

Public Protection PDS Chairman's Update

No of Meetings

The PP&E PDS met 5 times during 2021-22 (the 5th and last meeting for this financial year is scheduled for 23rd March 22).

Portfolio Priorities for 2021

At the PP&E PDS meeting due to be held on the 23rd of March 22, the Public Protection & Enforcement Portfolio Holder Cllr Angela Page will outline her Draft Portfolio Plan priorities for 2022-23, which will incorporate the new corporate ambitions as presented in Making Bromley Even Better.

These fell under the 4 following priorities:

1. We will Keep Bromley Safe

We will take an intelligence led and partnership approach; working together with public sector agencies, businesses, and local communities to reduce enviro-crime, crime and to improve safety.

2. We Will Protect Consumers:

We will maintain our community safety and trading standards and public protection services, to protect elderly and otherwise vulnerable residents in Bromley, and to ensure there is a fair, safe and genuine trading environment, through encouraging compliance and responsible enforcement.

3. We will support and regulate businesses

We will abide by the approach within our enforcement policy, and embed a risk-based, proportionate, targeted and flexible approach to regulatory inspection and enforcement among the regulators to which it applies. This approach will ensure that regulators are efficient and effective in their work, without imposing unnecessary burdens on those they regulate.

4. We will protect and improve the environment through custodianship and effective and responsible enforcement

We will make a difference to people's lives by promoting a healthier, fairer and safer environment in local homes and within our communities, through appropriate policies, and by providing compliance advice, education and through proportionate regulatory enforcement. We will focus on promoting behaviour change, and supporting compliance, working with businesses, the community and volunteer groups, and taking appropriate action to ensure the street environment meets local needs. We will undertake enforcement activity around issues relating to anti-social behavior, illegal incursion, dog attacks and drug abuse in our parks and open spaces; and we will manage parking issues through effective enforcement to balance the needs of motorists, residents and businesses.

Success against the 21-22 Portfolio Plan

Performance and enforcement actions undertaken against the previous Portfolio Plan have been presented to the PP&E PDS committee for scrutiny; below are examples from each service area that demonstrate the support services provide to each other and the diversity of work undertaken within the Portfolio area:

Trading Standards

The investigation of doorstep crime is considered as a priority in Bromley, with many of the victims being either elderly or vulnerable. The investigation process often uncovers additional victims that were not always apparent in the first instance, and rogue traders regularly operate, physically and electronically, beyond local authority borders. Two current Trading Standards investigations that were proceeding to prosecution, required cross boundary authorizations from other local authorities, and Trading Standards secured the correct delegated authority to effectively investigate these cases.

Commercial and Domestic Regulation

A private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement Policy was introduced that included the ability to apply civil penalties, and further provided a transparent rationale as to how the Private Rented Sector Housing Team (PRSH Team) provides the service to different tenures, the circumstances it takes into account should a service be withdrawn, and the discretion that will be used when considering formal enforcement action against Category 2 Hazards pertaining to (amongst other issues) uncontrolled fire and smoke.

Community Safety

Bromley's Violence Reduction Action Plan (VRAP) is considered as an exemplar, and according to the GLAs Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) ranks within the top 3 plans produced in London. Accordingly, the VRU requested that our Assistant Director of Public Protection, Joanne Stowell, present the VRAP to the Partnership Reference Group which is chaired by the Mayor of London and has key senior leads from across the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Community Impact Days (CID) which are delivered by the Community safety Team, remain very successful and effective. Their aim is to reduce or stop crime and the negative impact it has on the community in areas where the highest levels of ASB and arson are recorded (currently Cray Valley East, and West, Mottingham and Penge). The initiative is funded by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), and the statutory partners within the Safer Bromley Partnership, (e.g., Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade and Clarion Housing), work with other national agencies (e.g., DVLA and Border Force) and voluntary groups, in a coordinated manner. There are agreed taskings, with the express aims to improve the visual environment and reduce recorded ASB and arson within the targeted areas. According to the London Fire Brigade and the Police, incidents of arson within the above areas has decreased by:

- -4.2% Cray Valley East
- -18.5% Cray Valley West
- -20% Mottingham
- -75% Penge & Cator

The overall reduction on arson was -29%, which was a significant improvement on the -4% reduction the previous year. The LFB and CID coordinators are looking to improve on the reductions and will give specific consideration to Cray Valley East moving forwards.

Neighbourhood Management

The Street Enforcement team has been working "business as usual" responding to customer complaints, undertaking site and residential visits concerning all matters of highway enforcement. This ranges from the investigation into, the removal of unauthorized traveler encampments onto LBB land, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, illegal encroachment of Highway land, overhanging vegetation onto the footway, removal of illegal skips, cones hoarding and other obstructions on the highway.

Street Enforcement Officers have assisted with the opening of a Covid Test Site at Normans Park. During the recent Winter lockdown the site was open 7 days a week including being open on Christmas Day. In addition the Councils Park Security contractor (Ward Security) has continued to fulfil its contractual obligations and operate 7 days a week, 365 days a year enforcing parks Byelaws and undertaking regular weapon sweeps of Green Spaces.

In November 2021 a target hardening scheme was completed at Mottingham Recreational Ground at a cost of £85,000 (detailed as committed expenditure above). The scheme originated at the Fly Tipping Action Working Group and resulted in the installation of a permanent post and rail fencing within the grounds of the Rec to prevent vehicles illegally accessing the grounds. Previous vehicular access had resulted in waste being deposited at site.

Finally, 226 Fly tipping referrals passed to the Enviro-Crime Officer resulted in the issuing of 23 formal notices, 44 warning letters, 9 fixed penalty notices and 1 prosecution

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Planning Enforcement

In the period April 2020 to March 2021, the Council received 987 new complaints concerning alleged breaches of planning control. This compares with 768 complaints registered in the previous year.

In terms of enforcement activity 52 enforcement notices were issued in respect of breach of planning control in the period April 2020 to March 2021, in other cases, negotiation led to matters being resolved before notices were issued.

PP&E PDS Reports and Updates

In line with agreed policy priorities, by the end of the year, Members will have received detailed written and / or verbal reports on:

- Annual Update on the Safer Bromley Partnership Strategy
- Budget Monitoring Reports
- Community Impact Days Report
- Capital Programme Monitoring
- Contracts Register and Database Report
- Delegation of Function
- Emergency Planning, Civil and Corporate Resilience Annual Report
- End of Year Police Update and Forward Plan
- Enforcement Activity Update
- Enforcement Performance Overview
- Environment & Public Protection Risks
- Extension of the Stray Dog Contract
- Food Safety Service Plan 2021-22
- Fly Tipping Action Plan
- Mortuary Contract Update
- Police Crime Update Reports
- Planning Management Enforcement
- Portfolio Holder Updates
- Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement Policy
- Proposed Changes to the Out of Hours Noise Service
- Protocol for the Scrutiny of the Safer Bromley Partnership
- Safer Bromley Partnership Update on Supporting the Elderly and Vulnerable
- Safer Bromley Partnership Board Progress
- SLAM Update
- The work of the Bromley Youth Council presentation
- Transforming Bromley, the First Two Years
- The new Protect duty

Safer Bromley Partnership Board (SBP) Scrutiny:

The Safer Bromley Partnership Strategy (SBPS) is the strategic framework document that links partners aims and outcomes against agreed MOPAC priorities; the Safer Bromley Partnership Board (SBPB) provides the governance role in relation to the strategy. The Police and Justice Act 2006 (the Act) requires every local authority to have a crime and disorder committee (CDC) with the power to review and scrutinize the work of Community Safety Partners, and in Bromley, the PP&E PDS is designated as the CDC for this purpose.

As Chairman of both the PP&E PDS and CDC, I required that a cross party Task and Finish group be convened, to be chaired by the PDS Vice Chairman Cllr Colin Hitchins. The aims of the group were to: Produce a draft protocol, for approval, that set out how the SBP will be scrutinized; produce a suggested workplan that invites statutory partners to present their work for scrutiny throughout the year; and agree a 'fit for purpose' data package, which replicates the performance report that MOPAC presents for monitoring

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progress against the Police and Crime Plan, and that reduces the use of Police resources. The aims were achieved, and the protocol and subsequent data package were accepted and implemented.

The SBPB has the responsibility for developing the Safer Bromley Partnership Strategy that delivers the priorities determined by MOPAC, as well as those that are important to our residents. The 4 priorities within the current strategy that was launched in March 2020 are:

1. Safer Neighbourhoods (e.g., MOPAC local priorities - ASB, residential burglary, and non-domestic violence with injury, and a borough priority of financial abuse of the elderly)
2. Violence Against Women and Girls
3. Keeping Young, People Safe, and
4. Standing Together Against Hate and Extremism.

These priorities were chosen by incorporating the specific priorities within the MOPAC Police and Crime Plan 2017-21, data from the strategic assessment of crime, and the results of the crime survey undertaken in 2020. The overall aim is to work towards reducing crime and ASB across the borough, but particularly targeting these sectors. The comprehensive annual report that details the outcomes against these priorities within the strategy can be found here:

<https://cde.bromley.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?Ild=71108&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI71669>

In accordance with Mayoral requirements, a new Police and Crime Plan is being produced, and a draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025 has been consulted on and approved. The Portfolio Holder, Angela Page, and the Assistant Director of Public Protection, Joanne Stowell, attended the consultation exercise to ensure that Bromley's views were represented. A new Safer Bromley Partnership Strategy will be developed in line with the priorities as outlined in the new Police and Crime plan.

Crime Over the Last Year (January 20 – December 21 latest MOPAC figures)

All PP&E PDS meetings include a written Police Update presenting a data package commensurate with the MOPAC High Harm London Wide Priorities (HHLWP), and High-Volume Local Priorities (HVLN).

The data on the following page demonstrates that there were percentage decreases for many areas of crime considered in the Safer Bromley Partnership Strategy, as well as under the Violence Reduction Action Plan. However, of note, there were percentage increases in non-domestic violence with injury (NDVWI), the theft of motor vehicles, and hate crime. The theft of motor vehicles is being considered by the Metropolitan Police Tactical Tasking Coordination Group (TTCG), as is the response to the increase in NDVWI; as increases in this crime type were noted London wide, it is thought that the new Police and Crime Plan will seek to ensure that each BCU addresses these issues as priorities.

As was the case last year, an increase has been recorded for reports of hate crime; the Covid-19 pandemic remains an influencing element in the increase in hate crime reporting, especially against Chinese and East Asian minorities. However, it has been recognised that historically there has been under-reporting in this crime type. Some authorities have a target to improve the reporting in this area. According to the Home Office, one of the biggest drivers for the increase in recorded hate crime is a general improvement in police recording, along with an increased willingness of those impacted to come forward. Having said that, we cannot be complacent, and with that in mind, our Assistant Director of Public Protection wrote to MOPAC to enquire how we can effectively disaggregate increases in offences from those produced by improved reporting, if indeed that is possible.

Interestingly, the previous year's record number of ASB reports have reduced exponentially, as the previous rise was associated with calls pertaining to alleged breaches of Covid-19 legislation, the numbers here have reduced in line with the easing and cessation of lockdown.

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REPORTING PERIOD January 20 to December 21						
RAG Tolerance for % difference <=0% Green >=5% Amber >5% Red						
MOPAC High Harm London Wide Priorities	Rolling 12 Months	2021 (J)	2021 (D)	Difference	% Difference	RAG
			2907	2580	-327	
	Domestic Abuse	494	543	49	-11%	●
	Total Sexual Offences	216	181	-35	10%	●
	Knife Crime Offences	52	28	-24	-16%	●
	Gun Crime Offences	518	612	94	-46%	●
	Race Hate Crime offences				18%	●
Bromley High Volume Local Priorities	Non -Domestic Abuse with Inju	1287	1362	75	6%	●
	Total Burglary Offences	1629	1508	-121	-7%	●
Bromley Local Priority	Theft of MV	951	1034	83	9%	●
		21385	22415	1030		●
Miscellaneous Data	Total Notifiable Offences				5%	
	ASB Calls	13110	8311	-4799	-37%	●
	Totals	42549	38574	-3975	-9%	●
Satisfaction and Perception Data	RAG Tolerance for overall % <=50% Red >=69% Amber >70% Green					
	Local police Activities over last 12 months	54%	47%		-7%	●
	Agrees Police listen to concerns	73%	69%		-4%	●
	Agree Police can be relied upon to be there when needed	67%	61%		-6%	●
	Agree Police treat all fairly	72%	66%		-6%	●
	Agree Police deal with things that matter to this community	67%	64%		-3%	●
	Knows how to contact Ward Officer	21%	25%		4%	●

Work of Public Protection and Enforcement Services Through COVID-19 Pandemic

Public Protection have played a vital role throughout the pandemic in explaining rules to local businesses, encouraging them to comply with regulations, and enforcing where necessary. The table below lists the formal enforcement that Public Protection has taken within between 27th March 2020 to 28th March 2021 resultant of COVID enforcement. When it came to boroughs submitting their enforcement actions, benchmarking demonstrated that when monthly submissions were compared with the resources available, it could be seen that outputs of Public Protection Officers significantly outperformed other boroughs. Members and Officers are rightly proud of this achievement.

ENFORCEMENT OF COVID -19 REGULATIONS (1st April 2021 to 31st January 2022)

Health Protection (Coronavirus, restrictions) (Steps) Regulations	No. of warnings/prohibition notices (e.g., lack of face coverings, statutory notices, social distancing)	37
Health Protection (Coronavirus, restrictions) (Steps) Regulations	No. Fixed Penalty Notices (e.g., lack of face coverings, statutory notices, social distancing)	2

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"I would like to thank all members of the PP&E PDS for their contribution and support over the past year, and I would also like to thank those Council Officers who have worked diligently to ensure the Committee has been able to fulfil its role.

I would also like to thank the PP&E Portfolio Holder Cllr Page, for her support and guidance and her hard work and enthusiasm over a very busy year. Finally, Joanne Stowell the Assistant Director of Public Protection left Bromley Council in February 2022 for pastures new and has secured the prestigious position of Director in another Local Authority Council. Bromley (and Public Protection & Enforcement in particular) will greatly miss her experience and expertise, along with her enthusiasm and incredible capacity for hard work. Personally, as Chairman of the PP&E PDS, I will miss Joanne's understanding, support, and wise counsel. Her strategic understanding and detailed knowledge have been second to none and she will be a hard act to follow. On behalf of the Public Protection & Enforcement Committee, I wish her all the very best for her future career and would like to place on record our enormous gratitude for her significant contribution, over recent years, to the safety and protection of Bromley, its residents, and its communities.

Cllr David Cartwright QFSM
Public Protection & Enforcement PDS Chairman