

Decisions of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee

11 May 2023

Members Present:-

Councillor Sara Conway (Chair)
Councillor Gill Sargeant (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Zahra Beg	Councillor Lachhya Gurung
Councillor Dean Cohen	Councillor Simon Radford
Councillor Shuey Gordon	Councillor Ella Rose
Councillor Kamal Gurung	

Also in attendance

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Jennifer Grocock Councillor Danny Rich

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (IF ANY)

Apologies were received from Councillor Danny Rich and Councillor Jennifer Grocock.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS (IF ANY)

Cllr Conway declared a non-pecuniary interest – that she is a Trustee of the Jewish Volunteering Network.

Cllr Rose declared a non-pecuniary interest – that she is a member of the London Jewish Forum.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

7. BARNET TOGETHER PRESENTATION

Katrina Baker, Director of Volunteering Barnet, Caroline Collier, Chief Executive of Inclusion Barnet and Neil Taylor, Young Barnet Foundation gave a presentation to the Committee on Barnet Together & The Barnet Together Alliance.

Members were then able to ask questions of the presenters.

Cllr Conway expressed her thanks to the guests on all their efforts and particularly commended Barnet Together's work on the Community Response Fund during covid, and the work on warm spaces. She noted that Cllr Stock and Cllr Prager had also been involved on the panel throughout the covid period.

The Community, Leadership & Libraries Committee noted the contents of the presentation.

8. DRAFT BARNET VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY 2023-2026

Will Cooper, Deputy Head of Strategy and Engagement presented the report and noted that the strategy is focused around seven priority areas and actions for the Council, and the private sector. These priority areas include:

- Embracing diversity
- Raising the profile of volunteering
- Volunteering for all
- Recruitment and Retention
- Rewarding and recognising volunteers
- Ensuring quality in Volunteer Management
- Investing in our volunteers

Katrina Baker also noted that this was a collaborative piece of work with over 200 volunteers contributing to this strategy.

Cllr Sargeant asked what the team are doing to try and recruit more volunteers. Katrina Baker highlighted the importance of making volunteering more inclusive for all and informed that the team are supporting organisations to develop a more flexible environment for people to help. The team have also noticed that the range of skills that volunteers offer do not always match the opportunities that are vacant and this is also being worked on to ensure organisations get the best out of volunteers and make it more accessible to all.

Cllr Beg commented that she would be the new portfolio holder for Equalities and Diversity in the new governance arrangements and asked that the narrative and perception of refugees and asylum seekers is a more positive one on these communities within the borough. Katrina Baker commented that diversity is incredibly important and

would be happy to work with Cllr Beg on this, in particular volunteering led by asylum seekers.

Cllr L Gurung asked how many refugees are currently in the hotels in the borough. Will Cooper agreed to provide this information.

ACTION: MR COOPER

Cllr Conway expressed her thanks to the organisations and officers for their work in putting the strategy together, noting that she had always found volunteering locally as an insightful place to listen and learn to residents.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

1. Approved the draft Volunteering Strategy 2023-26.

9. MAYORALTY, CIVIC EVENTS AND TOWN TWINNING

Andrew Charlwood, Head of Governance, took the committee through the report and highlighted some of the key events within the appendix.

Cllr Gordon asked about the locations of the town twinning and how often renewals come up. Mr Charlwood noted that there were eight twin towns which have historic links with the borough. He continued that town twinning is a post war concept for towns and cities to come to together and establish relationships. Twinning relationships were dependent on committees in these towns and cities to continue to maintain the relationships. The recent Pokhara town twinning is an example that was led by a councillor with close relationships with the town.

Cllr K Gurung asked about the activities organised within the year in relation to these twin towns. Mr Charlwood advised that it relies on volunteers to foster the links on these activities, and they there would typically be inward and outward delegates to keep the links going.

Committee members expressed their sincere thanks to the Mayor and the Mayor's Office for all their efforts in the municipal year.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the update on the civic events and the mayoralty as set out in the Appendix.

10. ARMED FORCES COVENANT ACTION PLAN

Andrew Charlwood took the committee through the report and the action plan which made up the appendix to the report.

Cllr Conway welcomed Cllr K Gurung as the Council's new Armed Forces Champion.

Cllr Beg asked how many members of the armed forces we have in the borough. Mr Charlwood commented that in the borough there is an armed forces community with includes active personnel and those who are retired, no longer active, cadets and reservists. Mr Charlwood would seek to obtain the number of those within the borough.

ACTION: MR CHARLWOOD

Mr Charlwood also noted that the Council will continue to deliver its support to the Armed Forces community with an application for gold accreditation which has been submitted to the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. A decision is expected in July 2023 and this would be positive recognition for the Council.

Cllr Conway thanked Angela Richardson, Mayoral & Civic Events Manager and the Council's officer Armed Forces Champion for all her efforts on the armed forces work that is carried out on behalf of the Council. Committee members also echoed this sentiment.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- 1. Noted that the Armed Forces Covenant was re-signed in November 2021.**
- 1. Noted that the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Silver accreditation was achieved in June 2022.**
- 2. Noted that an application and evidence supplied to the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme for Gold accreditation has been submitted.**
- 4. That Officers be instructed to continue to implement the Barnet Council Action Plan.**

11. FAMILY SERVICES DOMESTIC ABUSE & VAWG ANNUAL REPORT

Tina McElligott, Director of Childrens Social Care presented the report which provided an update to the annual report of June 2022 to the Community Leadership Committee (CLLC) on the work of the Safer Communities Partnership in meeting the aims of the Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2022-25.

Key highlights of the DA and VAWG Delivery Action Plan 2022/23 include:

IRIS funding for 2023/24 - Family Services secured £40k from North Central London (NCL) Integrated Care Board (ICB) and £50k from Public Health to run the IRIS programme and train all 50 GP surgeries in Barnet by March 2024.

IRIS programme in Barnet- To date, IRIS have delivered training to nine new surgeries that previously never had any IRIS training and completed those partially trained. There are 50 GP surgeries in Barnet with 28 currently fully trained practices and a further 15 partially trained with 7 not yet engaged in the training. The team have recently linked Solace with Barnet Primary & Community Care Training Hub who will support engagement with surgeries.

Minerva House funding for 2023/24 - The council was successful in securing £100,000 of funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities to support the continuation the Minerva House refuge provision by Barnet Homes in 2023/24.

Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) funding to Barnet Homes - Barnet Homes successfully obtained AVA funding for a three-year project, a two-year partnership to

Barnet Homes which started in January 2023, with the remainder of the project focussed on creating and publishing guidance and sharing learning.

Ask for Angela initiative - Currently 57 of Barnet's 73 licenced venues are participating in "Ask for Angela". initiative to address women's safety with the Community Safety Team are exploring if training in Ask for Angela can be included in licensing conditions.

Communication – a leaflet on where to get help and support for domestic or sexual abuse in Barnet was launched on 25 November 2022 and widely circulated to all networks and residents.

The Barnet Council Domestic abuse website also has been updated with the new leaflet and videos produced by students from Middlesex University who have worked with the council to create short films to promote awareness about local support services for people at risk of Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls.

The Communications team produced a comms toolkit for the 16 days of activism between 25 November and 10 December 2022 with the key messages being promoted across the 16 days of activism to support residents and signpost residents to information about where to get help and support through provision of key contact information of voluntary sector organisations and partners working in Barnet.

Events - A successful World Social Work Day event jointly organised by Children's and Adult's Social Care Services was held on Tuesday 21 March 2023 with the theme 'Respecting diversity through joint social action', the event was supported by RISE, Solace and Barnet Homes stalls.

Cllr Conway thanked everyone involved for the InspirationALL awards campaign noting that had positive impact on and feedback from women from across the Borough.

Cllr Conway also expressed her thanks to the Roads and Transport Police who are regularly doing VAWG awareness raising with stands in different locations at transport hubs etc.

Cllr Beg asked for commitment that our partners are working in the best interests of residents who are experiencing domestic violence. Ms McElligott noted that much training is taking place for all forms of domestic violence and is a priority of the service and external partners to ensure that this is a continues over time.

Cllr Beg also commented about the domestic abuse statistics, noting that Barnet had the 4th lowest rate in London out of 32 borough and asked for clarity on what this meant. Ms McElligott commented that the data shows us domestic abuse incidents that are reported across London, however Barnet has been consistently lower than the rest of London for many years and all households have been provided with information that provides information and guidance on how to report abuse and access support.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

1. Noted and commented on the progress made by the Safer Communities Partnership on delivering the five priority objectives of the Barnet Domestic Abuse (DA) and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2022-2025).

2. Noted and commented on Safer Communities Partnership priorities as set out within Barnet's Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy (2022 – 2025).

12. COMMUNITY SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Maggie Higon Brown, Head of CCTV & Community Safety presented the report to the Committee and informed the report demonstrated the work undertaken by the Community Safety Team during the period April 2022 –March 2023.

Ms Higon Brown noted the main sections within the report which were:

- Barnet Community Safety restructure
- Community Safety Team case volumes
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Community Safety ASB Enforcement Tools and Powers activity
- Community Triggers
- Community Safety Team other Notable Workstreams
- CCTV
- Prevent
- Barnet Zero Tolerance to Hate Crime Project
- SCPB Strategy update

Cllr Cohen asked in relation to figure 11.1 of the appendix referring to Barnet hate crimes and questioned why there were only three quarters. Ms Higon Brown commented that we have not been able to report quarter 4 data as Barnet Mencap have not issued this information to include in the report, however the figures will be reported for next quarter.

Cllr Cohen also asked about fly tipping and if the team were able to give any statistics for this. Ms Higon Brown advised that she would check the case volume report back to committee members.

ACTION: MS HIGTON BROWN

Cllr K Gurung asked about the Burnt Oak and Colindale Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and high numbers of public urinating in public spaces. He suggested that we look at public toilets in those areas and that we should pick this up as part of healthy high streets.

The Committee noted that there had been a few complaints from those who cannot speak English who have been targeted in parks, plus issues with older people. Ms Higon Brown said that there had been no issues reported and that this would need reporting as there is an appeals process. It was noted that equalities data was EDI data is being collected as part of the Fixed Penalty Notice process also.

Cllr L Gurung asked in relation to ward walks and if these had been arranged on the request of Members. Ms Higon Brown informed that all ward walks have been arranged for the forthcoming year but were sent out to ward councillors on a 3-monthly basis.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the Community Safety Team Annual report.

13. ANY ITEM(S) THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT – VOTE OF THANKS

The Chair thanked all officers that have been involved in the Community, Leadership & Libraries Committee.

Cllr Rose thanked Cllr Conway for her Chairing of the Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

The meeting finished at 8.45pm