

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE WITH ETHNIC MINORITY ORGANISATIONS

10 DECEMBER 2014

(Time Not Specified - Time Not Specified)

PRESENT Councillors (in the Chair),

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 1)

None.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies were received from Cllr Gadzama, Ms Colquhoun, Mr Jerry Hall, Mrs Shah.

3 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 24 SEPTEMBER 2014 (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes were agreed.

4 MATTERS ARISING (Agenda Item 4)

There were no matters arising.

5 FIRE SAFETY - STEWART BROWN, CREW MANAGER, LONDON FIRE BRIGADE (Agenda Item 5)

Crew Manager Stewart Brown from the London Fire Brigade (LFB) gave a representation on fire safety. He outlined that the LFB aims to build closer ties between its 100 fire stations and the community.

The numbers of fires have decreased due to fire safety work. 80,000 fire alarms were fitted last year. Fire safety work relates to:

1. The home – where there are high risks due to smoking, drug and alcohol use
2. Business – the need for risk assessments
3. Work – risk assessments required
4. Community buildings – risk assessments required

The LFB is trying to reduce accidental dwelling fires and make communities safer.

**Questions**

**How could the drug and alcohol service make referrals?** Referrals may be done directly or via the council.

**Are children given training?** There is a young engagement project to encourage young people to go into fire stations. The LFB also visit schools. Community groups are also encouraged to visit fire stations.

**Are there any provisions for community groups to have in-house training?**

There is no formal community safety course, however there is a diary of events across communities, but no national programme.

**Can the fire service visit places of worship to assess fire risk?** Yes this is a service offered as part of the 2004 Fire Service Act. THE LFB will inspect premises and offer advice. The organisation is responsible for the risk assessment but the fire service will advise.

**Are there any home fire escape tips?** The fire service provides home visits to practise escape routes. Information is contained in the leaflets that were distributed and is also on the web site.

'Know your plan' is targeting high rise flats and maisonettes. Concern was expressed about parked vehicles preventing emergency access.

**How does the fire service get access when parked vehicles are blocking emergency access?** Stewart assured that meeting that the fire service would get access in such circumstances.

## 6 COMMUNITY DRUG SERVICE FOR SOUTH LONDON - ABAYEH SAVAGE, ESTHER REUSSE AND MONIKA MICHALIK (Agenda Item 6)

Abayeh Savage, Esther Reusse and Monika Michalik gave a presentation on the work of the Integrated Substance Misuse Recovery Partnership. The service started in 1990 and in 2013 CDSSL entered into partnership with South West London and St George's Trust (SWLSTG), sharing provision of services covering alcohol and drugs support in the boroughs of Merton and Sutton. Within the partnership CDSSL provides all psychosocial services, while SWLSTG provides all medical services.

The service aims to provide:

- Integrated, holistic, psychosocial and medical, whole family system approach service.
- Full support to service users, presenting with substance and or alcohol misuse problem, residents in the borough and their carers and family members.
- Based on the concept of recovery capital and strong aftercare.
- Support to service users and their families to achieve full functionality and full integration in the local community.

There are three stages of service delivery:

Stage 1 – to support service users to reach abstinence from substances and alcohol by offering an integrated package of care individually designed for each clients needs.

Stage 2 - To support service users to become full functional members of their local community, and to achieve their individual aspirations and goals

Stage 3 – Aftercare – supports users to remain abstinent, become confident integrated members of the local community and reach their full potential.

Abayeh is the contact for the BAME community and provides benefit advice and advocacy. Esther is the Family Coordinator for Merton and Sutton and provides counselling and undertakes outreach work. She informed the meeting that the referral levels are low for BAME families. Ms Reusse urged the JCC members to display CDSSL's literature in their community buildings. Ms Michalik is the coordinator for the Polish community. She informed the meeting that in addition to supporting the management of their alcohol or drug addiction polish clients often needed welfare and housings support as there are high levels of homelessness. Ms Michalik also acts as a translator.

## Questions

**What does the service do to be proactive?** CDSSL have limited resources but outreach work is done a couple times a week.

There were suggestions that the organisation should consider the use of volunteers or linking up with resident associations.

## 7 POLICE UPDATE - CHIEF INSPECTOR MARK LAWRENCE (Agenda Item 7)

Chief Inspector Mark Lawrence presented an overview of police performance. He outlined that the police is performing well and that crime in Merton has decreased over the last 12 months. There have been pleasing reductions in burglary, robbery and theft from motor vehicle. Burglaries involving Asian Jewellery still remain a problem but have fallen.

Hate crime statistics are now being separated and there is a new flag for Tamil related crime. Race crime is relatively low in Merton. 50% of perpetrators of Islamophobic crimes are being charged.

CI Lawrence talked generally about policing matters including international concerns such as people travelling to Syria, which has resulted in an increase in counter terrorism work and Channel referrals.

Confidence in policing in Merton has decreased by 2% compared to the same period last year but remains 7% higher than the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) average.

The decrease is because people in Merton perceive that crime and ASB are more of a problem than they did in the previous year.

The Satisfaction statistics show that the gap between white and BME victims of crime has grown. Satisfaction for white victims of crime is currently 85% compared to 76% for BME victims of crime. Merton was previously best in the MPS by a considerable margin and some months saw BME victims more satisfied than white victims. The drop is believed to be linked to violent crime where victims are not satisfied with the overall result of the criminal investigation.

## Questions

**What effect will the Crime and Disorder Act have – how will the police cope? In Wimbledon there have been incidents of bag snatching.**

CI Lawrence replied that the police have not seen an increase in pick pocketing but burglaries have increased because people are working in teams. He urged the JCC members to call 999 if they see any suspicious behaviour.

The legislation does not present any significant challenge, the main change relates to anti-social behaviour. A police officer will be based in the civic centre in the New Year.

There are more police in the area and the officers are being used intelligently with some officers being proportionately based in Mitcham.

**How many burglaries result in recovery?** There has been a decrease in the percentage of those taken to justice because the way people are charged has changed. 10% of burglaries are solved.

**Why are Islamophobic crimes so high and anti-semitic crimes so low?** There is a higher Islamic community in the borough. It could also be because of greater publicity, higher reporting.

**Could there be under reporting of hate crime?** Hate crime is recorded according to what the victim thinks.

It was suggested that the JCC and other groups could act as Third Party reporting sites.

**Is there an officer working with gangs or young people on drugs from the BAME/Refugee communities?** There is a Youth Engagement Coordinator. Also the Youth Offending service works with the Youth Offending Team. The police also have Safer Schools officers working with schools to prevent gangs and youth violence.

**What is the impact of the One Stop Shop on the increase in Domestic Violence figures?** The numbers has increased because the One Stop Shop is working well.

**Will Merton be affected by future cuts?** CI Lawrence replied that he is not sure how the cuts will affect us locally – but he policing model across London may have to change.

**There is concern about the increase in motor vehicle and domestic violence crimes how can communities help the police?** 5% of vehicle thefts are motor cycle or mopeds which may be attributable to young people.

Concern was expressed about the closure of Safer Neighbourhood Offices. CI Lawrence clarified that they are still being used and are open Wednesday and Thursday evenings and on Saturday. They will remain until the election because it is a commitment from the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

8 EMPLOYMENT SKILLS UPDATE - JOYCE OGUNADE, LBM FUTURE MERTON (Agenda Item 8)

This item was deferred to the JCC meeting to be held on 11 March 2015.

9 PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT - KAY EILBERT, LBM DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah introduced the Public Health Annual report. Kay Eilbert the Director of Public Health presented the report. The report's theme is 'Bridging the Gap' and built on the commitments made at the Merton Partnership Conference in November 2013. The five conference themes were:

The Place for a Good Life - Themes

- The best start in life for early years and education
- Good Health – prevention and early detection of disease and management close to home
- Good Life skills and good work
- Community participation and feeling safe
- A good natural and built environment

The themes are aligned to the community plan. Good progress has been made on the indicators but gaps are evident between the East and the West of the borough. There is a link between deprivation and life expectancy.

Life expectancy is lower in the East – there would be 113 fewer deaths if the variables for residents in East were the same as for residents in the West. Data is available on the website – JSNA.

The biggest impact on health includes family, environment and employment – 76 % has nothing to do with health. Healthier choices are required to reduce illness. Good health is created by:

1. Best Start in Life – improve social and mental well being to decrease the gap in achievement between East and West
2. Good health- make the healthy option an easy option, develop health service to meet local needs, increase mental/physical health
3. Good Life skills and Good Work – reduce gaps in levels of education and of work
4. Community Participation – closing the gap in perception in the East and the West. Make communities safer and improve community connectedness and cohesion
5. Good natural and Built Environment – access to green spaces, healthy high streets and affordable housing

Public Health will be refreshing the Health and Wellbeing strategy and welcomes the input of the faith and belief forum.

Livewell is a health improvement initiative that has health champions. Dr Eilbert appealed to JCC organisations to work with public health to recruit health champions.

### **Questions/Comments**

The BAME Strategic Plan outlined health inequalities, so the issues have already been identified it is just the commitment that is needed to address the health section of the BAME Strategic Plan.

Dr Eilbert informed the meeting that public health would be working with the BAME community and is not starting from a base position.

### **10 BAME VOICE UPDATE - KATE HERBERT, LBM HEAD OF POLICY, STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS (Agenda Item 10)**

Kate Herbert, Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships updated the meeting on progress to date in developing the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Voice in

Merton. A second public meeting was held at the Positive Network Centre on 11 November to engage the wider community. At that meeting a steering group was formed to agree the next steps. A meeting of the steering group will be held in January 2015.

Ms Herbert highlighted that there was still a lack of Asian representation in the process and the steering group needed to be representative of the borough's diversity.

The council has committed funding of up to £20,000 for the next two financial years

Mr Rizvi agreed to join the steering group. Ms Anderson undertook to contact some Asian community representative to encourage them to get involved.

Evereth to write to the JCC to encourage Asian representatives to join the steering group.

#### 11 FEED BACK FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD - ABAYEH SAVAGE (Agenda Item 11)

Mr Abayeh Savage gave an update on the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) and informed the meeting that he is now the vice-chair. Mr Savage reported that Merton is doing well and crime levels are in the Merton are relatively low compared to the rest of London.

Funding of £22,000 is available for projects and BAME organisations are encouraged to put forward project submissions.

He stressed the importance of the JCC members giving him information to report to the SNB.

#### 12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 12)

Councillor Macauley thanked Ms Herbert for her hard work and support of the JCC and wished her good luck and success in her new job.

Ms Anderson outlined that Merton Unity Network had received £2300 for the BME forum to fund an event and the money needs to be spent by March 2015. The money was to be used to profile services by holding a conference followed by a social event. Ms Anderson asked for views from the JCC.

It was agreed that Evereth should meet with Ms Anderson to discuss further.

Mr Vukalic informed the meeting that Victim Support has new leaflets and asked representatives to display them in their organisations. He also encouraged representatives to get in touch if they have any queries.