

Item No. 9.	Classification: Open	Date: 14 May 2013	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Community Safety Initiatives 2013/14	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Richard Livingstone, Finance, Resources and Community Safety	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

In January, the Mayor of London announced his proposals, for consultation, to reduce the police budget, dismantle ward-based Safer Neighbourhood Teams and close police stations, including the East Dulwich and Rotherhithe stations, and reduce the hours of operation of the front counter service at other stations.

In February, the cabinet agreed to use the estimated £750,000 that the council saved in the 2012/13 financial year through the purchase of its Tooley Street offices on one-off community safety measures to help offset the impact of these decisions on the local community, with the hope that this investment might also help the Mayor and his deputy to come up with some more imaginative and helpful proposals for the borough.

It is disappointing that the Mayor and his deputy did too little to address these concerns when the outcome of the consultation was published in March. Nevertheless, it is still important that the council does what it can to ameliorate the negative impacts of this policy rather than just criticising them from the sidelines.

This report therefore sets out the first steps for utilising this money to provide this support. The recommendations here will enable the council to work with the Metropolitan Police Authority to establish a replacement police team base in the Rotherhithe area and develop with them police contact points. Furthermore, the proposals include innovative work with Victim Support to establish victim care points now that victims will have less access to police station front counter support.

There are also a set of further initiatives proposed to address other community safety issues. These will include the purchase of specialist equipment to help the police and council fight crime and investment into community solutions to reduce and solve crime.

We are not able at this time to set out firm proposals for support for police provision in Dulwich as discussions continue on the appropriate solution. Money is being set aside to enable that work to commence once the police are in a position to make those decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the Cabinet

1. That the work done with the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to fund replacements for police front counters is noted.
2. That the work done to identify further community safety initiatives is noted.

Recommendation for the Leader of the Council

3. That the leader of the council delegates authority to the cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety to determine which initiatives should be funded and the amounts to be spent from the £750,000 set aside in 2012/13.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. In the cabinet's consideration of the Quarter 3 revenue monitoring report, the cabinet asked the strategic director of finance and corporate services to set aside the 2012/13 savings arising from the Tooley Street acquisition for additional investment in community safety schemes in the borough. Those savings amounted to £750,000.
5. The initial draft Police and Crime Plan 2013/14, the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), announced the closure of a number of police stations and bases across London. Within Southwark the proposals were the closure of Dulwich and Rotherhithe Police Stations, the retention of Walworth Police Station as the only 24 hour 7 day a week police station, Peckham Police Station to be open 16 hours a day 7 days a week, Southwark Police Station to be opened Monday to Friday to cover extended office hours, and the retention of Seeley Drive, Dulwich and Bellenden Road Safer Neighbourhood bases as drop off points for police during their shifts.
6. Following the initial consultation process on draft Police and Crime Plan 2013/24, it was clear that the proposals put forward by the MOPAC, left a significant gap in provision in the south of the borough. This gap was compounded by the proposed closure of policing provision in the neighbouring areas on Croydon, Lambeth and Lewisham, which have been in part alleviated by the retention of Gypsy Hill Police Station. The impact of the MOPAC proposals for the Dulwich area meant that the only provision was the Seeley Drive Safer Neighbourhood Base. The council has offered to increase this provision by providing the facilities for police contact points both at the Kinsgwood Area Housing Office on Seeley Drive and at Dulwich Library. In addition the council has offered to fund the capital cost of alternative accommodation in the Dulwich area if that would enable Police Officers to have better provision for a local base in order to reduce travelling time and maximise police presence. Options are currently being discussed with the MOPAC and MPS Southwark, including the Gatehouse at Dulwich Hospital.
7. In light of the above changes, the priorities for the Tooley Street savings were to mitigate against the gaps in provision and accordingly the decision on the final allocation of spend for the £750,000 will be based on the following criteria:-

- Firstly, monies will be used to establish the most suitable police accommodation in both Rotherhithe and Dulwich. This will include a viable neighbourhood policing team base in Rotherhithe.
- Secondly, monies will be used to establish police contact points at a range of publicly accessible location in the borough. This will include the establishment of victim care points as part of the council's offer to support and improve the satisfaction of victims of crime. The proposals for the police contact points and victim care points are set out in detail below.
- Finally, any remaining monies will be used on a range of one off community safety initiatives which can be delivered to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Initiatives will be discussed and agreed through the Safer Southwark Partnership Board once the costs for the first two priorities have been established.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Replacements for front counters

8. While the council can offer funding to support police premises, it will only be accepted by MOPAC and the MPS where they consider that the premises meet their operational needs and they have the resources to staff and maintain it in future. Officers have therefore worked closely with MPS officers and property service to identify premises which the council can provide that meet operational needs.
9. This has resulted in a high level of agreement as to which premises the council will fund. However, there are some elements of the expenditure which are not at this stage clear, and there are some elements where the council has offered funding but MOPAC and the MPS have not at this stage indicated either the need for the premises or the ability to staff and resource them in the long term. This in turn means that decisions on the precise spend on other elements of the community safety initiatives cannot yet be taken.

Agreed council funded police premises

10. **Neighbourhood policing team base in the Rotherhithe area.** Rotherhithe Police Station is scheduled for closure and disposal. The council has offered part of Seven Islands Leisure Centre as a neighbourhood policing team base for the North East cluster. The MPS have confirmed that this is operationally useful and their property team have carried out a site visit and are working with officers to the most feasible use of the site. Whilst this is still in the early stage, the estimated cost to the council of the work needed to bring this into use as a police base is in the region of £100,000 to £150,000. More detailed work is needed to identify the precise cost and should this site not be feasible, to identify and secure another location in the Rotherhithe area.
11. **Police contact points on council premises:** The council has agreed with MOPAC and the MPS to provide facilities for a police contact point at Canada Water Library at a cost of £5,000. The council has also offered to provide facilities in the south of the borough at both Kingswood Area Housing Office and Dulwich Library. The precise location of these contact points will depend on the decisions to be made on other potential premises within Dulwich. Police contact points are resourced by the police for at least 3 hours a week.

Additional council facilities

12. **Victim care points:** Working with Victim Support, the council is able to provide additional Victim Care Points, where victims of crime can talk to Victim Support volunteers. These will be provided to give extra hours coverage where there are police contact points on council premises, together with additional coverage at Dulwich Library, Nunhead Library, the Aylesbury Area Housing Office on Thurlow St, the Harris Street Area Housing Office in Camberwell (until the new library is built in 2014, when the contact point will move to the library) and the council office at Queens Road. The cost of these will be around £50,000 in total.

Council provision that is not yet agreed

13. The council has in addition offered to make its police contact point facilities available for longer hours if the police are able to resource these. In addition, Council funding has been offered for additional provision in the Dulwich area, as set out above. MOPAC and MPS Southwark are considering their position on this, so funding of around £100,000 has been held until a final decision is reached by MOPAC.

Other community safety initiatives

14. Officers have been working with partner, community and voluntary agencies to identify a number of community safety initiatives that would make a significant contribution to tackling crime, anti social behaviour and improve confidence and satisfaction for those affected by crime.
15. Initiatives that have been recommended include:-
 - Use of technological advances such as thermal imaging devices to detect cannabis factories and Police body cameras and the investment in property marking technology to prevent residential burglary.
 - Developing community based responses to prevent crime such as the expansion of neighbourhood watch and the city safe scheme which was launched in June 2012 and provides safe havens for people in fear of crime. In addition funding will be provided to improve confidence in the gypsy and traveler community through series of themed engagement events.
 - A strong youth based element including pre-work skills training, community reparation programmes, and safety on the street workshops.
 - Multi agency operational programmes to address robbery and the illegal economy which impacts significantly on crime anti social behaviour.

Community impact statement

16. The Community Safety Team support the work carried out by the Safer Southwark Partnership (SSP) to identify and highlight disproportionalities in crime types, victims, offenders, locations and times.
17. The SSP uses this information to ensure best use of resources and the most impact for the communities in most need. It is the intention that the proposals put forward through the community safety initiatives, highlighted in this report, will be taken through the existing SSP structure.

18. An equalities impact assessment will be carried out each of the individual community safety initiatives as part of the decision making process.

Resource implications

19. The £750,000 to be spent in 2013/14 has been allocated by the strategic director of finance and corporate services from the savings in the first year arising from the purchase of 160 Tooley Street. Lower priority initiatives will only be funded to the extent that they fall within this envelope.

Consultation

20. Consultation has taken place with senior officers in MPS Southwark to identify operational needs.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Legal Services (DFB/0413)

21. This report correctly indicates that it is for the leader to delegate to the cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety to make the determination.
22. The Localism Act 2011 grants councils a general power of competence whereby a local authority has the power to do anything that an individual generally may do. This power can be used even if legislation already exists that allows a local authority to do something. However the general power of competence does not enable a local authority to do anything which it is unable to do by virtue of a pre-commencement limitation.
23. However, as stated in paragraph 7 under Section 92 of the Police Act 1996 ("the 1996 Act") the council may make grants to any police authority established under section 3 of the 1996 Act whose police area falls wholly or partly within the council's area. Such grants under this section may be made unconditionally or with the agreement of the chief officer of police for the police area concerned, subject to conditions.
24. In addition, the Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states that the council must 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 reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.
25. When considering individual initiatives the cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety will be provided with an equalities impact assessment.

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services (FC13/027)

26. This report seeks delegated authority to the cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety to determine which initiatives should be funded and the amounts to be spent from the £750,000 set aside in 2012/13 for Community Safety Initiatives.

27. Each proposed initiative will be financially appraised to determine initial capital or revenue costs and any on going revenue costs. These will need to be contained within available resources.
28. Contract awards, including those for carrying out building works will be subject the council's contract and financial standing orders.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet report and minutes – 12 February 2013. The document is available on this web page (item 10): ListDocuments.aspx?Cld=302&Mld=4251&Ver=4">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ie ListDocuments.aspx?Cld=302&Mld=4251&Ver=4	Council offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Richard Livingstone, Finance, Resources and Community Safety
Lead Officer	Deborah Collins, Strategic Director, Environment & Leisure
Report Author	Jonathon Toy, Head of Community Safety & Enforcement, E&L
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Key Decision?	No

CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER

Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	29 April 2013	