

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE Themed Debate – Making communities safer and reducing anti-social behaviour	
REPORT OF The Cabinet Member for Safer Communities	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Full Council	DATE 4 July 2022
STRATEGIC CONTEXT <p>We Make Camden is the Council’s and our communities’ shared vision for the borough. It is a refresh of Camden 2025 and sets out a series of shared ambitions including ensuring that everyone is safe at home and safe in our communities. This focuses on, but is by no means limited to, tackling violence, harassment, abuse and creating a borough where everyone is safe. It has been informed by a series of conversations with people living and working locally who have shared their thoughts on crime and its impact on local communities.</p> <p>The Way We Work is Camden’s operational response to We Make Camden and outlines how the Council will seek to deliver against its strategic aspirations and commitments.</p>	
SUMMARY OF REPORT <p>This report provides an overview of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) across Camden. It outlines the current position with regard to crime and anti-social behaviour trends and provides detailed information on the current Camden crime and anti-social behaviour priorities as well as an outline of the wide range of commissioned activity developed by the Council in partnership with a range of partner organisations.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Metropolitan Police Central/North Borough Command Unit activity.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Jamie Akinola Head of Community Safety and Public Protection 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG 020 7974 4819 jamie.akinola@camden.gov.uk</p>	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Full Council is asked to note the report.

Signed: Councillor Nadia Shah

Date: 23rd June 2022

1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Crime and anti-social behaviour and its impact on local communities continues to be highlighted as a key issue of concern by those who live, work, study and visit Camden.
- 1.2 Creating safe, strong and open communities where everyone can contribute is one of our ambitions for Camden. Recognising how important safety is for our residents we have identified this as one of the six challenges we want to address within We Make Camden, our strategic plan for the future of our borough. We are committed to ensuring that everyone is safe at home and safe in our communities.

2. PAN LONDON POSITION

- 2.1 The Mayor of London has overall responsibility for activity delivered via the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), which is the equivalent of the office of Police and Crime Commissioner in other parts of England and Wales.
- 2.2 MOPAC is responsible for the oversight of the Metropolitan Police, it is accountable for all policing in London, excluding the City of London. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is responsible for the issuing and delivery of the Police and Crime Plan which reflects the Mayor's manifesto and vision for making London a safer city.
- 2.3 The Police and Crime Plan, published in March of this year sets out the London Mayor's Priorities and objectives for addressing crime in London for the next 3 years. Following consultation with Londoners, the plan has identified the following priorities:
 - Reducing and preventing violence
 - Increasing trust and confidence
 - Better supporting victims
 - Protecting people from exploitation and harm

3. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN CAMDEN

- 3.1 Overall levels of crime and anti-social behaviour across Camden were significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The overall number of reported offences reduced significantly during periods throughout 2020-2021. The data suggests that this is likely to have been influenced in reductions in so-called acquisitive crime, particularly in relation to offences such as theft from a person etc.

- 3.2 The chart below shows the number of Total Notifiable Offences recorded in Camden each month over the last two years. This is plotted against the monthly average for all offences during 2019.

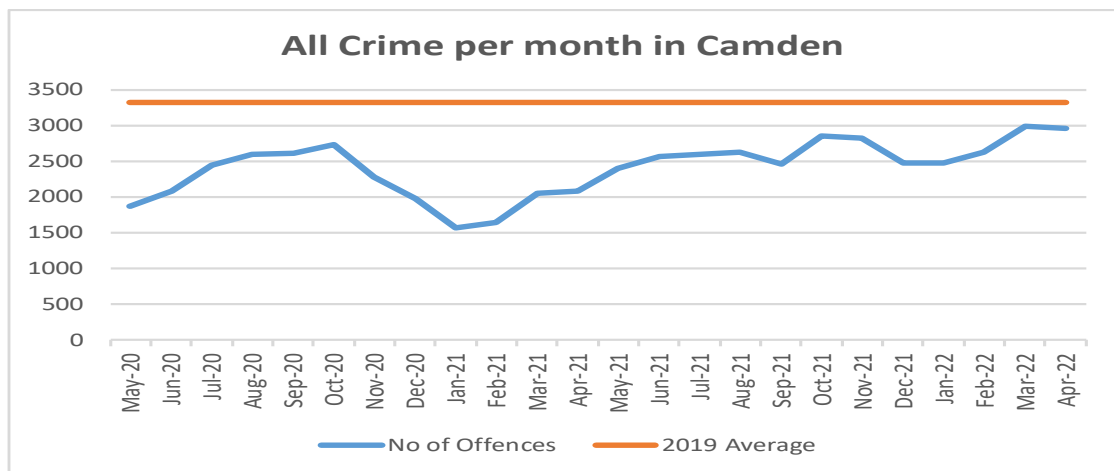


Figure 1: Overview of the levels of total notifiable offences in Camden between January 2019 and December 2021

- 3.3 While the types of offending have varied, there have been increases in particularly harmful offending such as domestic violence, drug related offences and sexual offences. Overall, crime levels decreased during the Covid-19 restrictions and have yet to rise to pre-pandemic levels.

4. PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY

- 4.1 The Camden Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was developed in response to the statutory provisions outlined within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The partnership plays a key role in the co-ordination and delivery of a wide range of crime and anti-social behaviour reduction related strategy/activity.
- 4.2 The partnership brings together a range of organisations including Camden Council, Metropolitan Police and the Camden Safer Neighbourhood Board. It is tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the development and delivery of policies, strategies and operational activity designed to reduce both crime and anti-social behaviour and re-offending rates. Partnership priorities for 2022-23 include issues such as:

- Drug related crime, anti-social behaviour and misuse
- Youth safety
- Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Serious Violence
- Hate crime

- 4.3 The partnership priorities were influenced by the annual community safety strategic assessment which evaluates both statistical data and information from the relevant crime and anti-social behaviour related resident/community surveys.

5. CAMDEN DRUGS ACTION PLAN

- 5.1 The Camden Drugs Action Plan was formally approved by the Community Safety Partnership Board in July 2021. The plan focuses on delivering increased level of activity in the following priority areas/themes:

- Support for Young People - keeping young people safe from drugs and criminal exploitation.
- Support for Communities – disrupting drugs markets and reclaiming public spaces.
- Support for People with Complex Needs (including drug use).

- 5.2 Activity has continued to focus on providing support to the most vulnerable, including looked after or excluded children as well as vulnerable residents whose homes are used without their consent for drug related offences. The impact of local drugs markets on the Camden night-time economy also continues to be key area of activity with a specific emphasis being placed on the need to identify and target those responsible for the sale of illegal drugs and to reclaim areas of the public realm impacted by local drugs markets.

- 5.3 The delivery of the Drugs Action Plan is supported by a range of initiatives primarily delivered by the Metropolitan Police service. It is anticipated that this activity may well be further enhanced during 2022-23 by the introduction of Project ADDER the national programme supported by the Home Office and the National Crime Agency which aims to further co-ordinate law enforcement activity and the use of the relevant diversionary programmes in order to:

- Reduce drug related death
- Reduce drug relating offending
- Reduce the prevalence of drug use
- Sustain the disruption of drug market related criminal networks

- 5.4 Further activity to tackle the impact of drugs and the associated drug markets will continue to be delivered throughout 2022-23 and beyond with the impact on levels of offending scrutinised via the Community Safety Partnership Board.

6. CAMDEN YOUTH SAFETY TASKFORCE

- 6.1 In 2018-19 The Camden Youth Safety Taskforce Report set out an ambitious plan to further embed a public health approach to Youth Safety. The report

outlined a number of recommendations to further promote youth safety in Camden with a strong emphasis on five distinct but overlapping strands, (Identify, Prevent, Support, Disrupt and Enforce). The Youth Safety Taskforce Steering Group which consists of a wide range of statutory/non statutory organisations has recently completed a detailed evaluation which noted Camden's "strong record on youth safety" and also highlighted the 20% reduction in weapons/serious violence related offences. However, the evaluation report emphasized the need to ensure that youth safety remains a priority for the Council and its partners.

- 6.2 There are a number of initiatives which continue to play a significant role in the ongoing delivery of the Taskforce action plan. The Youth Diversion Programme 'Engage' now established within Camden provides an opportunity for youth workers to meet with young people in police custody who have been arrested. The engagement activity provides an important opportunity to work with young people and their families in order to provide support with the aim of deterring them from committing further offences and building resilience. The number of referrals to the Engage initiative increased in 2020/21, with 148 young people being contacted by the Engage Team at police custody or in the community following their arrest.
- 6.3 Triage is a crime prevention programme aiming to deter young people from entering the youth justice system. The programme works with young people who have committed a low-level offence for which they have admitted guilt and creates a tailor-made plan with the young person and their family to reduce the likelihood of further offending and address any needs identified during assessment. Triage has been so successful that we have seen a reduction in the number of first-time entrants into the youth justice system, from 63 (2019/20) to 56 (2020/21). This is a significant reduction from the 75 first-time entrants in 2016/17.
- 6.4 It is recognised that the Youth Safety Taskforce has made some positive progress, however the evaluation report has made a number of recommendations which are currently being assessed in order to inform the development of a revised action plan.

7. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS (VAWG)

- 7.1 In 2021, the tragic murders of Sarah Everard, Bibaa Henry, Nicole Smallman, Sabina Nessa and closer to home Nicole Hurley have drawn to our collective attention, the prevalence of violence against women and girls and on our streets. These incidents started a national conversation about male violence, and the lengths that women go to on a daily basis to protect themselves.
- 7.2 As part of the Global 16 days of Activism campaign in November 2021, a Full Council themed debate on Violence Against Women and Girls took place including a discussion on women's safety in the public realm. A series of Women's Safety walkabouts were subsequently delivered in order to influence the development of the Camden Women's Safety (Public Realm) Action Plan which will focus on the following key priorities:

- Tackling offending behaviour
- Women's safety in night-time economy
- Improved approach to the management of public spaces

7.3 It is anticipated that the Camden Community Safety Partnership Board will formally endorse the proposed Women's Safety (Public Realm) Action Plan which will place a strong emphasis on challenging offending behaviour, delivering behavioural change (amongst men) and creating a culture which encourages and supports women to report offending behaviour.

7.4 There remains a strong commitment towards ensuring that the development and delivery of the Women's Safety (Public Realm) Action Plan continues to be influenced by the lived experience of women who live, work, visit and study in Camden.

7.5 The Camden Women's Forum's inquiry into domestic violence and abuse recommended the establishment of a Violence Against Women and Girls Board. It is anticipated that the board will be fully established later this year in order to co-ordinate strategy/policy development in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership Board.

8. SERIOUS VIOLENCE REDUCTION

8.1 Serious violence particularly knife crime remains a key community safety priority for the Council and the wider Camden Community Safety partnership.

8.2 Earlier this year the Camden Community Safety Partnership's Violence and Vulnerability Reduction Action Plan was submitted to the Mayor of London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). The submission provided an overview of progress on delivery during 2021, outlined plans for continued activity during 2022-23 and reflected the Council's commitment to further establishing the broader public health approach to violence reduction.

8.3 Camden's 2020 submission was assessed as 'Good' by the MOPAC Violence Reduction Unit; which noted the strong strategic leadership and drive via the Youth Safety Taskforce Steering Group and the Community Safety Partnership Board. The updated plan also noted the positive impact on levels of violence within the borough during the period between 2019-2021.

8.4 There is some evidence which suggests that there has been a recent increase in the level of serious violence in Camden; which may well align with the broader crime trend data which highlights an increase in offending since the full withdrawal of the Covid-19 restrictions. However, the volume of violence with injury has continued to fall in Camden. There were 1777 violence with injury offences in Camden in 2020-21, compared with 2292 in 2019-20, a decrease of 22%. This measure fell by 14% in London in the same time period.

- 8.5 The Community Safety Partnership Board will continue to assess levels of serious violence and the effectiveness of the Violence & Vulnerability Action Plan as a partnership priority.

9. METROPOLITAN POLICE RESOURCING/ACTIVITY

- 9.1 In late 2021 the Metropolitan Police Central/North Borough Command Unit (which serves both Camden & Islington) announced the creation of two new Town Centre policing teams to operate in Camden Town and the Euston area.
- 9.2 Each of the new town centre teams consists of three sergeants and twenty-one constables and is led by an Inspector. The teams are focussed on specific geographical areas with a brief to reduce offending, improve confidence and provide reassurance through high visibility policing. There are now approximately 1200 Metropolitan Police employees operating within the Central/North Borough Command Unit
- 9.3 The table outlined within appendix 1 provides an overview of the range of partnership activity currently being delivered by the MPS Central/North Borough Command Unit. The activity ranges from tactical/intelligence led enforcement operations to the continued delivery of community engagement focused activity.

10. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 10.1 Responding to the views and concerns of Camden residents and businesses remains a key community safety priority. The relevant Council services and partner organisations recognise the importance of ensuring that the feedback and lived experience of local residents, businesses and communities continues to play a central role in the further development and delivery of community safety and crime/anti-social behaviour reduction related services, projects and initiatives.
- 10.2 A forward plan of targeted community safety walkabouts and community engagement events has been developed to ensure that that the Council and the relevant partner organisations are able to respond effectively to resident concerns, particularly in areas disproportionately impacted by crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 10.3 The community safety focused walkabouts delivered throughout 2022 will retain a strong emphasis on the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour in Camden Housing Estates. An intelligence led approach will be developed to identify so called hot-spot locations and inform the development of actions plans designed to address specific issues and concerns raised by tenants, businesses and local community organisations. The learning from previous successful engagement activity/events will be used to ensure that the relevant action plans are communicated effectively and updated on a regular basis in order to provide the required reassurance to local communities.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 Crime and anti-social behaviour and its impact on local communities remains a priority for the Council. The range of criminality and the complexity of the societal issues (which often underpins offending behaviour) continue to create a number of challenges for the Council, its partners and the wider community.
- 11.2 It does seem clear that the varied picture with regard to levels of crime and anti-social behaviour will continue. However, the Council retains a strong commitment towards developing and delivering a range of strategies, policy initiatives and service delivery programs which seek to challenge offending behaviour, support victims and provide reassurance to local communities. This commitment is further underpinned via the relevant ambitions, challenges and missions outlined within 'We Make Camden'.

12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Legal comments are incorporated in the body of this report.

13. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The comments of the Director of Finance are included in the body of this report.

REPORT ENDS