

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 19 NOVEMBER 2015

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY,
19 NOVEMBER 2015 AT 1400 HOURS IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL
HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:-

Councillor Iqbal in the Chair; Councillors Atwal, Cartwright, Harmer, Hartley, Jenkins, Pears, Spence and Williams.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Councillor Shafique Shah	- Cabinet Member for Inclusion and Community Safety
Councillor Mariam Khan	
Councillor Sharon Thompson	
Mashuq Ally	- Assistant Director, Equalities, Community Safety and Cohesion
Gary Ladbrooke	- Integrated Services Head
Sam Monnox	- Domestic Homicide Review Co-ordinator
Amanda Simcox	- Scrutiny Research and Policy Officer
David Smith	- Committee Services

NOTICE OF RECORDING

41 It was noted that the meeting was being webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.birminghamnewsroom.com) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs. The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt items.

APOLOGIES

42 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Lines, Mackey and Phillips for their inability to attend the meeting.

MINUTES

- 43 The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2015, having been circulated to Members, were confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:
- a) Gary Ladbrooke, Integrated Services Head, to be shown as present and Alison Harwood's title to be shown as Acting Director for Regeneration and Enforcement;
 - b) The spelling of Councillor Mackey's surname to be corrected on page 29, Minute No. 35;
 - c) That Minute No. 34 be amended at the end of the first paragraph on page 25 by adding the sentence: "Councillor Cartwright expressed concern at the effects of budget cuts on the West Midlands Police in relation to terrorism."
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PRIORITY REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

The following report of the Cabinet Member was submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

Councillor Shafique Shah, Cabinet Member for Inclusion and Community Safety, drew attention to the following email that he had circulated today to Members regarding the recent attacks in Paris and Beirut, which was tabled:-

(See document No. 2)

He advised that meetings had been held at local mosques with all Faiths and Police representatives to discuss the current situation. The position taken had been that it was business as normal, but that people needed to be vigilant. He expressed condolences to families of the victims. A statement had been sent to all local schools on 16 November 2015 containing a message of reassurance. The Chairman agreed that the violence should be condemned.

In response to questions from Members, the following were among the points made:

1. He acknowledged a comment that role models were needed for young people and highlighted that schools had pupils from all backgrounds, which made it important to work together.
2. He confirmed that he was committed to maintaining the use of CCTV cameras in the City and agreed that a combined approach between organisations should be taken.

**Neighbourhood & Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee –
19 November 2015**

3. While some cameras were in the process of being removed, he acknowledged the need for a rationale and that no more should be removed until a clear, integrated model was established.
4. With regard to nervousness within the local Muslim communities and discrimination being experienced by young people, he advised that all Muslim groups within the City had condemned the violence and terrorism.
5. Work was being undertaken with the West Midlands Police Force and Faith leaders, arranging meetings to engage with different communities and listen to their concerns. He advised that Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members would be welcome to attend those meetings.
6. He acknowledged that young people were facing discrimination and bullying because of their faith, as well as their ethnicity, and pointed out that there were not only physical threats, but also dangers in relation to the internet on which awareness needed to be raised.
7. Mashuq Ally, Assistant Director, Equalities, Community Safety and Cohesion, advised that the City Council was working with voluntary organisations to support young people and that a variety of projects had been initiated.
8. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the briefing had been widely circulated, including Youth Centres and Business Improvement Districts and that he would consult with local Councillors before removing CCTV cameras.
9. He accepted concern that Syrian refugees coming to Birmingham should be welcomed and encouraged to integrate. It was taking time to bring them to the City because of background checks and screening that was being undertaken.
10. Work was being undertaken with partner organisations to ensure that refugees' physical and mental needs were catered for when they arrived. The main partners were The Children's Society, Barnados and the University of Birmingham.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Councillor Shah for attending the meeting.

44

RESOLVED:-

That the report and tabled email be noted.

**PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION: WORKING WITH
COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT RELATIONSHIP VOILENCE**

The following report of the Cabinet Member for Inclusion and Community Safety was submitted:-

**Neighbourhood & Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee –
19 November 2015**

(See document No. 3)

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Mariam Khan, Councillor Sharon Thompson and Mashuq Ally, Assistant Director, Equalities, Community Safety and Cohesion, to the meeting for this item.

With regard to Recommendation 1, Mashuq Ally advised that work was in progress on compiling contact information. Officers had become aware of additional work taking place and that was being added into the details. It was hoped that the faith communities event would be held in January 2016. He undertook to share the Domestic Violence Review timeline with Members after the meeting. Emphasis was needed on integrated work, not working in 'silos', with Members and officers actively working together.

He acknowledged concern that abusers wrecked the confidence of their victims and confirmed that officers were working hard to provide a safe environment to enable victims to come forward. He believed that good progress was being made and advised that work was ongoing to bring perpetrators to account. Councillor Cartwright expressed concern for children affected and suggested that the issue should be raised with District Committees.

It was agreed that Recommendation 1 be assessed as '3' – Not Achieved (Progress Made).

On Recommendations 2 and 3, Mashuq Ally reported that Theme 12 of the School Improvement Plan related to educating children regarding domestic violence and working to prevent it. He noted concern that Service providers, particularly for youth services, should be involved as well as schools and that young people may not view relationship violence as being domestic violence. He noted also the concern that it was important to provide a safe place for discussion and support away from school and family settings. He undertook to take those comments away and ensure that they were addressed. He highlighted projects in progress and advised that he intended to report further to the Committee.

It was noted that the Cabinet Member for Inclusion and Community Safety had advised Members that work was in progress on a statement highlighting safeguarding issues. Concern was expressed that safeguarding work in schools required considerable effort and that teachers needed support to enable to undertake that work effectively. Formal and informal work was needed to enable engagement with all children and young people. Mashuq Ally took those comments on board and advised that during the previous 18 months there had been considerable focus on the teachers' role in safeguarding. With regard to intervention work, he undertook to provide information to Members after the meeting and advised that more and more schools were becoming involved in the programme. A lot more work needed to be done with parents and he would work closely with colleagues in School Improvement.

It was agreed that Recommendations 2 and 3 be assessed as '3' – Not Achieved (Progress Made).

**Neighbourhood & Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee –
19 November 2015**

With regard to Recommendation 4, Mashuq Ally advised that a Child Poverty Commission inquiry was taking place at the present time. He advised that “DHR Team” referred to the Domestic Homicide Review Team, which studied Coroner reports and criminal reviews. Members recognised that there had been much progress and that there would always be more to act upon. Mashuq Ally suggested that a new date of March 2016 be agreed as a target for further progress.

It was agreed that Recommendation 4 be assessed as ‘3’ – Not Achieved (Progress Made), with a new target date of March 2016 for further progress.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Councillor Khan, Councillor Thompson and Mashuq Ally for attending the meeting for this item.

45

RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted and the progress against Recommendations be agreed as set out above.

REVIEW OF BIRMINGHAM’S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STRATEGY 2015

Mashuq Ally, Assistant Director, Equalities, Community Safety and Cohesion, presented the following report and additional paper circulated prior to the meeting:-

(See document No. 4)

Mashuq Ally was accompanied to the meeting by Sam Monnox, Domestic Homicide Review Co-ordinator, who advised that her team ensured that the findings from incidents of domestic homicide and domestic violence were taken on board and acted upon. There were issues around the knowledge and skills of the workforce, which was important in making early interventions. It was a very complex area and there was a need for advice, support and training. Consideration was being given to a framework of workforce development, with joint commissioning. She emphasised the need to have an understanding of coercive control and to have empathy with victims. Mashuq Ally drew attention to key lines of inquiry and progress made. However, it might be necessary to revise the timescale for the work from February to March 2016.

Members welcomed the work undertaken. Councillor Jenkins drew attention to the need to recognise the situation of young people, not just children, affected by domestic violence. She highlighted the problem of gang involvement and how both boys and girls could be victims, which needed to be explored. She referred also to the growing number of boys that were being exploited and were subject to violence. There was a need for multi-agency work and consideration needed to be given to schools’ approach to parents.

**Neighbourhood & Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee –
19 November 2015**

In response to questions from Members, Sam Monnox referred to the Birmingham Safeguarding Board Section 11 audit and the schools domestic violence Section 175 audit. She advised that schools were required to have a domestic violence policy and that the audits informed the Domestic Violence Strategy. She drew attention to the role that the media could play in teenage relationships and advised that consideration was being given to launching a public awareness campaign regarding coercive control. Mashuq Ally advised that the relevant stakeholders were the groups providing advice and support. He noted a request from the Chairman for information regarding the number of multi-agency works in the MASH and undertook to provide that information after the meeting.

46 **RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES O&S COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME**

The following paper was received:-

(See document No. 5)

The Chairman stated that the next meeting would involve the Neighbourhood Challenge Inquiry.

47 **RESOLVED:-**

That the work programme be noted.

DATES OF MEETINGS

48 It was noted that the Committee meets on the following Thursdays at 1400 hours in the Council House:-

17 December (Room 6)	21 January (Room 6)
18 February (Room 6)	17 March (Room 2)
21 April (Room 6)	

**REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS
RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

49 The Chairman advised that there had been no requests for call in/councillor call for action/petitions received.

**Neighbourhood & Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee –
19 November 2015**

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

50 No other urgent business was raised.

AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

51 **RESOLVED:-**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 1550 hours.

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CHAIRMAN