

Safer Communities Partnership Board

Minutes of meeting held on 22 January 2021
Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present:

Cllr Roberto Weeden-Sanz
(Chairman)

Superintendent James Rawlinson, Head of Neighbourhood Policing, North West Borough Command Unit, Metropolitan Police

Ellen Cheshire, Inclusion Barnet

Peter Clifton, Community Safety Manager, LBB

Tamara Djuretic, Director of Public Health, LBB

Adam Breyer, Senior Probation Officer, National Probation Service, Barnet, Brent and Enfield

Matt Leng, Community Safety Manager, LBB

Tina McElligot, Director for Early Health and Children's Social Care, LBB

Ben Norfolk, Community Safety Team Data Analyst, LBB

Richard Norfolk, Reducing Offending Partnership Coordinator, LBB

Reshma Hirani, Hate Crime Reporting Project, Barnet Mencap

Diane Russell, Senior Probation Officer

Ray Booth, Chief Executive, Barnet Mencap and Chair of Access to Justice Sub Group

Kauser Mukhtar, Contracts and Partnerships Manager, London Community Rehabilitation Company

Fiona Bateman, Independent Chair, Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board.

GregTerefenko, Head of Housing, Barnet Homes

Radlamah Canakia, Barnet Homes (VAWG Lead)

Luke Kwamya, Head of Public Health Commissioning, LBB

Emma Phasey, Public Protection, LBB

Declan Khan, Head of Counter Fraud Operations, LBB

Apologies

Clair Green, Director of Assurance, LBB

Kevin McKenzie, London Fire Brigade

Kathryn Hunt, National Probation Service

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ellen Cheshire represented Inclusion Barnet on behalf of Caroline Collier. Greg Terefenko, Head of Housing attended for Barnet Homes. Adam Breyer, Barnet Probation attended on behalf of Kathryn Hunt.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Clair Green, Director of Assurance, London Borough of Barnet (LBB), Kathryn Hunt, National Probation Service and Kevin McKenzie London Fire Brigade.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Peter Clifton confirmed all followed up. Agreed to send a written update on them.

5. PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)

Mr Clifton presented an update on the Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy, including the key priorities, summary of activities and a breakdown of actions, as well as a section on the measures in place to ensure business continuity during the pandemic.

- Lot of focus over last year to ensure business continuity of domestic abuse services across the partnership
- A Communications campaign 'At Home Should Not Mean at Risk' had been highlighted again.
- There had been a fourfold increase in domestic abuse MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) meetings to improve speed of cases being progressed.
- Allocations of independent DV advocates had been reviewed over the past 18 months to ensure that these provide the best possible support. The provision of service or link up with mental health services had been increased, including one in Barnet Hospital (Springwell Centre).
- Business continuity remains at the forefront for the next year ahead, resulting in delayed some of the strategic work timescales. The launch of the refresh of the Domestic Abuse and VAWG Strategy would be around September 2021, with a report to the SCPB in the summer of 2021.
- Services would be recommissioned in September 2021. The Domestic Abuse Board is looking for opportunities to improve the allocation of independent domestic abuse advocates, and to increase provision to early help services delivered through the local authority.
- There would also be an increase on focus on intergenerational domestic abuse.

Mr Clifton noted that the Domestic Abuse Strategy Coordinator would circulate a feedback form to Board Members in the next few weeks and the team would be grateful of input on this. In addition the communications campaign would be shared with the Board.

The Chairman noted that Barnet is seeking 'White Ribbon' Accreditation, and he declared an interest by virtue of the fact that he is a White Ribbon Ambassador. He asked whether an update on how the Council is meeting these requirements could be brought to the Board. Mr Clifton noted that the Domestic Abuse Strategy Coordinator has carried out this work and a report would be brought back in early 2021.

Ms Bateman noted that the Safeguarding Adults Board had been keen to stress that intergenerational domestic abuse is a significant issue nationally, which had exacerbated under lockdown. The Board is keen to be involved in working alongside the Community Safety Team and VAWG Group in highlighting the needs of adults with care and support needs. The Board had also been focused on providing information and support to

informal carers to help them get support before any element of 'carer strain' arises, and would shortly publish a review on the harm that can be caused unintentionally in informal situations. Ms Bateman would provide an update at the next meeting.

Action: Ms Bateman

Mr Booth enquired whether good use is being made of carer's assessments to try to understand what is happening in potential domestic abuse situations and to provide support. This had been focused on in the Domestic Homicide Review several years ago. Mr Clifton agreed to review this and bring it back to the Board with a response.

Action: Mr Clifton

Ms McElligot reported that she had received additional funding for domestic abuse work which is available for one year only. She asked for ideas around short-term work that has long term sustainability potential.

Mr Clifton suggested some work with the perpetrator change programme may be useful as the Board had been looking at how to increase capacity. Also, resource was needed around intergenerational domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse services. The Chairman asked the Board to think about this and contact Ms McElligot outside the meeting.

Action: All

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6. APPROPRIATE ADULTS SERVICE FOR BARNET RESIDENTS

Ms Bateman presented her paper.

Ms Bateman noted the Met Police had notified the Safeguarding Adults Board about this issue in 2017. An appropriate adult is required by law where an individual who may have additional needs is taken into custody. Unfortunately, it is difficult to collect data on this and the police are not able to commission the service as it must be an independent service. No other statutory body is required to commission such a service for adults, but in respect of young people, the local authority is responsible for commissioning the service.

Barnet has been fortunate in being well cared for by the voluntary service over many years with appropriate adults' services though there had been some issues with access to volunteers in a timely manner during lockdown.

Ms Bateman expressed her thanks to Sean Almeida of the Met Police for manually reviewing custody records and looking at the issues this raises in adults with a vulnerability. He has reviewed 99 cases; 77% of those required provision of appropriate adult service from a paid-for service. But no one organisation has agreed to meet the funding. During lockdown, of 99 individuals, over 30 vulnerable adults had to wait for over three hours, often much more, for an appropriate adult.

Ms Bateman noted that the issue had been brought to the Safeguarding Adults Board numerous times and she had set out two alternative options in the report. Adult social care has significant funding pressures and could not help but would continue to monitor this and look for a long term sustainable solution.

The Chairman suggested investigating how other Councils deal with the issue. Ms Bateman and Mr Clifton agreed to explore options and report back to the Board.

Action: Ms Bateman, Mr Clifton

7. FAMILY SERVICES UPDATE

Ms McElligot spoke to her slides. Funding had been agreed for the Troubled Families Programme to continue, and Barnet had performed well with a 92% attachment target for 2020/21.

There had been some disruption to face-to-face contact in relation to youth offending during the pandemic, and also delays in court hearings. The Youth Offending Team (YOT) had been working hard throughout the pandemic and was still seeing children and young people face to face. The 'digital divide' had become more apparent during this time which could result in young people falling out of education as this a risk indicator for them committing further offences.

Data from the Youth Justice Board to 2019 revealed that Barnet was lower than the London and national averages for first time entrants into the criminal justice system.

31 young people had been involved in out of court disposals to December 2020 in Barnet. The work had been scrutinised by the Met police BCU Panel which includes representatives from MOPAC and the Youth Justice Board, and feedback had been that there was good evidence of multi-agency working and Barnet was put forward as an example of good practice.

A smaller number of individuals had reoffended after community orders had been given. This smaller group does have a more complex range of needs and tends to reoffend more frequently, so this is an area the team is working on.

There are a wider range of disposals for young black people, including custody, which is disproportionate to children from other ethnic backgrounds, and this is relative to the gravity index of their offending. A piece of work is being undertaken in NCL by the Directors of Children's Services on the disparities in criminal justice outcomes of black and minority ethnic children. This is being led by the London Boroughs' Youth Offending Service Leads and other members who are co-opted in.

Ms McElligot reported that another development is around reducing the criminalisation of looked-after children, by introducing a protocol for care providers, the police and multi-agency partnerships to try to reduce the criminalisation of young people in the care system, given the high proportion of adults in custody that have care experience in their background.

The London Borough of Camden is leading a piece of work with the West London Alliance to provide alternatives to secure accommodation for young people, with the first property to be in Barnet. This is focused in particular on young people from BAME backgrounds. Each unit will house up to five young people as an alternative to custody. A further update will follow for the Board later in 2021.

The next draft Youth Justice Plan is currently being shared with the members of the YOT Management Board and would be signed off later in the year. The final draft would be brought to the SCPB for sign off.

Mr Kwamya enquired whether Barnet's resources for young people are also engaged, such as to tackle problems around cannabis use. Ms McElligot responded that the team has good links into substance misuse services. A number of young people are referred to these services but the take-up could be improved. She added that support to encourage take-up would be welcome. Mr Kwamya offered to feed this back.

Action: Mr Kwamya

Ms Bateman reported that the Adult Safeguarding Board and Children's Partnership are looking to set up a Transitional Safeguarding Task and Finish Group. A Professional Young People's Forum on 23rd March will be discussing transitional safeguarding and she hoped to receive feedback from young people on the issues they think might need to be addressed. Ms Bateman stated that it would be helpful to discuss this with Ms McElligot after the forum.

Action: Ms Bateman, Ms McElligot

8. BARNET REDUCING OFFENDING GROUP UPDATE ON THE NEW LONDON INTEGRATED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT (IOM) FRAMEWORK

Richard Norfolk presented his slides.

The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Framework is a new process for managing persistent offenders. The new system has no single national governance but can be set up according to local circumstances. MOPAC has introduced the London IOM Framework to encourage consistency across London with the new model going live in January 2021.

The refreshed Barnet IOM operating model used over the last three years is well placed to meet the demands of the new London model. The new London IOM Framework:

- Aims to reduce disproportionality
- Maintains focus on priority of acquisitive offences including burglary and robbery
- Promotes focus on persistent and violent offenders
- Increase focus on identification and measurement of risk of violence
- Has evidence-based performance monitoring and evaluation by MOPAC analysts
- New selection criteria - streamlining the process for identifying potentially eligible cases. Monthly list produced by NPS and MOPAC and sent to each Borough
- Introduced regular and reliable measurements showing impact of effectiveness
- Pilot of integrated IT platform (ECINS) used already in Barnet
- Long term vision for building and testing pan-London evidence base of how to reduce persistent offenders.
- Renewed focus on youth-to-adult transition
- Reintroduction of referral process; weekly co-location
- Agreement of local priority crimes
- Partnership Sharing Agreement.

Mr Norfolk noted that this reflects how Barnet has been operating over the past three years so there will be very little change.

9. NORTH WEST BCU POLICE UPDATE

Detective Inspector Rawlinson provided a verbal update.

Covid-19 had massive impact on policing since March 2020 with operational challenges. The police had reviewed operations throughout and had not stopped providing any services. Some services such as Safer Neighbourhood Boards and Ward Panels had moved to virtual meetings.

The police had worked closely with partners, particularly local authorities. Mr Khan, Mr Leng and Mr Clifton had been invaluable during this time, providing daily contact points on enforcement and legislation. The police also meet weekly with Barnet's senior leadership team on issues relating to the pandemic.

For the Met police operational resilience has been an issue, with some staff having to shield. At the most 22% of officers have been away from work due to Covid/self-isolating but response to crimes had been maintained. Staff are having to change ways of working and buildings had had to be adapted, and risk assessments carried out.

The Met in Barnet has introduced Operation Fortify to move to an enforcement approach where needed.

The police have been providing extra support for vaccination centres to ensure that vulnerable residents can safely receive their vaccinations.

Colindale Police Station is undergoing major refurbishment so currently Harrow Police Station is being used for custody for Barnet. The work should be completed by summer 2021. Colindale's front police station counter may need to also be temporarily moved for a few weeks but would remain open 24/7.

The BCU has an increased number of police officers, with 1481 out of 1499 posts filled. This included an increase in filled vacancies and also an increase in the number of posts. The BCU is supporting the work undertaken by the Home Office on underrepresented groups and is keen for local police officers to reflect the local community.

DI Rawlinson reported that the following week, Chief Superintendent Sara Leach returns from maternity leave. Spt Louis Smith would revert to Headquarter Superintendent. Spt Tanya Martin, new Response Team Superintendent, would join the BCU and DI Rawlinson would revert to CI Neighbourhoods. He and possibly also Spt Martin would attend SCPB meetings.

The BCU has a small team of officers, led by Inspector Wazeem Safraz, who will be putting the London Mayor's Action plan to improve confidence for black communities in particular, into action in the NW BCU. Details would be presented to the SCPB.

The BCU would conduct a review of the Safer Neighbourhood Boards over the next few months. These drive scrutiny of policing and the governance of these is important to get right.

Barnet's Ward Boundary Review in 2022, from 21 to 23 Wards would have an impact on the BCU, with discussions to follow. Currently there are 2 DWOs and one PCSO.

The Chairman asked whether crime had reduced during the pandemic overall. DI Rawlinson responded that robbery patrols continued and burglars continued to be arrested. Crime had tended to shift towards anti-social behaviour (ASB) which includes

Covid breaches. There had been reductions in major crime types, burglary and robbery in particular.

The Chairman noted that the new Wards would have two Members rather than three as they would cover smaller areas. He enquired whether information was available on how these might operate, such as from neighbouring Boroughs. DI Rawlinson responded that this is due to be considered but most Boroughs have three-Member Wards.

The Chairman expressed his congratulations for Mr Oxenham who was recognised in the New Year Honours List for his work as a Special Constable in Barnet for several decades.

10. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Mr Clifton presented his slides. He reported that the main impact of the pandemic in Barnet had been a reduction in burglary, robbery, knife and gun crime. There had not been a major reduction in violent crime.

There had been a significant increase in reports of ASB, largely due to Covid breaches.

Levels of domestic abuse are being closely monitored. There had been no spike in Barnet in reported figures, but there had been a slight reduction. The team is aware that with lockdown such an underreported crime could be further underreported. The team is working on the assumption of increased risk to victims and focusing on this area during the pandemic.

The Chairman stated that it is pleasing that the domestic abuse sanction and detection rate has increased for the first time in a while. He asked how this had been achieved and how it could be continued.

Mr Clifton responded that work was being carried out by the Domestic Abuse Board, with the police as key members, including training, and the reversal of the trend with increased sanction and detection rate was positive. DI Rawlinson noted that the increase of police officer numbers had helped meaning cases could be progressed more rapidly. Unfortunately victims often did not wish to proceed with prosecution but the new Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) power means that conditions can still be imposed on perpetrators if that is the case.

11. WORK PROGRAMME/ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Noted.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman noted that the April meeting would be cancelled if the GLA election goes ahead, as the meeting would be within purdah. A notification would follow.

Note: the April meeting has been cancelled.

Next meeting: 23 July 2021.

The meeting finished at 10:27 hours.