

Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Wednesday 2 March 2016

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Larry Culhane (Chair), Iain Cassidy, Sharon Holder, Charlie Dewhirst and Steve Hamilton

Other Councillors: Sue Fennimore and Wesley Harcourt

Officers: Chris Bainbridge, Helen Clutton, Richard Duffill, Meghan Field, David Page, Claire Rai and George Warren

39. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Councillor Dewhirst said that he had not yet received the dates over which the Waste and Street Cleaning Consultation had run. The Chair agreed to remind Councillor Harcourt that these had been requested.

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

42. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair invited members of the public present to make any comments in relation to issues on the agenda as part of that item.

43. SERVICES FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Dave Page, director of safer neighbourhoods, explained that Hammersmith and Fulham Council had a great history of tackling violence against women and girls. He felt that the service was very important as 2 of the last 3 murders in the borough had been related to domestic violence, whilst those experiencing or growing up around domestic violence were likely to suffer other problems. He explained that a significant change in approach to service delivery had recently taken place and he invited officers from the service to explain the new partnership.

Meghan Field and Helen Clutton informed the meeting that services for victims of violence against women and girls had been expanded significantly. The service had reorganised to become a shared service with both Kensington and Chelsea Council and Westminster Council. A violence against women and girls strategy had been developed which recognised the expectations placed on statutory agencies but also identified opportunities for additional services. These services had, since July 2015, been delivered by a group of agencies which had come together to form the Angelou Partnership. The partnership consisted of the following agencies: Advance, Women and Girls Network, Al Hasaniyah, African Women's Care, Galop, Woman's Trust, Solace Women's Aid, Standing Together and Hestia.

Services delivered by the partnership included:

- Coordination of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (Standing Together)
- Coordination of the Courts (Standing Together)
- Impact Project to improve the response of the: Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation Service and Magistrate's Court response (Shepherds Bush Housing Group, Advance, Standing Together)

There were also a range of pilot schemes:

- The Perpetrator Pilot
- The Harmful Practices Pilot
- The FGM Pilot, and
- The Social Care Pilot

The partnership had been set a target of working with 3,000 women and girls in its first year, and after just its first 3 months of operation it had managed to see 900 people. Referrals had increased by 30% compared to its predecessors and 92% of those contacted now engaged with the partnership. Those using services felt safer, suffered less abuse and enjoyed a better quality of life. The MARAC was now achieving 85% referral rates, which was very good, whilst the conviction rate had risen by 12.5% since the start of the

service. The Impact Project had also obtained the first European Protection Order from a British Court.

Councillor Holder asked whether the police service had issues with officers making judgements about women. Meghan Field explained that whilst this perception of the police existed, it was not true in Hammersmith and Fulham; indeed survivors consistently said good things about the way police dealt with them. That the police station also housed Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and staff working on the Impact Project helped to ensure that officers were treating victims appropriately.

Councillor Dewhirst asked whether the forecast fall in the conviction rate was significant. Helen Clutton explained that the variation related to a very small number of cases and so was not considered to be a serious concern, although officers were not complacent. She also explained that a focus on securing early guilty pleas had spared many victims from difficult experiences in court.

Councillor Dewhirst noted that there had still not been a conviction for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the UK, and asked whether this was a problem. Meghan Field explained that Hammersmith and Fulham benefited from good community support to prevent FGM; convictions would not, in her view, achieve any more than existing work, and indeed might cause people to resent or fear those trying to prevent it. Work with schools and men was ongoing to prevent FGM affecting the borough's residents.

Councillor Holder asked what the key reasons for improved performance were. Meghan Field explained that the multi-agency response and closer working between officers had been very important. The fantastic culture amongst staff was also very important.

Councillor Cassidy asked whether online harassment was a significant problem, and how it was being tackled. Meghan Field explained that a specialist provider for young people had been commissioned and they worked extensively on this issue. The workers in that team also used modern technology to communicate with service users. A campaign to explain what a healthy relationship was would launch in April, in addition to the work already carried out in schools.

Councillors thanked officers for their presentation and congratulated them for their very good work in this area.

44. SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS UPDATE

George Warren introduced the report, explaining that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) were intended to slow the flow of water to rivers and sewers and where possible to reuse water.

He gave details of schemes at Australia Road, Kenmont Gardens, Melina Road, Mendora Road, Talgarth Road, Stevenage Road, the Queen Caroline Estate, Chessman's Terrace and Cyril Thatcher/Richard Knight/Eric

MacDonald Houses. He explained that SuDS schemes were often incorporated into other projects to ensure efficient use of funding and that engagement with local communities was vital to their success. He also explained that the Council would be working with Imperial College London on a Blue Green Dream project, which would improve standards on new developments.

Councillor Hamilton asked for information about the scheme at Goldhawk Road, and what plans there were for the next year. George Warren explained that the scheme had linked highway drainage to a number of street trees with large below ground stoppage potential rather than directly to drains, but that more ambitious works had been prevented by the presence of a large number of services under roads and footway.. Turning to address the plans for the next year, he explained that work was being investigated on housing estates, as there were significant opportunities for schemes at a relatively low cost to remove large quantities of surface water from going straight to the sewer through downpipe diversions and the subsequent enhancement of the green space. He explained however that the team would welcome suggestions from Councillors and the public for where SuDS schemes could be installed.

John Griffiths, Acting Chair of H+F Cyclists, asked what fraction of impermeable land had been fitted with SuDS. George Warren explained that the fraction of land covered by SuDS was very small, but said that by showing what could be done, the council was able to push developers in the borough to do more.

Residents raised the issue of front gardens being paved over, which led to water reaching drains and rivers more quickly. George Warren explained that planning policy required an application to be made if the area to be paved was greater than 5m² and a non-permeable surface was to be used. Permitted development rights enabled areas smaller than this to be paved, without planning permission. He agreed to ensure that the council's website was up to date to encourage the use of permeable surfaces, and also to look at the crossover application process. Rosemary Petit, Chair of the Air Quality Commission, suggested that that body could look into the issue further. Councillor Harcourt agreed to raise the issue with planning officers, as part of the review of the local plan.

Councillors thanked officers for their work on the issue, and congratulated them for developing and building an exciting range of schemes.

45. HAMMERSMITH GYRATORY CONSULTATION

Richard Duffill introduced the report explaining that the scheme was part of Transport for London's 'Better Junctions' programme. Hammersmith Gyratory was a very challenging junction, and any changes made would have an impact on some other part of the gyratory. The scheme offered significant benefits to cyclists, especially when seen as part of a wider scheme for improving cycle routes in the area. Officers had already made preliminary comments objecting to the loss of the crossing from Shepherds Bush Road to the Broadway.

John Griffiths, Acting Chair of H+F Cyclists, explained that he was concerned that road space was being taken from pedestrians to accommodate the changes, in order to preserve road space. He was concerned about the increase in width of the crossing between King Street and the Broadway, and whether the crossing would have sufficient capacity for those using it. He was also concerned about the lack of a two way cycle lane on King Street, the use of a stepped, rather than segregated cycle track which could be unsafe. Mr Griffiths expressed his disappointment with the lack of detail in some of the plans. He said that pressure on the scheme from King Street could be reduced by the creation of a cycle route along Studland Street and onto Glenthorne Road

Councillor Dewhirst explained that he was concerned with the impact on Fulham Palace Road, where the Council had previously done much to ease congestion.

Nigel Hensman, a local resident, explained that he was concerned about pedestrian safety, especially about the new wider crossing, and about the impact on journey times through the junction. Other residents concurred with this view, and added that it was difficult to see how pedestrians waiting to use the crossing could be kept from doing so on the cycle lane. Mr Hensman noted that journey times for pedestrians could be significantly slower than at present, as could those for motor vehicles, although cyclists would benefit from a reduced journey time. John Griffiths pointed out that this might encourage car users to use more sustainable forms of transport.

Councillor Hamilton was concerned about the reduction in the number of lanes from the Broadway onto Butterwick and the potential impact on traffic. He was also concerned about the introduction of a bus lane on Beadon Road which could impact on Hammersmith Grove. He felt that the new taxi rank and loading bay arrangement in Blacks Way was poorly designed, as it would move the loading bays away from the rear of the shops which they serviced.

A resident said that they were concerned that cycle lanes would be at different heights, which would make it difficult to cross roads, especially for those with difficulties seeing.

Rosemary Petit, a local resident, said that she supported the idea of a bus lane in Beadon Road as it presently caused significant delays to journeys. She said that if a bus lane were not introduced, a bus stop should be, in order that people could access the western part of the town centre without waiting in traffic to get to the next stop on the route.

The committee thanked officers for their presentation, and asked that their disappointment that Transport for London had not attended the meeting be passed on.

46. CYCLE QUIETWAY BETWEEN KENSINGTON AND EAST ACTON CONSULTATION

Richard Duffill introduced the report, explaining that the quietway initiative intended to create routes which were suitable for less confident cyclists. This scheme would connect St Marks Way, in North Kensington to East Acton, meeting the proposed East-West Cycle Superhighway at the junction of Wood Lane and the Westway. The scheme would involve upgrades to junctions, cycle tracks and the formalisation and surfacing of an existing worn path across the west of Wormwood Scrubs.

The Chair asked whether the lighting along the route would be improved. Richard Duffill explained that the lighting would be improved, but noted the need for sensitivity across Wormwood Scrubs.

Councillor Hamilton asked whether there was the opportunity to build sustainable drainage into parts of the quietway. Richard Duffill agreed to look into where SuDS could be implemented in the scheme.

47. WORK PROGRAMMING

Members did not suggest any additional items for the work programme, but were reminded that they could do so between meetings by contacting the Chair.

48. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on 12th April 2016.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 9.25 pm

Chairman

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