

COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Community Safety Scrutiny Commission held on Monday 29 October 2018 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Leanne Werner (Chair)
Councillor William Hougbo (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Karl Eastham
Councillor Richard Leeming
Councillor Alice Macdonald
Councillor Michael Situ
Councillor David Noakes

**OTHER MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

OFFICER Sharon Ogden, Safer Communities Team Manager
SUPPORT: Kate Moriarty-Baker, Director of Quality & Chief Nurse, NHS
Southwark CCG
Kirsten Watters, Public Health
Nina Dohel, Director of Education

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Nick Johnson sent apologies, with Cllr David Noakes present as a substitute.

The co-opted education representatives, Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer and Martin Brecknell, sent apologies.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There was none.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Alice Macdonald declared that she is a trustee of Glitch, which works to tackle VAWG.

Cllr David Noakes said he works for a council as a Community Safety officer, however he advised this is not a conflict.

4. WORKPLAN

The chair explained that tackling Violence Against Women and Girls was her recommended focus for the Commission's work this year and drew members' attention to statistics outlining the high rates of rape, domestic abuse and violence that men perpetrate.

A member commented that gay people are also victimised, and experience high rates of domestic abuse. Officers commented that this view had been discussed and there was a widespread view that looking at gender based violence would be helpful. Members queried if this would dilute the focus on women and girls, who are overwhelming the sex most likely to be targeted. Officers agreed, however they pointed out that males are more likely to experience servitude. Members discussed looking at Modern Slavery and Child Trafficking in more detail, as well as social and digital media.

5. OFFICER PRESENTATION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)

The chair invited Sharon Ogden, Safer Communities Team Manager, Southwark Council, to present the report on VAWG circulated with the agenda. Kate Moriarty-Baker, Director of Quality & Chief Nurse, NHS Southwark CCG imputed.

The following points were made in the Commissions subsequent discussions with officers:

Is the impact of the Women's Safety Charter being assessed? Members suggested this could be worthwhile, with a follow up survey of women and premises. This follow up would also be an opportunity to bring the charter to the attention of premises once again, as the original staff who signed it may have moved on. Members asked if signing up to the charter could be a licencing condition.

There was a discussion on rolling this out to other councils. Officers said that there have been other initiatives; such as 'Ask Angela' and a wave project. MOPAC also have a night safety charter. Evaluation

would establish whether this was an impactful initiative and if promotion more widely could be justified. A map would be useful to see coverage to date.

Officers explained that there were not plans to evaluate this in the work programme and this would incur significant officer time. As such it would need to be planned for; this could be a Commission recommendation.

A map would be useful to see coverage to date.

Kirsten Watters, Public Health consultant, presented on the preventative strand of Southwark's sexual and reproductive health strategy; Healthy and Fulfilling Relationships – enclosed with the minutes.

There was a discussion on defining what a healthy relationship was and the different cultural views; it is important to acknowledge these differ. Stigma is an issue preventing people accessing timely treatment. Officers were asked how to combat this and they responded that research and targeted communication can help.

Officers were asked what outcomes they were looking for and they highlighted a focus on prevention and promoting healthy relationships. The approach is to have a more integrated system strategy.

Officers were asked on their views on the present government consultation on Sexual Health teaching – Public Health has provided a professional submission.

A member highlighted the success of the 'Ask Frank' drugs information portal and asked if something similar had been considered for sexual health. Officers said that this is not presentably being considered, however the London online testing service is considering a user generated online forum with questions.

Members asked if there was specific Southwark PSHE guidance. Offices said they do suggest toolkits. There is a RE Southwark specific syllabus. Members said it is worth bearing in mind that Academies are exempt from the requirement to teach sex and relationship education. Trusts and standalone schools are more likely to approach the local authority for resources; where as large academy chains may have in-house resources. A recent Southwark sexual health event saw high attendance from teachers.

Nina Dohel, Director of Education, presented on changes to the delivery of sex education and safeguarding in schools.

Members asked if there was a duty to report back to the local authority. The Director said abuse must be recorded and schools will then consider whether they need to make a report to the safeguarding hub (MASH), the police, or both. A member asked how much reliance can be placed on teachers given their primary focus is on teaching. The Director agreed that schools cannot be the only place for reporting and there is an increasing emphasis on a multi-agency approach by Ofsted which would encompass the school nurse, social workers etc., Ofsted will also look at if children feel able to report concerns, this is often a result of good relationships. Teachers do have an important role, as do governing bodies in reviewing how safeguarding is working. A member commented that he is somewhat concerned that nobody has to report to the council. The Director responded that Ofsted will look to see if schools are making appropriate action on safeguarding issues. Ofsted and the council will also pick up local intelligence. There have been concerns about a couple of schools becoming closed off; good working relationships are important.

All schools want to be able to concentrate on the job of teaching, and there are concerns about social issues such as the impact of social media and the rates of youth violence. There are good local networks and process around safeguarding, and good engagement with 60 teachers attending a recent meeting on healthy relationships.

A member asked what is not working so well and the Director said that warning signs are high turnover of staff. The local authority said that they also link with CEO of local Trusts which are growing.

There was a discussion about using online apps to report abuse. Officers said multiple channels are important; and most important are trusted adults in children and young people lives.

Officers were asked if Southwark has high rates of sexual harassment. The community safety lead said one of the issues was young women framing sexual harassment as abuse as increasingly exploitative behaviour has become normalised. Members raised concerns about this. The officer said she had been to a recent conference on Pornography and how this impacts on notions of consent.

Members asked about statistical rates. Officer reported that Harassment is high, others are lower. It also depends on how crimes are recorded. Domestic Abuse is well recorded and officers

are satisfied that the data on this is reliable. However for other criminal and harmful practices we can be less sure; part of the VAWG strategy will be to cover this. Members asked if there is consultation with community groups to sense check the data and look for under reporting trends.

The recent domestic abuse campaign has been focused on raised awareness; and there has been a 62% increase in referrals. This could be in large part a result of raised awareness and improved communications – however there has also been a national trend upwards. Members commented on the huge increase and asked what could be done. Officers said that they are recommissioning a wide range of services and considering adding more capacity. Scrutiny could influence this re-commissioning process, as could the emerging VAWG strategy; however the challenge is the financial envelope remains the same.

A member asked about child abuse and referral .There is a national IRIS programme and GPs will refer from there to specialised domestic abuse services. Members asked for more information on this.

RESOLVED

A map from licencing listing all the premises that have adopted the Women Safety Charter will be requested.

A refresh and impact assessment of the Women’s Safety Charter would be timely; and could be a recommendation for cabinet to agree in the VAWG review report.

Data on the IRIS programme will be supplied by officers on the number of GP practices trained in recognising Domestic Abuse and also the referrals made.

6. VAWG PROPOSED REVIEW

The Commission discussed how to take the review forward, in light of the previous officer presentations and subsequent discussions.

RESOLVED

Field work will be done by conducting focus groups on the issues outlined in the scoping document. These will be done in junction with secondary schools and with youth & community networks, particularly ones those that members have links with.

Social media will be considered.

Primary and secondary school governing bodies, headteachers and safeguarding leads and networks will be contacted with a survey and through direct contacts, where there are relationships

Trafficking and modern slavery will be addressed in a future meeting.