

# **PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 14 November 2023

## **Present:**

Councillor Kim Botting FRSA (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)  
Councillors Kathy Bance MBE, Sophie Dunbar, Josh King,  
Alexa Michael, Keith Onslow, Harry Stranger and  
Thomas Turrell

Sharon Baldwin, Hannah Dumbrell and Nathan Ward

## **Also Present:**

Chris Line, Emily Wren and Councillor Angela Page  
(Change, Grow, Live)

Councillor Angela Page (Portfolio Holder)

## **STANDARD ITEMS**

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Councillor David Cartwright and Councillor Keith Onslow attended as substitute.

Apologies were received from Councillor Sam Webber.

It was noted that Ermond Berisha from Bromley Youth Council was standing down from Bromley Youth Council and he was replaced on the night by Nathan Ward.

The Chairman expressed her gratitude for all of the hard work that had been undertaken for the Council by the late Councillor Andrew Lee. She said that the PPE PDS Committee had been Councillor Lee's favourite committee. The Committee observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT PDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 12th SEPTEMBER 2023**

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Public Protection and Enforcement PDS Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.**

**4 QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

No questions were received.

**5 QUESTIONS FOR THE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

No questions had been received for the Portfolio Holder.

**6 UPDATE FROM CHANGE, GROW, LIVE**

Emily Wren, the Service Manager for Change, Grow, Live (CGL) attended to provide an update to the Committee. She explained the vision, mission, and values of the organisation and that CGL had been operating in the Borough for 12 years. CGL aimed to provide a holistic solution for individuals, based on their consent and on their personal aims and objectives. CGL was an opiate substitute prescribing service and also provided a needle exchange provision service. Additionally, they ran alcohol community based services and supported people of all ages. The Service aimed to provide same day appointments if possible, otherwise, by telephone the following day.

The Service Manager explained the signs to look out for which could indicate an opiate overdose. She said that before the administration of any medication, the first thing to do would be to check for any airway obstructions and dial 999, and then to administer Naloxone. She explained how Naloxone should be administered. Two needles and instructions were provided with each kit. There would be no adverse effects on the individual if the drug was administered in error. The Service Manager then explained how to use the nasal spray version, which was Nyxoid. This was a nasal spray that was administered directly into someone's nostril. These drugs displaced the opiates from the receptors in the brain for a period of 20 minutes, which would hopefully be enough time for an ambulance to arrive and for a person's life to be saved.

A Member enquired as to what methods were used to promote/advertise the services of Change, Grow, Live, as it was obviously a very valuable service, but the Member said that she not aware of the name change. The Service Manager responded and said that the re-branding of the Service to Change, Grow, Live (from Bromley Drug and Alcohol Service) had occurred about a year ago. CGL promoted their services at GP practices, community centres, public houses, social media, hospitals and various events such as appearing at tonight's committee meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Service Manager for her presentation.

**RESOLVED that the presentation from CGL be noted..**

**7 LONDON FIRE BRIGADE--ANNUAL UPDATE--NEW FIRE SAFETY PLAN**

The Bromley Fire Commander, (Chris Line) attended to provide an update from the London Fire Brigade.

The LFB Community Risk Management Plan had been launched on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. This was a statutory requirement and set out priorities for the whole of London. The Fire Commander had developed a Bromley Borough Risk Management Plan that focussed on the risks and needs of the Bromley Borough. The London Wide Plan was geared more for Central London.

The Fire Commander stated that the LFB were providing services or strategies in six key areas which were:

- Prevention
- Protection
- Response
- Engagement
- Preparedness
- Recovery

The Prevention Strategy would modernise the service, and give ease of access to online services to a wide audience. If a vulnerable person was notified to the Fire Service by partner agencies, then that individual would receive a visit from the Service within four hours. The next tier of individuals who were designated as being at relatively elevated risk, would be visited within seven days. Advice would be provided and fire alarms installed. It was anticipated that medium risk residents would use online tools. LFB provided various engagement services such as 'Driven by Consequences', where the dangers posed by drink driving, speeding and environmental factors would be highlighted. The LFB Borough Commander highlighted the work that was being undertaken with both the Bromley Mentoring Scheme and with the Fire Cadets. A Member stated that 'Driven by Consequences' should be rolled out to as many schools in the Borough as possible.

The Protection Strategy was prioritised by levels of risk, by directing resources to the highest risk premises—it aimed to:

- Improve information and support for premises owners
- Improve accessibility of information with digital and virtual tools
- Advise on planning and building regulations consultations
- Influence industry standards
- Develop LFB's role in environmental protection.

It was noted that LFB had a statutory duty to support the new fire safety legislation. The Committee was informed that there was now a new high rise building data portal, where landlords who were responsible for high rise buildings were required to provide any information regarding fire safety defects on the portal. LFB would endeavour as far as possible to lobby to improve industry standards in this regard.

In terms of response times, the Committee was briefed that the first response time was 6 minutes, followed by a second fire engine within 8 minutes. A consultation was taking place regarding the attendance response to automatic fire alarms, which in many cases was not an effective use of LFB's time and resources. The Fire Commander said that the Fire Service was keen to improve community engagement whenever possible. To this end, LFB would attend various community events and open days and welcomed feedback from the public, as well as endeavouring to provide reassurance to communities.

With respect to Prepare and Recovery Strategies, there was a need to prepare for flooding and very hot weather, with its associated likelihood of increased fire risk. It was the desire of the Fire Service that they did what they could to support families and communities who had suffered loss after either flooding or fire.

The Fire Commander said that he was keen that the Service would do the right things and that it needed to be accountable. He explained that there were various means by which the Fire Service could be held accountable for its activities and targets, including attending meetings like the Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee, where the Fire Service could be scrutinised. There was also the Safer Bromley Partnership. He briefed the Committee that the London Fire Brigade Service's corporate KPI's were published on the central LFB data store. This was part of the London Safety Plan. The Fire Commander said that community feedback was welcomed.

There was a discussion concerning whether or not sprinkler systems were compulsory in high rise blocks and in schools.

*(Post Meeting Note):*

**Sprinklers in Blocks of Flats:**

*Currently, there is no requirement for existing buildings (that is, those built before 2007) to fit sprinklers.*

*In May 2020, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities published amendments to the Statutory Guidance in Approved Document B (fire safety) volume 1, to state that sprinkler systems should be fitted throughout blocks of flats with a top storey more than 11m above ground level. In the majority of cases, therefore, sprinkler protection will be necessary in any newly formed accommodation that falls above the new 11m trigger height.*

There was an enquiry about the all-terrain vehicle, and if there was a backup vehicle when it was being maintained or repaired. The Fire Commander responded that this was not the only piece of equipment that the fire brigade could use in difficult terrain. They had other equipment that they could use and had the benefit of 'mutual aid' if required. It was noted that LFB were also trialling lightweight protective equipment. The Portfolio Holder thanked the Fire Commander for his input and support in the Bromley Mentoring Programme. Members looked forward to a further update from LFB in 2024.

**RESOLVED that the LFB update be noted.**

## **HOLDING THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO ACCOUNT**

### **8 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE**

The Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement, Councillor Angela Page, provided a verbal update to the Committee.

She said that in September she had attended a community scam event that had been held in Bromley High Street in conjunction with Council officers and Barclays Bank; this was generally regarded as a very successful event. Also in September, she had chaired a meeting of the Bromley Mentoring Network where it was good to meet with Mentors. The Portfolio Holder had taken up the opportunity for a 'police ride along' which she highly recommended to other Members. The Portfolio Holder had attended the Safer Neighbourhood Crime Summit which was also a very successful and well attended event.

The Portfolio Holder noted the sterling work undertaken by the Council's CCTV Room operators. This work had been acknowledged by the police who had awarded a certificate of excellence to one of the operators for his work in going above and beyond duty in helping to prevent and resolve crime.

A Member raised the issue of the new speed gun, and hoped that it would be put to beneficial effect. The Portfolio Holder assured the Member that Superintendent Baldock was rolling out training, and would ensure that the speed gun was used on a regular basis. Hate Crime was mentioned and it was clarified that this was the remit of the Safer Bromley Partnership Board.

**RESOLVED that the update from the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement be noted.**

#### **a BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24**

##### **FSD23069**

Members noted that in essence there was no change from the previous report and that the budget was balanced.

**RESOLVED that the Budget Monitoring Report be noted and that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the 2023/24 revenue**

**budget monitoring position for the Public Protection and Enforcement Services Portfolio.**

**b PUBLIC PROTECTION PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORT**

**ES20311**

The report was provided to present the committee with the PP&E Performance Overview indicators pertaining to the Portfolio Plan for 2023/24. The Committee noted the key performance indicators.

**RESOLVED that the Committee note the report and that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the outcomes, aims and performance measures set out in the draft 2023/24 Public Protection and Enforcement Portfolio Plan.**

**10 INFORMATION ITEM: PUBLIC PROTECTION PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW APPENDIX**

The data pertaining to the Public Protection and Enforcement performance overview indicators had been published as an information briefing. No questions regarding the indicators were raised on the night.

**RESOLVED that the Public Protection and Enforcement Performance Overview Information Briefing be noted.**

**11 SAFER BROMLEY PARTNERSHIP - MEMBER UPDATE**

A Member enquired about the acquisition of the speed gun, and asked what training was being provided to police officers. It was noted that this would require an update from Superintendent Luke Baldock.

A Member enquired as to why the robbery of school children was higher in Bromley than in neighbouring boroughs such as Croydon. The Assistant Director responded that there was probably a variety of reasons, one of them could be that Bromley was an affluent borough, but more information would be required from Superintendent Baldock. It was noted that a task and finish group would be set up in January to deal with shoplifting and it was asked if there would be representatives from retailers on the task and finish group and the response to this was affirmative. A Member asked what the aims would be in terms of dealing with shoplifters who were prolific drug users. Would there be some form of referral service set up? She expressed the view that it would be of little use fining them, as they would just go out and steal more to pay the fines. The Assistant Director suggested that the matters raised (requiring a police response) should be noted and dealt with as matters arising to be addressed at the next meeting.

Details of bladed articles placed in the knife amnesty bins were noted.

A Member commented on robberies and said that more detail was required and that it would be useful to have details that were ward specific. Similarly, with respect to violent incidents, it was requested that more detail was required, as to where these incidents were occurring.

The matter of low level hate crime as a police priority was raised by a Member. It was acknowledged that hate crime including Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia were serious issues. Concern was expressed by a Member, however, that low level hate crime where people were effectively being easily offended by things other people said, was being over emphasised and should not take up a significant allocation of police resource. The Members felt that some of this police activity could be redirected towards issues such as the rise in shoplifting. He felt that a statement from the police regarding this would be helpful. The Assistant Director, in response, explained that officers were working and reviewing a new draft Safer Bromley Partnership Strategy. The existing Strategy would end in March 2024. The Safer Bromley Partnership had to decide what the priorities would be for the Borough over the next three to four years. An update regarding this would be provided to the Committee for scrutiny in January 2024. The Portfolio Holder pointed out that as well as priorities being determined by the Safer Bromley Partnership, there were certain priorities that were dictated by MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime). So in a sense there was a double setting of priorities.

**RESOLVED that the Committee note the Safer Bromley Partnership update report.**

**12 HOUSES OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) ADDITIONAL LICENSING AND PRIVATE SECTOR LICENSING ASSESSMENT – MEMBER UPDATE**

**ES20331**

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee on the findings of the open source data assessment, to determine whether the current policies and processes with regard to houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) were adequate to ensure that private rented sector tenants and the wider Bromley community were sufficiently protected.

It was noted that the mandatory housing licencing scheme for HMOs was already operative. It was further noted that following a comprehensive review, it was found that Bromley did not meet the statutory test for the introduction of additional HMO licencing or private rented sector selective licencing schemes. Reference was made to a table in section 4.5 of the report showing the breakdown of reports and complaints made by the public regarding HMOs. It was confirmed that this related to all HMOs and not just to those requiring a mandatory licence.

The report noted that between April 2022 and March 2023, the Public Protection Division had received 111 complaints about privately rented properties. A Member asked if this relatively low number was because of the

blanket Article 4 Direction that had been adopted by the Council. The Head of Environmental Health and Licensing responded that there were a number of tools that the Council could use with respect to HMOs (as outlined in the report) and so it was not appropriate to link the low number of complaints directly to the Article 4 Directive.

A Member asked why there were 350 homes in the Borough that were empty and not paying Council Tax and what could be done about this. The Head of Environmental Health and Licensing answered that it was likely that some were going through Probate and some would be overseas investment properties. It was suggested that the question be referred to Housing Services for a response.

**RESOLVED that Members note that Bromley did not meet the statutory test for the introduction of additional HMO Licensing or Private Rented Sector Selective Licensing schemes.**

### **13 FLY TIPPING ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

#### **ES20317**

The report was presented to the Committee to update them concerning actions that had been undertaken by Neighbourhood Management since the last annual Fly Tipping Action Plan Update. The Committee was informed that a trial had recently taken place at Bromley Magistrates Court. The defendant was found guilty, fined and his vehicle sold at auction. The vehicle sold for £3.5k at auction, and this money would be credited to the Council in due course. Members discussed the proposed levels of fines for different fly-tipping offences.

**RESOLVED that the Committee note the report and that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the updated fixed penalty amounts.**

### **14 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT CONTRACTS REGISTER REPORT**

#### **ES20310**

Members noted the report regarding the PP&E Contracts Register. The report presented an extract from the September 2023 Contracts Register. This was based on data as at 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and which had been presented to the ER&C Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**RESOLVED that the PP&E Contracts Register Report be noted.**

#### **a INFORMATION ITEM: PART 1 CONTRACTS DATABASE UPDATE**

The data extract pertaining to the PP&E Contracts Register had been presented as a link to an information briefing.



**RESOLVED that the Contracts Database Information Briefing (Part 1) be noted.**

**15 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT RISK REGISTER**

**ES20313**

The report was presented so that the Public Protection and Enforcement PDS Committee could scrutinise the Public Protection and Enforcement Risk Register. There were no significant changes to the Risk Register since the report was presented previously. However, it was noted that the risk with respect to food safety inspections had improved, and so had been re-rated from Red to Amber.

**RESOLVED that the Public Protection and Enforcement Risk Register be noted.**

**16 WORK PROGRAMME**

**CSD23141**

The Committee was presented with the Work Programme for their information and in order to provide the Committee with the opportunity to make any suggestions for modifications to the Work Programme as may be considered appropriate.

**RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted.**

**17 PART 2 (Confidential) Agenda**

The Chairman moved that the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the items of business listed below, as it was likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present, there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information.

**18 PART 2 CONTRACTS DATABASE EXTRACT**

The Part 2 (confidential) database extract had been emailed to committee members directly prior to the meeting.

**RESOLVED that the Part 2 Contracts Database Extract be noted.**

The Meeting ended at 8.54 pm

Chairman