

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on **MONDAY, 7TH OCTOBER, 2024** at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT

Councillors Awale Olad (Chair), Sharon Hardwick, Matthew Kirk, Rishi Madlani and Stephen Stark

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ABSENT

Councillors Nina De Ayala Parker and Izzy Lenga

ALSO PRESENT

Councillors Pat Callaghan (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities) and Linda Chung(remote attendance)

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Izzy Lenga who was substituted by Councillor Liam Martin-Lane.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF STATUTORY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, COMPULSORY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND VOLUNTARY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

There were none.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

The Chair announced that the meeting was broadcast live by the Council to the Internet and could be viewed on the website for six months after the meeting. After that time, webcasts were archived and could be made available on DVD upon request. Those who were seated in the room or participated via Teams were deemed to have consented to their contributions being recorded and broadcast and

to the use of those sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes.

Anniversary of 7th October terrorist attack

A Committee member commented that today marked the anniversary of the terrorist attacks in Israel, with hostages still being held in Gaza as well as many people suffering as a result of the ongoing conflict asking that it was appropriate that this be noted by the Committee. The Committee agreed to note this.

Variation of order of business

In accordance with paragraph 10 of the Constitution, Committee Procedure rules, the Chair proposed and the Committee agreed to vary the order of reports on the agenda and take the Cabinet Member's annual report with items 7 and 8 (State of the Borough and New Met for London and Camden's Local Action Plan), as the item were linked to Cabinet member's portfolio.

4. DEPUTATIONS (IF ANY)

The Chair advised that two deputation requests had been received from Save the London Motorcycling Group and a group of Fleet Road residents, but neither had been accepted for this meeting.

The Save the London Motorcycling Group deputation had not been accepted as nothing had changed with regards to their request at the previous meeting in July.

The Fleet Road residents' deputation related to the Council's plans and traffic orders on Fleet Road pertaining to the south end green streaterly. The Council's Transport Strategy will be considered at the November meeting and it would be more appropriate to consider the deputation then subject to it being re-submitted.

5. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There was none.

6. MINUTES

A Committee member informed members that he had received a response to issues raised by a disabled resident in Hampstead Town Ward but he and the resident felt that the response was lacking and does not deal with the issues raised. The member

requested that officers meet with the resident and walk the areas to look at the issues and felt that this needed to be included on a future agenda of the Committee.

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meetings held on 15th July 2024 be signed as an accurate record.

7. STATE OF THE BOROUGH

Please see item 10 for discussion on this item.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

8. NEW MET FOR LONDON AND CAMDEN'S LOCAL ACTION PLAN

Please see item 10 for discussion on this item.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

9. FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

Consideration was given to the Metropolitan Police report on Facial Recognition Technology.

In response to questions, Detective Chief Inspector Jamie Townsend (Metropolitan Police) and James Bottomley, Head of Oversight and Performance (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), made the following points:

- With regards to the 89% positive identification rate, this was taken from an Independent Study of the National Physical Laboratory and was in relation to the demographic population. This was independently reported and available for the public to read.
- There was also a second figure referred to as the false positive rate which looked at how often the technology would get the facial recognition wrong, the figure provided was one in every 6,000 which highlighted that a high degree of accuracy was involved.
- The facial recognition technology used by the police was different to that used by commercial establishments such as shops and supermarkets. The Police system identified a face and biometrically templated the face against a

watchlist. The system used by commercial enterprises were used for business purposes for example to determine groups of people purchasing certain products.

- The facial recognition technology system was tested against the public sector equality duty to determine the performance of the algorithm, the results showed that the system was very accurate.
- A report would be published in January which would provide a breakdown of people arrested by race, age and gender due to facial recognition technology.
- The police had started to collect the data around gender, perceived gender, age and ethnicity this would be available later in the year.
- With regards to public perception, the public perception surveys had indicated that 60% of the people surveyed trusted the police to use facial recognition responsibly.
- A way of carrying the public along, involved educating the public on the effectiveness of the technology in a way they understood. Most in the business community where hugely in favour of the Police using the technology.
- It was also about the Police being more proactive in getting the message across and signposting people to where the available information on facial recognition technology was.
- Chief Superintendent Andy Carter, Police Borough Commander invited Members to attend any borough within London where the Police were using the technology to see how it operated and when next used in Camden would notify members so they could see how it was used and the resultant outcome
- In all the ways the Police used the live facial recognition (LFR) it was subject to the same academic oversight.
- The only people targeted where criminals on the Police watchlist.
- Where there was a false alert, and a person was inaccurately identified, the Police systems would keep the image for 31 days to determine the reason for the error and after that the image would be destroyed.
- Where an individual was scanned via LFR and not on the Police watchlist, the whole process of scanning the image and checking against the watchlist and deleting the image was done in seconds.
- LFR had a positive impact on lots of communities and groups, there were 373 arrests this year as a result of LFR of which included 34 sex offenders. It was not targeting any communities.
- The police watchlist was made up of people that were wanted for offences.
- The independent scientific evidence had indicated that the LFR technology was not flawed.
- The community engagement feedback on the ground, portrayed a very different positive picture of the use of LFR than that provided by anecdotal information from the neighbouring boroughs of Islington and Newham.
- The Police were regulated in the way LFR was used, the use by the Police had been tested at 2 recent court cases where it was ruled that there was ample sufficient law for it to be used. There was oversight of the Police use of this technology and policies were in place to regulate its use.

- Police officers could not comment on how it was used by other organisations as the detailed knowledge of how it was used was not known.
- The accuracy of the technology over time had improved and would continue to improve.
- The performance stats were on the facial recognition website on-line providing stats back to 2022. The system was not used during Covid so there was no information for this period.

Members requested that the Police let them know when next the LFR technology would be used in Camden or a nearby neighbouring borough so that they could attend to witness its operation.

All Members / Detective Chief Inspector Jamie Townsend

The Committee thanked the Police Officers for attending the meeting and their response to questions.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

10. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES

Consideration was given to the annual report of the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities., items 7 and 8 (State of the Borough and New Met for London and Camden's Local Action Plan),

In response to questions, Councillor Pat Callaghan (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities) Jamie Akinola (Director of Public Safety) Pat Coulson (Community Safety Manager), Shaheda Rahman (Community Safety Manager), Chief Superintendent Andy Carter and Chief Inspector Nicholas Hackett-Peacock (Metropolitan Police), made the following points:

- With regards to the impact of abstraction of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, a direct impact of the attacks in Israel 12 months ago had been to focus Policing on those affected communities and protests in London.
- There were a lot of police officers locally that were public order trained to the level that enabled them to be deployed to Central London to deal with the protests.
- It had been challenging for the police to constantly find the balance between providing and supporting what was needed locally and the protests in Central London. However, as a reassurance abstractions were monitored very closely.

- Deploying local Police officers from local jobs to Central London because of their skill set was also part of their career development which was also a factor to consider.
- It had been a challenge for the police to keep the presence locally so in order to keep local officers on their wards, measures such as extended 12-hour duties had been adopted for response officers. Local ward officers were taken away from their locations as a last resort and these did have to be managed with other commitments.
- Shoplifting had increased dramatically with a number of venues that were easy pickings for thieves and continued to be targeted. The Police were focussed on working with businesses and retail colleagues to tackle crime within the retail community and to prevent opportunities for thefts to take place in those environments.
- The Police had recently conducted an operation investigating shoplifting called operation Atlanta in the Euston Town area and realised that a few people were responsible for the disproportionate amount of shoplifting within the Euston Town Centre footprint.
- The Police were proactively reaching out to as many retailers as possible to locate offences that might be linked to the individuals concerned so that when they were arrested there was a better chance of there being a custodial sentence to remove the problem from the streets once and for all.
- Further intelligence work was being conducted to piece together the various connections linking the key individuals and targeting the bigger picture where items were being stolen to order with positive results already being seen with this.
- The Police were also looking to obtain further funding from the Proceeds of Crime Act to assist with tackling and focussing on shoplifting in the borough.
- The Council's Community Safety Team was also engaging with business improvement districts and other businesses and stakeholder groups to look at what any future business crime prevention service might look like, which included focussing and looking at ways to further develop opportunities for businesses to share information, particularly, around offenders, and how that data was fed back into the relevant Council services and the Police to support any enhanced enforcement activities going forward.
- With regards to how effective the Police working in partnership with other organisations were in tackling the serial crime wave on Tottenham Court Road and the surrounding areas, from the Police perspective it was a difficult environment. More intelligence and more information was needed about

where the stolen property was going which could be acted on to cut out the market and stop stolen goods from being sold this would stop the thefts. Where crime and anti-social behaviour was found the police would act and intervene.

- From the Community Safety and Council perspective it was difficult to say how effective the partnership was, however, there was more that could be done in partnership with the police in terms of business crime reduction partnerships. The emphasis in best practice business crime prevention partnerships had shifted in recent years from radio alerting enforcement agencies to acquiring as much intelligence as possible and proactively taking action.
- Once the encampment site on Tottenham Court Road was cleared it was hoped that the kitchen that catered for homeless people would serve as a source of employment in the area and reduce some of the issues in the area.
- In terms of increasing the funding to employ more Community Safety Officers to assist the police, the Council would very much like to employ more Community Safety Enforcement Officers to add to the 22 currently employed, and the Council would continue to lobby for more. However, resources and budgets were limited and needed to be managed carefully.
- The Community Safety team would take on board the view coming back from the Committee that engagement with local businesses, business improvement districts and stakeholders needed to increase as well as clarifying to stakeholders what they needed to do.
- Police officers were often deployed on their own or in a pair, depending on risk assessments of patrolling an area there could be more in a group.
- With regards to supporting the local community to have a police base at the former West Hampstead Police Station, the Met Police had an accommodation strategy that involved maximising the accommodation it had and looking for opportunities in the local community to base police officers close to the community where they served. This involved improving the accommodation it already had, there were not any plans to invest in the former West Hampstead Police Station.
- In terms of joined up working with the police, joint patrols with Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Community Safety Enforcement Officers (CSEOs) worked really well. The visibility of uniformed police and local authority presence around the wards seemed to be paying off particularly with new police officers coming in learning more about the local community from CSEOs.

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- The Council had also recently commissioned a broad ranging review into antisocial behaviour involving the newly appointed Cabinet Adviser on Resident Engagement on Anti-social Behaviour and Community Safety, working with the Cabinet Member for Community Safety looking at how the Council engaged with local residents and what recommendations and options could be made with regards to communication going forward.
- With regards to Right Care Right Person (RCRP) impact on residents having to wait for the right agency to attend to deal with a problem, if it were a medical emergency the police would still need to wait for the ambulance service to arrive, the complaint that this was impacting residents had not appeared to be raised as a common issue but this could be fed back to determine if it was a common occurrence.
- Where there were any problems with RCRP it was important that this was fed back to the Local Ward Team which would then be fed back to the Met Command Control who managed the Call Centres and created the initial risk assessment and deployment plan.
- With regards to the diversity and number of female officers on Central North Police workforce in April 2024 there were 476 female officers out of a total of 1351 which was 35.3%. Female officers involved in frontline policing in April 2023 made up 34.9% of the workforce and in April 2024 35.2%.
- In comparison Central East BCU which was in Hackney and Tower Hamlets had 33.9% female officers as a percentage of its workforce in April 2023 and 2024.
- With regards to Black, Asian and Multiple ethnic heritage there had been a slight drop in the number of officers from 277 in April 2022 to 266 in April 2024.
- In relation to the senior leadership team and breakdown by gender, there were 6 Superintendents 2 of which were female and 4 male officers of the 13 Chief Inspectors and Detective Chief Inspectors, 5 were female. Central North Borough Command Unit (BCU).
- With regards to recruitment of ethnic minorities to the Police force, there had been dedicated recruitment teams locally that ran different programmes attended different establishments in an attempt to recruit candidates, but it had been a struggle and challenge to retain people.
- The job market in London was a factor why people preferred not to stay in policing as well as people not seeing policing as a vocation anymore or wanting to make it a long-term commitment.

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- 68% of the Police workforce in Camden had under 4 years' service, so it was a very junior workforce.
- In terms of responsiveness of officers to calls, a key performance indicator for the police was the speed of responsiveness to calls, for emergency calls the expectation was to arrive within 12 minutes which was achieved between 85-90% of the time. The Police performance in getting to calls quickly was quite strong.
- In terms of visibility, staffing and police numbers it was not everything that people would always see. It was important to understand that numbers referred to in the report were just one strand of five, because there were emergency response officers dealing with 999 calls, police in local investigations, public protection and other departments dealing with issues locally that would not be in uniform and would not be visible but would still be working. Also, when needed officers from outside the Met as well as other central units would help.
- The model allowed for consistent levels of staffing across all of Camden's wards however, the crime hotspots were centred around Camden Town and Bloomsbury and the police had to focus their efforts on those particular hotspot areas tackling crime and anti-social behaviour as opposed to the broader displacement and coverage at other times.
- There were clear criteria on what was regarded as an emergency call, it was broadly a situation that was deemed a risk to life, injury, imminent danger or someone on scene committing a crime.
- There was a contact number for residents to call the Community Safety Service if there were issues in the area. However residents needed to be made aware that in an emergency it was the 999 number they needed to call.
- Operation Kisu was very much a Neighbourhood Team and Town Centre activity which showed the positive effects of using intelligence. It involved processing the intelligence and looking at the bigger picture of why people were offending and why drugs were located in certain areas.
- The Community Safety and Enforcement Service did a lot of community engagement work in conjunction with the Police team around addresses of concern and tackling cuckooing in Camden.
- The work Camden did on cuckooing had been recognised nationally as best practice.
- The Council had quite a high level of success working with the police and tackling these sorts of issue through both an intelligence led approach and

use of enforcement, issuing of appropriate warrants and safeguarding vulnerable residents.

- A member raised the issue of instances of what appeared to be drug dealing on Bedford Avenue where photographic evidence had been sent to the local Police and nothing appeared to be done. The member was asked to send details of the issue to officers so it could be followed up.

ACTION BY: Councillor Madlani / Head of Community Safety and Enforcement

- Officers agreed to report back on the learning from the Anti-Social Behaviour Review.

ACTION BY Director of Public Safety

In response to further questions, the following answers were given

- Strengthening Neighbourhoods was a programme of work that fell under the remit of the new Met for London and was a commitment from the Met to improve the way it delivered services. Some parts of the programme had been delivered while some was on going.
- With regards to Strengthening Neighbourhoods community engagement, part of the approach included increasing representation on Ward Panels, recruiting more people on to these Panels and improving engagement with residents, joint community engagement initiatives with local authority partners and inclusion of young people. Also improving existing community engagement mechanisms such as Safer Neighbourhood Panels and Ward Panels participation.
- At the end of the year there would be a new community engagement platform in place for the Met to be able to better understand and respond to community concerns. The aim was to highlight what the Met was doing in response to concerns raised by the community.
- There was support in place via a number of funding streams which provided a living wage as incentives to young people to take part in community engagement Panels.
- With regards to radicalisation of young people, despite the government stopping prevent funding, the Council was still allocating funding from the revenue budget towards the prevent agenda. In addition, the Council in conjunction with the Police had done a lot of work with faith organisations to combat radicalisation, as well as working on proposals to provide clear hate crime reporting processes.
- The Police were also addressing the needs of young people by focussing on this group as vulnerable members of society and providing them with support.

- With regards to the ASB task force and metrics, at the moment it was still too early to provide metrics as the historic data was not available to measure current processes against at the moment. More time was required to analyse trends which would be conducted over the next 12 months.
- A Mental Health Protocol was being developed which would provide a number of different performance indicators that would be used to measure the work. These would include response times around a single source of reporting, measurements around reduction of risk and feedback from residents on actions taken.
- In relation to the Police engagement with Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+) organisations, each BCU had a fully funded LGBTQ+ community liaison officer. The role of these officers was to look at how the Police could rebuild trust among the LGBTQ+ community as well as having a point of contact who was fully culturally aware of all the issues regarding under reporting of crime amongst the LGBTQ+ community.

Members made the following comments:

- Right Care Right Person (RCRP)- for mental health issues appeared to be the correct approach and reflected the fact that crisis teams were better at dealing with crisis than police officers. However, in order to explore this area properly there was the need to have input from other partner agencies such as the mental health team, Adult Social Service and the London Ambulance Service.
- officers agreed to liaise with the police and other partner agencies to provide a report to a future Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting.
Action By: Director of Public Safety
- The Police reports were an improvement on some of the reports provided to Safer Neighbourhood Panels in terms of the quality of data provided which was really helpful.
- In terms of statistics on leadership and gender, the presence of a quite a number of female officers was a good news story which the Police should share more widely.
- With regards to the ethnic minority statistics, it would be helpful if a more detailed breakdown could be provided of their respective positions in the organisation.
- Lots of studies had shown that where a third of the workforce consisted of ethnic minorities there were better outcomes for the community they policed.

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- It would be useful if the process for reporting anti-social behaviour by residents could be made easier by having something similar to an A6 postcard that was previously used and made available digitally.
- It would be a good idea if a member of the Youth Council could attend meetings of the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee so as to provide a young person's perspective on issues.

The Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, the Police Borough Commander, Chief Inspector Metropolitan Police and Officers were thanked for their work, time taken to attend the meeting and their responses.

RESOLVED –

THAT the Cabinet Members Annual report, State of the Borough and New Met for London and Camden's Local Action Plan be noted.

11. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2024/25 AND ACTION TRACKER

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Supporting Communities.

Members discussed the work programme and suggested that the following items be moved:

- Royal Mail to discuss issues with missing post-delivery in the borough to be removed from the Work Programme.
- Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Voluntary Sector, Equalities and Cohesion – to be moved to the December 2024 meeting.
- Update on Culture – to be moved to the January 2025 meeting.
- To request TfL to provide an update on its approach and strategy in Camden and Camden specific TfL issues- for the November 2024 meeting.
- Inaccessibility of borough pavements for disabled residents due to retail related clutter' – to be brought back to January 2025 meeting.
- Right Care Right Person (RCRP)- Mental Health input from partner agencies (London Ambulance Adult Social Services) this should be brought back to the February 2025 meeting.
- Lime Bike/Scooters -Update - this should be brought back to the February 2025 meeting.

Subject to these changes it was

Resolved:

That the report be noted

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was none.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END