investigate.
- 8.11 A member stated that SBS failure to keep appointments for repair jobs affected people's working lives and asked how long will it take to close the gap and get better attendance and results for tenants? The officer reported that gap was closing, but were about 12 months behind Mears and stressed to the sub-committee that there was a clear commitment to deliver a service that tenants deserved.
- 8.12 A member stated repairs and missed appointments must have a solution where simple repairs could be dealt with locally by a handy person and could be delivered at cost? The officer agreed that in some cases smaller is better and there are some TMO's like Leathermarket who are delivering a very good service to tenants. He further reported that SBS were bridging the gap and should reach their target in the next 12 months.
- 8.13 A member stated that the quality of work that residents were receiving was not good enough and why were 2 people being sent on a job for one person? The officer stated that it was worth looking at table two which showed that satisfaction was improving and had been for the last two years.
- 8.14 The officer reported there were still complaints but officer were working to reduce the number.
- 8.15 The chair stated that a new fresh scrutiny might be needed to look at how the system can be improved.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Chair and Vice-Chair listen to 50 calls from tenants requesting repairs.

(2) That officers collect more statistical information on repairs and provide them to the sub-committee.

(3) That contractors Mears and Southwark Building Services be invited to the next meeting of the sub-committee on 25.11.2013.

(4) That the Chair and the Vice-Chair meet with David Lewis to look at the areas where things are not working well.

Meeting ended at 21.30 p.m.

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**