



THE LONDON BOROUGH

Policy Development & Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22

For submission to Full Council on 11th April 2022

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1. Foreword

1. On behalf of all Members who served on Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees in the London Borough of Bromley for the current municipal year, I have great pleasure in presenting our Annual Report for 2021/2022, which summarises the work that has been carried out by the Committees.

2. The municipal year began with the Council's activities still significantly affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Although physical committee meetings were resumed, significant precautions continued to be taken with respect to social distancing in accordance with government guidelines. A large majority of officers continued to work from home, which was only possible thanks to the robust IT solutions implemented prior to and at the outset of the pandemic. It is a testament to the flexibility, creativity and dedication of our officers that the Council continued to deliver existing statutory and non-statutory services, alongside new COVID-related tasks, without the significant increases in overheads seen in other local authorities. As the London borough receiving the second-lowest grant per resident from central government along with one of the lowest council tax burdens, we are only able to deliver high quality public services to residents by being amongst the most efficient councils in the country.

3. The impact of the pandemic continued to distort the council's finances. As well as existing programmes, officers were also tasked with distributing high volumes of COVID-related grants, although the total amount more than halved from the previous year (£86.6m for 2021/22 vs £209.7m for 2020/21). The 'rollover plus' settlements since the beginning of the pandemic have undoubtedly helped the council's financial position. That said, the medium term forecasts of the council's finances show rising spend in adults' and children's social care. The various mitigation measures, many of which fall under the multi-year transformation programme, will be vital to ensure continued service delivery without compromising the council's enviable financial position. The recent rise in inflation only underlines the importance of keeping control of costs.

4. Disciplined financial management has not prevented the Council from developing investment proposals across all policy areas for the coming years. As well as housing, significant investment is planned for the Council's operational estate, while investment in Environment has helped to bring delivery of the Council's net zero target forward by two years to 2027. Maintaining a strong financial position gives Bromley the ability to invest for the long term, rather than cutting back spending on services to pay interest on loans.

5. To conclude, I thank all members who have contributed to PDS Committees this year, whether as permanent or visiting members. The adoption of amended recommendations by the Executive shows member participation in PDS Committees contributes directly to policy making. I would also like to thank officers for all reports they have prepared for the various committees, as well as those who record the minutes and recommendations.

Cllr. Christopher Marlow
Chairman, Executive Resources and Contracts PDS Committee

2. Policy Development and Scrutiny Chairmen 2021/22



Cllr Christopher Marlow
Executive, Resources & Contracts



Cllr Gareth Allatt
Adult Care & Health Services



Cllr Nicky Dykes
Children, Education & Families



Cllr Will Harmer
Environment and Community Services



Cllr David Cartwright
Public Protection and Enforcement



Cllr Yvonne Bear
Renewal, Recreation & Housing

3. Policy Development and Scrutiny in Bromley

Introduction

- 3.1 Six Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committees at Bromley discharge the overview and scrutiny functions conferred by sections 21 and 32 of the Local Government Act 2000 and successive legislation. The Executive and Resources PDS Committee has an over-arching, co-ordinating role on behalf of the other five PDS Committees and is required by the Council's Constitution to present Full Council with an Annual Report "on the Policy Development and Scrutiny functions and PDS budget, and amended working methods if appropriate" (Article 6, Section 6.03 (d) of the Constitution).
- 3.2 The PDS Committees mirror the Council's executive portfolios:
- Executive, Resources & Contracts (covering both the Resources, Contracts and Commissioning Portfolio and the Executive)
 - Adult Care & Health Services
 - Children, Education & Families
 - Environment & Community Services
 - Public Protection and Enforcement
 - Renewal, Recreation & Housing
- 3.3 In addition to these Committees there are two PDS Sub-Committees:
- Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee (Adult Care and Health)
 - Budget Sub-Committee (Children, Education and Families)
- 3.4 Although they have no decision-making powers, PDS Committees and Sub-Committees have key roles in contributing to policy development and scrutinising the decisions of the Executive and individual Portfolio Holders.

Policy Reviews

- 3.5 PDS Committees advise Portfolio Holders, the Executive and Full Council on policies, budgets and service delivery. PDS Committees can commission groups of Councillors to review an issue or policy, so assisting a Portfolio Holder or the Executive to improve a service or function affecting local people. This can be linked to a forthcoming decision by a Portfolio Holder or the Executive or to assist in formulating fresh, new policy. In each case detailed, evidence-based assessments are carried out and recommendations made in a report. In the process, Councillors can speak to a broad range of people to help gather information for their evidence-based reports.

One-Off Reviews

- 3.6 In addition to in-depth policy reviews, PDS Committees can also review a topical issue at Committee with comments and recommendations referred on to the Portfolio Holder. These reviews are often based around a presentation or an evidence-giving session with expert witnesses.

Performance and Budget Monitoring

- 3.7 PDS Committees monitor the performance of services, functions and contracts within their remit, assessing performance against key performance indicators and policy objectives. Concerns are reported to a Portfolio Holder who can then, if necessary, be called to a PDS Committee meeting to account for the performance of his or her Portfolio.
- 3.8 PDS Committees are also involved in the budget setting process and provide considered comments and recommendations for the Executive to take account of when formulating the Council's annual budget. Similarly, PDS Committees also monitor in-year spend of budgets and raise concerns where there is any possibility of overspend or other issues affecting spending priorities.

Call-in

- 3.9 The call-in process is a key means by which PDS Committees can hold the Executive to account. Any five Councillors can call in a decision and prevent it from taking immediate effect until it has been re-considered by a PDS Committee. The Committee can then interview the Portfolio Holder and officers and consider whether the decision is appropriate, within the Council's policy framework, and whether it should be reconsidered. If the Committee feels that the decision should be reversed or altered, it can make a recommendation to the Executive, which then has to reconsider the matter.
- 3.10 At the time of writing, one call-in has been made in 2021/22. The continued low level of call-in reflects an emphasis given to pre-decision scrutiny leading to better and more robust decisions which are less likely to be challenged.

4. Report from Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Christopher Marlow

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Kira Gabbert

Introduction

In the 2021/22 municipal year, the Committee held eight meetings, all of which took place in person following the relaxation of various COVID-related restrictions. Unlike the previous year, all other scrutiny committees returned to their usual frequency, allowing this committee to revert to its core responsibilities: scrutiny of the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council with respect to its strategic leadership, scrutiny of the Resources Portfolio Holder and all key reports falling within this portfolio relating to the Council's finances, scrutiny of key supplier contracts, and policy development with respect to these three areas.

Committee priorities

At the start of the municipal year, the Committee defined its four priorities as follows:

1. The Income and Expenditure of the Council post Covid-19,
2. A Review of the best sources of funding for the Council's Housing and Capital Programme,
3. A Review of the Procurement Framework post Brexit, and
4. Review of the timetable for the Council's Transformation Programme and monitor the Transformation Programme to ensure that new technology was used wherever appropriate in order to ensure that the Council's operations were economic, effective and efficient.

For the first item, the Committee scrutinised the Capital Strategy 2022 to 2026 and the update on the Council's Financial Strategy 22/23 to 25/26. The Council has produced a balanced budget for 2022/23, but these reports demonstrated the higher expenditures expected for adults' and children's social care in the medium term, and the importance of mitigation to maintain the Council's strong financial position. For the second item, a Housing and Capital Finance Task and Finish Group was established, chaired by Cllr Gabbert. The committee agreed to this as a priority in light of the significant volume of housing-related capital schemes currently expected, which should deliver both material savings to the council's budget and better outcomes for homeless families within the borough. As the Council's capital requirements will also be materially affected by the outcome of the operational property review that has yet to complete, it is expected that this priority and the related Task and Finish Group will continue into the next municipal year before reaching definitive conclusions.

For the third item, the committee was not able to progress as the relevant legislation is not anticipated to reach the statute book before 2023. For the fourth item, the Committee was given extensive reassurance regarding the progression of the transformation programme from several officers, above all the Chief Executive. He set out how the programme was progressing despite the extra workload created by COVID and the challenges from the rapid shift to working from home.

Scrutiny of the Chief Executive, Leader and Resources Portfolio Holder

The Committee scrutinised the Chief Executive and the Resources Portfolio Holder twice and the Leader of the Council once during the municipal year. Both the Chief Executive and the Resources Portfolio Holder produced reports in advance of their respective meetings, which made the scrutiny process more efficient. It would be beneficial if all Portfolio Holders could produce such reports as part of regular scrutiny by all PDS Committees.

Council Finances

The Committee continued with its scrutiny of the Council's finances through the standard budget monitoring and capital programme reports. The COVID grants report set out in detail the sheer scale and scope of the funding the Council had administered as part of efforts to provide support to those adversely affected by the pandemic and the related lockdowns.

Biggin Hill Airport

This municipal year was unusual in featuring not one but two reports relating to the Council's role as landlord for Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL). The first report in May 2021 related to a request by BHAL to amend the permitted user clause of their lease, while the second was concerned with BHAL's five year review of the Noise Action Plan. These items attracted an elevated level of public interest, both in terms of correspondence and attendance in the public gallery. Although members did not all agree on the desired outcomes, both meetings saw amended recommendations adopted which were subsequently adopted by the Executive, reflecting the real impact PDS Committees have on policy making in Bromley.

Key Contracts

The Committee continued to scrutinise key contracts, including those relating to customer, exchequer, benefits and revenues services.

Other items

The Committee provided significant scrutiny and amended recommendations for the revised corporate strategy (Making Bromley Even Better) and the Council's activities for Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

I thank all Members who served on the Committee for their contributions.

Councillor Christopher Marlow
Chairman, Executive & Resources PDS Committee

5. Report from Adult Care and Health PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Gareth Allatt

As former Vice-Chairman for the greater part of this municipal year, sadly I must preface this report with the news of the untimely and unexpected death of former Chairman, Cllr Mary Cooke on 7 January 2022 who served as Committee Chairman with flair and distinction from May 2017. Mary will be greatly missed for her commitment, wisdom, and incisive thought. Those who knew her will also miss her warmth and good humour.

Clearly, the pandemic still cast its dark shadow over the period, and in the midst of facts and figures associated with COVID 19, at the heart has been the sorrowful loss and pain for so many families and those close to the bereaved. On a brighter note, at the end of the municipal year, the prospect for both the incidence and severity of the virus to go into retreat feels palpable, and it is very much hoped that life will now enter into a post pandemic phase.

That aside, there are some significant legacy issues that call for attention in relation to those suffering from “Long Covid”, the mental health issues caused by bereavement, isolation and financial insecurity, as well as the unwelcome effects of those who have experienced the effects of weight gain and increased alcohol consumption during successive lockdowns and restrictions.

The Committee, in response to a presentation, made representations to the South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (‘SEL CCG’) in the year in relation to the difficulty in getting face to face surgery consultations that had emerged over the pandemic. It is apparent that this is not a straight forward matter. Minimising transmissibility of the virus has been just one factor. This is a complex issue set against a backdrop of demand for services eclipsing practice capacity, increase in acuity of conditions, and longer waiting lists, together with backlogs in routine check-ups, screening and immunisations. Those issues aside, I am sure that this will be a matter for continued scrutiny into the future.

An early consequence of the lockdown was for all local authority day care centres to have to close, however, with the Council’s financial support and in compliance with Public Health guidance resumption of services began in August 2021, albeit the return has been slow.

The Council’s capacity to manage Adult Social Care remained resilient. The department was awarded the Municipal Journal’s Award for Integration of Social Care and Health in Sept 2021. This was an excellent recognition of the work carried out both to enable people to be discharged from hospital in a timely way and the work done with care homes. We commend both Council staff, Care Home staff and our retained contractors for their commitment, focus and endeavour.

Thanks are also warmly extended to those many volunteers who reached out particularly to those experiencing isolation and loneliness. It is estimated over 40% of the Borough’s households aged 65+ live alone. Cllr Aisha Cuthbert and council officers continued working on the issue, to provide definition to the importance of not only physical welfare, but crucially also to sustaining mental health by looking after social connections and the key role these contribute to overall wellbeing. The actions identified from the resulting output report are currently in the course of delivery.

The Committee was grateful to receive and consider a report from the Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board ('BSAB') which covered the very wide span of control provided by various different agencies focusing on ; domestic abuse, financial abuse, self-neglect , modern day slavery , transitional care of children into adulthood, and vulnerable adults in specialist care and residential homes. Clearly this is a vitally important subject and a matter that needs to be at the forefront of all our thinking.

The scrutiny of the various aspects of Adult Care and Health matters will of course continue. Bromley is a large borough at some 59 square miles which can pose particular challenges in relation to coverage and the various contractual arrangements it commissions to provide services such as domiciliary care. The strands of the Council's responsibilities are many and diverse including some 1700 care placements, of which 1300 are in care homes (excluding private placements). The population of Bromley comprises a comparatively older age profile with some 60,000 aged 65+ and an increasing prevalence of dementia. Separately some 1300 adults are estimated to have moderate or severe Learning Disability and so the challenges of accommodating demand with first class care services within the financial envelope available will continue in to the future.

The four priority outcomes into the next municipal year will remain:

- Safeguarding the vulnerable
- Promoting optimal life chances, resilience and wellbeing
- Integrating health /hospital and social care
- Ensuring operational and contractual efficiency and effectiveness

In closing, thanks and appreciation goes to the Committee support staff and subject matter experts who in difficult times have demonstrated commitment, skill and diligence in performance of their duties.

Committee members both elected and co-opted are also thanked for their willingness to study the extensive committee papers to prepare and contribute to meetings which likewise is also extended to the various professionals from the BSAB, PRUH , Oxleas , and the SEL CCG.

Councillor Gareth G Allatt
Chairman, Adult Care & Health PDS and Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

6. Report from Children, Education & Families PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Nicky Dykes
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Judi Ellis

Introduction

This year has been another busy year for the Committee, with the continuing challenges brought by Covid 19 ever present. This report provides a summary of the activity of the Committee and work that has been undertaken to ensure Bromley maintains its position as one of the best boroughs to raise a family, delivering good services and support to those that need us most.

Scrutiny

The Committee has a statutory responsibility to review annual reports of key services. In the previous committee period it was decided that, to provide more 'real time' information, 6 monthly reports should be introduced. This Committee session therefore reviewed several midterm reports – private fostering; corporate parenting; adoption; and the virtual school.

We also continued to ensure the voices of our young people were heard, in a way that is suitable for them. The Vice Chair Cllr Ellis and I, supported by officers, met with the Bromley Youth Council (BYC) and our Living in Care Council (LiNCC) prior to committee meetings to discuss items of interest to them – such as the work of the Youth Offending Service and the Virtual School. This provided valuable insight into how they viewed reports and services and they asked some very challenging questions! These were shared with other members of the committee so they could take our young peoples views into their considerations.

As part of our regular scrutiny reports we also reviewed the work of the Bromley Safeguarding Children's Partnership (BSCP). It was pleasing to note that attendance of the Board meetings had improved, supporting cross partnership working.

Our role as corporate parents

From the outset Members stressed that the needs of the children for whom Members had Corporate Parenting responsibility had to be at the forefront of Member's thinking when decisions were being taken.

Given the importance of this, it's necessary to give extra time to discussion when needed. Therefore the Committee held an additional session with the Head of Children Looked After and Care Leavers to provide Members of the Committee with an informal briefing around the Education, Training and Employment (ETE) programme. This provided Members the opportunity to discuss this in more detail and learn how the council is providing support in this area.

Ofsted

During this Committee session, Ofsted conducted a focused visit on children in care. I was delighted that Bromley received a very positive letter from Ofsted following this visit. In the letter Ofsted had confirmed that Members, Officers and Partners were doing all they could to help young people reach their full potential.

Virtual school

The virtual school was one of the reports Cllr Ellis and I discussed with representatives from Bromley Youth Council (BYC) and the Living in Care Council (LinCC) prior to the PDS meeting. The LinCC raised questions seeking updates on the four challenges for 2020/21 whilst BYC had asked about support for attendance. Questions were also raised around support for the mental health of young people in Care in the light of COVID and how pupil premium was being spent to support the young people. These provide a good steer on their priorities which must always be on our minds.

Families

The Committee was pleased to see proactive outreach to families in the borough to promote activities and services. The Early Intervention and Family Support Service Baby and Toddler Festival as well as a Fun Day in Mottingham are good examples of this. The Committee welcomed this and requested future events be advertised across all the Council's social media channels.

Financial support for families

The Committee looked at how families were being supported during this challenging period. We were pleased that the Housing and Education departments were aligned and worked in partnership to support families through the Covid Local Support Grant. In total, Bromley received £709,516.58 for the period 21 June to 30 September 2021. All of the funding has been spent supporting children and families, including the families of 8,500 children with supermarket vouchers over the summer holiday period. Support is also available through the Welfare Fund.

The Committee received updates from the Portfolio Holder on funding that had been received for children holiday programmes. There was a high take up of places with most attendees being children in receipt of free school meals.

Tackling domestic abuse

The Committee was extremely supportive of this service, specifically the partnership work with the MET to encourage victims to come forward and access services and extending Bromley's contract with Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid.

SEND

Our SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) services are crucial. I was pleased to be able to visit the SEND Matters pop up shop in the Glades to reach out to families and children to show what support and services are available. Members were pleased to learn that further pop-up shops would be arranged for Primary and Secondary schools. Getting feedback from families that use the service is crucial for continuous improvement and to provide an excellent service.

Virtual reality demonstration

Following Member interest in the work the council was doing using virtual reality headsets, the Assistant Director for Specialist Services was asked to host a separate session for Members. The headsets are used for a variety of areas such as working with parents to help them see things from the child's perspective; work with carers (including foster carers, adopters, and special guardians), assessments and post order support and to reduce

placement breakdown. It was great for Members to experience this technology and the Committee looks forward to a future update on this work.

Education

School places

The Local Authority has an important role to ensure that there are enough school places for all children in the borough. The school places planning group met to assess the current situation and projection in very granular detail, including at ward boundary levels. The group agreed actions to ensure Bromley continues its good record of a high proportion of children getting one of their preferred choices.

As part of this work the Committee scrutinised two proposals for new schools – Harris Kentwood (Secondary school) and a new school in the borough for Bromley children with SEND. The need for these two new schools is established by the Department for Education and supported by the data reviewed by the school places planning committee.

With 97% of schools in the Borough being rated by Ofsted as either ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ it is not surprising that we are seeing an increase in demand for school places in the Borough. The committee should continue to scrutinise school place planning, so that Bromley continues to perform well in terms of placing children in their preferred places.

Support for mental health

The Committee recognised the impact of successive lockdowns on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people over the past two years. We therefore welcomed the significant additional resources put into both CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and Bromley Y with the local children’s mental health system expanded by a third in the last three years.

The Committee heard from Bromley Y, who have been central to leading on this early intervention work and the delivery of a mental health and wellbeing toolkit for schools which had been very well received.

The Committee did note that the situation was challenging and requested to be kept updated. The Committee also endorsed the approach from the Local Authority that early intervention and early identification of wellbeing needs was identified as a key ongoing priority.

Covid-19

In relation to Covid, many of the restrictions had been lifted and the requirements for schools had changed. Schools were now voluntarily informing Public Health of instances of significant outbreaks of infection in schools. Where these cases came to the attention of the Local Authority relevant Ward Councillors were informed.

The Committee continued to scrutinise the support available to ensure families were getting what they needed whether it be home learning packs, IT equipment, or advice and guidance.

Budget

There remain significant pressures in the budget. Social care placement is a particular area of fluctuation with expenditure fluctuating depending on the specific needs of individual

children. It is often difficult to predict specific levels of need, and this impacted on the budget.

SEN Transport remains an area of focus. Although Members noticed that authorities across London, indeed nationally, were experiencing the same pressures with SEN Transport, it needs to be kept high on the agenda. The cost pressures around SEN transport were also discussed further during the budget subcommittee, chaired by Cllr Ellis. The Sub-Committee noted that a Transport Group had been established to look at a range of options, such as travel training, personalised budgets, and options around the delivery of the in-house fleet.

0-25 Progress Report

The Committee welcomed the integrated 0 – 25 service offer for children and young people with SEND. I was very pleased to attend the transition event, a joint venture between the SEN and Adults Teams.

Members recommended the service develop a link with local businesses, who would be interested in supporting this work. As Chair I suggested that future reports on the 0-25 Project be considered at a joint meeting of the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee and the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee.

New Director

The Committee took time to recognise the valuable impact and contribution that Janet Bailey had made as Director for Children, Education and Families as she prepared to leave the Local Authority. It was a real pleasure to work with her – Janet is a passionate advocate for our children and young people and will be missed.

We have since welcomed Richard Baldwin, as the new Director of Children's Services.

Final comments

The Committee has worked to deliver scrutiny in a timely manner, to ensure first class services are being delivered to those that need it. We have also looked to the future to ensure the authority is set up for success - whether that be ensuring enough school places for the boroughs children or flexing services to meet the rise in demand for health services due to the pandemic.

Our children and young people and their needs should always be front of centre in our decision-making process.

Councillor Nicky Dykes
Chairman, Children, Education and Families PDS Committee

7. Report from Environment and Community Services PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. William Harmer

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Robert McIlveen

Following on from a challenging year under Covid, the committee resumed its work during the municipal year with regular packed agendas and high levels of interest from both committee members and members of the public. As always I would like to thank our clerk Mr. Wood and the team who ensure our meetings are kept running smoothly.

As always, I would also like to thank:

- Our committee members whose questioning and contributions have shaped and improved the proposals coming through the committee;
- The Director of Environment and Community Services, Mr. Colin Brand, and his team for their contributions both to the reports and to the meetings;
- Cllr Huntingdon-Thresher for his courteous and knowledgeable responses to the large number of committee questions as Portfolio Holder;
- Our partners who help us deliver our services all of whom participated in different committee meetings during the year; and
- The members of the public who in asking their own questions supported the committee in holding the Executive to account and demonstrated a clear passion for enhancing the neighbourhoods in which they live.

This year marked a bounce back after a difficult year under Covid. The Committee were focussed on ensuring the return to normality of many of the key service items but also took time to develop and scrutinise policy across a host of key areas outlined below. We also had all the major suppliers of services visit the committee where their performance and plans were closely scrutinised.

Minutes of all meetings are available on the Council website for those who are interested.

Key PDS Achievements 21/22

1



A new Open Spaces Strategy: The Borough's fantastic parks and open spaces are repeatedly highlighted by residents as one of the key things loved about the Borough. The 10-year strategy attracted a huge amount of public interest and following extensive feedback was significantly edited before being finally released.

2

A Net Zero Council: The Committee scrutinised and enhanced the Borough's commitment and progress to be a carbon neutral council by 2029. This was well received by members. On top of this we pushed our suppliers to match our net zero ambitions and towards the end of the year we scrutinised the Council's exciting tree planting programme that will see 5000 new trees planted across the Borough and the implementation of a new electric charging strategy.

2

Borough Wide Road Safety and Active Travel improvements The Committee scrutinised a series of improvements on crash cluster sites and schemes designed to improve road safety across the Borough. This included a review of the Crofton Road Cycle Scheme, changes to Albermarle Road and a review of our temporary school streets.

Cllr Will Harmer
Chairman, Environment and Community Services PDS Committee

8. Report from Public Protection and Enforcement PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr David Cartwright QFSM

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Colin Hitchins

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 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 authorisations 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 co-ordinated 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 unauthorised 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

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 scrutinise 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 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://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?Ild=71108&PlanId=0&Opt=3#A171669>

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 (HVLP).

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.

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				-11%	●
	Total Sexual Offences	494	543	49	10%	●
	Knife Crime Offences	216	181	-35	-16%	●
	Gun Crime Offences	52	28	-24	-46%	●
	Race Hate Crime offences	518	612	94	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%	●
	Miscellaneous Data	21385	22415	1030	5%	●
	Total Notifiable Offences	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					
	Agrees Police listen to concerns	54%	47%		-7%	●
	Agree Police can be relied upon to be there when needed	73%	69%		-4%	●
	Agree Police treat all fairly	67%	61%		-6%	●
	Agree Police deal with things that matter to this community	72%	66%		-6%	●
	Knows how to contact Ward Officer	67%	64%		-3%	●
	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

"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.

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**CCouncillor David Cartwright QFSM
Public Protection & Enforcement PDS Chairman**

9. Report from Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr Yvonne Bear

Vice-Chairman: Cllr Gary Stevens

The Committee met six times this municipal year, including one special meeting. Each meeting has scrutinised the reports for decision by the Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Holder and considered policy development for key areas across the portfolio.

The municipal year has been a very busy one for the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee, with many important policy developments and strategic initiatives coming forward for scrutiny.

Some of the most important proposals we have helped shape have included:

- The building of the council's first social housing in decades. The committee has overseen delivery of over 100 socially rented units built on Council owned land at Burnt Ash Lane Plaistow, the former Annerley Town Hall Car Park, Bushel Way Chislehurst and York Rise Orpington with the first 3 of these now nearing completion. In addition, new contracts with Beehive and Orchard and Shipman have enabled more homes to be acquired to address demand for affordable housing.
- Distribution of millions of pounds of grants to businesses to help them recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic.
- The launch of the Council's first Economic Development Strategy which seeks to understand the dynamics of the local economy and explore how best to support its future growth for the prosperity of the borough and its residents. This strategy also encompasses a digital infrastructure strategy which seeks to rapidly ramp up the rollout of full fibre broadband and 5G mobile connectivity across the borough, critical both for business and individuals who are now increasingly working from home. Big improvements have been seen over the last year as a result of the increased focus.
- Key investment in the Boroughs cultural assets. The biggest projects reviewed include the renovation of Crystal Palace Park, a major initiative which will seek to restore the key assets in the Park back into full use including the dinosaurs and subway, and the provision of a new library in West Wickham which will also come with some further social housing.
- Extensive enhancements in planning policies, including the creation of a conservation area in Shortlands, numerous Article 4 Directions including one which will require all HMO conversions in the Borough to require planning permission and the launch of the Orpington Supplementary Planning Guidelines which outlines a vision for how Orpington can be optimally and sympathetically developed in the future.

In addition, the Committee scrutinised the portfolio budget and raised concerns about the continually rising cost pressures on housing.

The Committee also analysed the contract register throughout the year, challenging on specific contracts to ensure that they are being managed effectively and there is suitable foresight of where new contracts are required. Similarly, it considered the Risk

Register on a regular basis, highlighting potential new risks and challenging identified impacts.

Regular thematic sessions have been introduced which enable a deep dive into specific aspects of the Portfolio. Extremely informative presentations have been made to members on the state of the local economy, homelessness and the performance of the housing team in addressing demand for accommodation, challenges within the planning department, and key culture, leisure and town centre regeneration projects. These presentations have been enhanced by external attendees from MyTime, GLL and the major local Housing Associations.

I would like to thank all the Members of the Committee for their diligence and hard work throughout the year. A lot of work has been carried out, which has covered a very broad range of subjects. I would also like to thank officers for their efforts in bringing forward clear and informative reports and presentations which have enabled members to make properly informed recommendations about the important work carried out in this portfolio.

Councillor Yvonne Bear
Chairman, Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee