

# Community Safety & New Policing Structures in Hillingdon



## **A review by the 2018/19 Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee**

**Councillors on the Committee in 2018/19:** Richard Mills (Chairman), Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chairman); Lindsay Bliss; Nicole Brightman; Farhad Choubedar; Alan Deville; Jazz Dhillon (Labour Lead); Vanessa Hurhangee and Kerri Prince



**Presented to Cabinet in July 2019**

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# Chairman's Foreword

**Hillingdon Council** understands that the safety of its residents is paramount, and it has a vital role in working alongside the Metropolitan Police Service to tackle crime and safeguard local residents in the Borough. It is the right of every resident to live safely in Hillingdon, free from crime and the fear of crime, and the Council's working relationship with the Police sets out to achieve this.



Over the last year, a number of major changes have taken place to the Metropolitan Police Service. The merging of single borough command units, to a new structure, saw Hillingdon's BCU merged with those of Ealing and Hounslow. These changes to the operational police structure, without question, would impact on the working relationship between the Council and the Police, and it was vital that the changes were used to the advantage of both organisations, to make sure that the safety of residents was ensured.

As such, this Committee agreed to further explore Community Safety and the New Policing Structure in Hillingdon as a review topic, to better understand the changes to the Metropolitan Police structure and how those changes have impacted, both positively and negatively, on the Borough.

The review allowed the Committee the opportunity to engage with officers from the Metropolitan Police, as well as a number of Council Officers from relevant departments who engage regularly with the Police. Additionally, the review agreed to look at the Council's CCTV infrastructure, which had recently undertaken a major upgrade across the Borough, as it was important that the Committee also considered these changes and how they would improve the ability to tackle crime in the area.

This review illustrates the importance of a strong working relationship between the Police and the Council, and aimed to better understand how the new policing structure could be used to the benefit of the Hillingdon and its residents, with a number of recommendations that look to maintain and improve the already successful partnership between the Council and the Police, ensuring the safety of local residents across Hillingdon.

## **Councillor Richard Mills**

Chairman of the Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee

# Our findings & recommendations

Through the witnesses and evidence received during the detailed review by the Committee, Members have agreed the following findings and recommendations to Cabinet:

<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>That the Council recognise the significant improvement in performance by the Community Safety Team over the past year, and ensure that the department remains adequately resourced to continue to carry out its work.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>That Hillingdon's Community Safety Team continue to share best practice and remain in constant communication with the other boroughs that make up the West London Basic Command Unit (BCU).</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>That regular and improved communication takes place between the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Community Safety Team with Housing Associations, in order to proactively share video evidence of anti-social or criminal behaviour that may be carried out on housing estates.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p>That the current CCTV upgrade programme is considered a success to date, and that the ongoing roll-out is continued, as planned, with confirmation provided to the Committee upon completion. Upon conclusion of the roll-out, it is requested that officers return to the Committee, in a sensible timeframe, to provide quantitative analysis to show the impact the CCTV Programme has had on Hillingdon.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p>That Council Officers are congratulated on their impressive upgrade of the CCTV Control Room, and that the Council continues to work in partnership with the Police, and allow access to Members of the Police Force who may not be able to operate in active duty.</p>

<p><b>6</b></p>	<p>That consideration is given to extending the hours of operation when the Control Room is manned, in order to achieve the maximum possible results of identifying crime and anti-social behaviour when it is happening.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p>That the Out-of-Hours Team, rather than being based at a desk during night shifts, are located in the CCTV Control Room to alert operators to any issues that are being reported.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p>That Cabinet is requested to agree officers undertake a study into the use of facial recognition CCTV software to enhance community safety, including action to find missing children and vulnerable adults, and to ensure compliance with Data Protection requirements, reporting back to the Cabinet Member for Communities, Commerce and Regeneration on the way forward, and thereafter, the Committee for information.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p>Where possible, Hillingdon Council continues to fund additional officers who form the Borough's Tasking Teams, who receive instruction from the Community Safety Team on where to target, and focus efforts based on local knowledge and priorities.</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p>That the Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce and Regeneration be requested to submit the Council's comments to the Mayor of London and MOPAC's review of the possible withdrawal of match funding previously given to Tasking Teams, supporting the continuation of this scheme to provide additional officers for our Borough.</p>

# Background to the review

In February 2018, the Metropolitan Police announced major changes to the way local policing was to be delivered in London through the introduction of Basic Command Units (BCUs). The changes, announced on 12 February 2018, would see the replacement of single borough command units with operational police structures that covered between two and four local authorities.

This new model was intended to improve Police services, as well as providing substantial financial savings. Finance was a major driver for the changes to operational policing that was announced by the introduction of the BCUs. The Metropolitan Police (MPS) had already made savings of £600 million, and now have to make further savings of £325 million by 2021/22, while officer numbers have fallen over recent years, and are expected to fall further by 2021.

The MPS argued that the new BCUs will give them a more sustainable policing model, and the ability to operate at a larger scale and with fewer officers. The MPS also stated that the BCUs will enable them to operate more consistently across London delivering the same core policing functions: neighbourhoods, response, CID and safeguarding. The BCUs are predicted to deliver savings of £73 million, which equates to a reduction of 1,583 police officer posts.

## New Policing Structure

The new BCU system replaced the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) old 32-borough model that was aligned directly with the boundaries of the 32 London Local Authorities. Instead, the previous borough model was redesigned to merge the 32 units to form 12 larger units, or BCUs.

The BCU model was designed to build on the strategic priorities that were identified in the "Police and Crime Plan 2017 - 2021: A Safer City for All Londoners" as follows:

- A better police service for London;
- A better criminal justice service for London;
- Keeping children and young people safe;
- Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls; and,
- Standing together against hatred and intolerance.

The changes to local policing structures look to support these priorities, based around the following core service areas:

- **Neighbourhoods:** Including a planning minimum of two Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) and one PCSO per ward, that will be 'ring-fenced' from abstraction.

- **Protecting Vulnerable People:** Bringing together both local and previously centrally-managed services that have been dealing with child abuse, rape and domestic violence in one place. This should provide a foundation for developing a more joined-up, victim-focused service.
- **Response Teams:** It is proposed that teams are brought together to cover a larger footprint, yielding potential efficiencies and reducing ‘handovers’ of investigations.
- **Local Investigations:** It is proposed that teams of investigators will respond directly to the more serious and complex crimes, offering immediate victim – investigator contact.

Each BCU is led by a Chief Superintendent, who is known as the BCU Commander, and buildings, staff and resources will be shared across borough boundaries within the new BCU. The BCU Commander will be the ‘owner’ of the strategic relationship in their command, and will become a key contact for council Chief Executives and Leaders. In Ealing, Hounslow and Hillingdon, the BCU Commander is Chief Superintendent Paul Martin.

The role of BCU Commander will be supported by five superintendents, with four each leading on one of the core policing functions and being the senior point of contact for individual boroughs. The fifth superintendent will lead the BCU HQ.

Additionally, there are six Chief Inspectors supporting each of the superintendents in the core functions, including two detective chief inspectors in Safeguarding.

The BCU model continues to see two Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) and one PCSO in every London ward. The Metropolitan Police have made a commitment to officers spending the maximum amount of time in their wards, focusing on community engagement and local policing and not being abstracted for aid to other areas.

The MPS also confirmed that BCUs will increase the number of officers dedicated to working with young people in schools and educational establishments, and each will have a named officer that they will know.

Further to the operational changes at the borough level, the MPS will be bringing together the investigation of domestic abuse, child abuse and sexual offences that are currently being delivered separately by borough and specialist officers. The BCU will also have safeguarding teams that will work to prevent harm coming to those with mental health issues, or those who go missing, and to reduce the demand from repeat incidents. Safeguarding officers will attend the most serious crimes – alongside response officers – where they will set the investigation and make contact with the victim early on, with the aim of reducing the number of different officers that a victim has to deal with.

The new BCU model was piloted in two boroughs from January 2017, with Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering combining, as well as Camden and Islington boroughs combining together in the north.

On 6 June 2018, Hillingdon became one of the next two BCUs to become operational in London, when it joined the London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow to form the West Area Basic

Command Unit, and the boroughs merged their neighbouring police forces to become one of the twelve new BCUs.

A map of the London Boroughs, included their new BCU alignments, are detailed as shown below, along with the following table, which is comprised of each named BCU and the boroughs that populate them:



<b>Central North</b>	<b>CN</b>	<b>Camden</b>		<b>Islington</b>
<b>East Area</b>	<b>EA</b>	<b>Barking</b>	<b>Havering</b>	<b>Redbridge</b>
<b>East Central</b>	<b>AE</b>	<b>Hackney</b>		<b>Tower Hamlets</b>
<b>North Area</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Enfield</b>		<b>Haringey</b>
<b>North East</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>Newham</b>		<b>Waltham Forest</b>
<b>North West</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>Barnet</b>	<b>Brent</b>	<b>Harrow</b>
<b>South Area</b>	<b>SN</b>	<b>Bromley</b>	<b>Croydon</b>	<b>Sutton</b>
<b>South Central</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>Lambeth</b>		<b>Southwark</b>
<b>South East</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>Bexley</b>	<b>Greenwich</b>	<b>Lewisham</b>
<b>South West</b>	<b>SW</b>	<b>Kingston</b>	<b>Merton</b>	<b>Richmond upon Thames</b> <b>Wandsworth</b>
<b>West Area</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>Ealing</b>	<b>Hillingdon</b>	<b>Hounslow</b>
<b>West Central</b>	<b>AW</b>	<b>Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b>	<b>Kensington &amp; Chelsea</b>	<b>Westminster</b>



The Metropolitan Police Service made a commitment for a two-month period of local engagement, and four months of preparation work, prior to BCUs going live. The blueprinting took place during this period, and afterwards there was at least one month to allow for the go-live period. As previously mentioned, a pilot scheme was carried out across two new BCUs, and, once this was deemed a success, a roll-out of the BCUs across the other boroughs then took place in London.

The timelines involved for each respective roll-out of the BCU model is detailed in the table as follows:

Pilot from Late 2016	June 2018	September 2018	November 2018
East Area	West Area	North East	North Area
		South East	East Central
Central North	South West	South Central	West Central
		North West	South Area

The Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities Policy Overview Committee's Terms of Reference include responsibility for the policy overview of the Council's community safety function, as well as public safety and civil protection. As such, it was considered that a review into the Metropolitan Police's new structure and its working relationship with the Council be considered for a review.

As well as considering the role of the Community Safety Team and Anti-Social Behaviour and Housing Teams, alongside the new West Area BCU, the review also sought to better understand how the Council uses CCTV to tackle crime, particularly following investment in an upgraded CCTV system.

It was also important that the review looked in depth at how Council concerns were passed on to the Police, and whether the Council was receiving value for money under the new Tri-Borough model of policing.

## Borough Officers and Financing

Each member of the West Area BCU is funded and set out differently, and, following contact with Ealing and Hounslow, it was confirmed how each of the three Boroughs used their funding and officers:

<p><b>London Borough of Hillingdon</b></p>	<p>The Council funds two sergeants and 5.5 constables with two grants: an annual grant of £81k, and a further grant of £538k for three years, which ends in March 2020.</p> <p>These grants are matched by the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime, which provides a further 7.5 constables.</p> <p>Currently, in the north of the Borough, there is one sergeant and five constables, while one sergeant and eight constables operate in the south of the Borough.</p>
<p><b>London Borough of Ealing</b></p>	<p>Ealing accepted the “buy one, get one free” offer from MOPAC, and pays for one sergeant and three constables, which affords the Council one sergeant and seven constables.</p> <p>A problem-solving team is also funded by Ealing, comprising of one sergeant and six constables, who undertake around 40 hours of patrolling a week. This is funded via the House Revenue Account, and means that the majority of their work centres on the housing function. The cost of this is roughly £280k per year.</p> <p>Separately to this, Ealing also funds “Parkguard”, in partnership with Parks. This provides one 7-day per week, 12-hour patrol of two officers, and also one 5-day per week, 12-hour a day dog-and-officer patrol across the Borough’s parks, parking sites and housing estates. This service costs approximately £220k per year. Parkguard is totally Council-funded and a private company that is not police-related, although they do offer support to the Police regularly.</p> <p>The Police are based out of Ealing Police Station, but are regularly in the Community Safety section, and are tasked and supported by the Council, as is Parkguard.</p> <p>The taskings are undertaken and agreed in fortnightly meetings with officers for both services, and these involve the local inspector as well.</p>
<p><b>London Borough of Hounslow</b></p>	<p>The Borough has one police sergeant, nine Council police officers, and four housing police officers.</p> <p>Tasking is done via a monthly meeting held with all Council teams on the first Thursday of each month.</p> <p>Also, the Housing police officers are in contact with Housing leads and Housing officers who individually manage a quarter of the Borough each. Within these areas, the officers manage any Council and Police-related matters linked with Housing, such as ongoing anti-social behaviour and drugs issues.</p> <p>Other tasks also include school patrols, trading standards operations, traveller incursions, licensing, parking enforcement and on-street prostitution.</p>

## Safeguarding and BCUs

Each borough has arrangements in place to receive and triage safeguarding and child protection concerns regarding children in its area. These arrangements include assessing risk and vulnerability, in order to take decisions regarding statutory intervention at one end of the spectrum, or to provide or signpost to universal services accordingly.

Within these “front-door” arrangements, all boroughs all have Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH). These are led and overseen by children’s social care in governance terms, and include the police, public protection, education and health services, but can also include representatives from a range of other agencies, including adult social care, adult mental health, housing, probation and the voluntary sector.

The Hillingdon MASH team is located in a secure location, where each team member has access to their agency database and can lawfully share this information in a safe and managed way.

The MASH arrangements enable information from different agencies to be shared quickly and efficiency to build up a better picture of a child’s life from the outset, and assess risk and vulnerability. This makes it easier for social workers to decide on the best type of intervention that is required to protect the child and support the families, and allows families to get the right help quicker. With multi-agency processes and co-locations increasing, the understanding between agencies regarding different roles and statutory responses enables safe and appropriate information sharing.

Police involvement and commitment to the MASH is vital to an effective multi-agency front door. In addition, the recent innovation, which has seen the Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) officers co-located in a Children’s Social Care Assessment Team, has had some real benefits in terms of the timeliness and quality of both risk assessment, as well as appropriate engagement with Strategy Meetings. These strategy meetings are seen as a key initial meeting which starts to share individual risk assessments and plans for intervention for a child, or children, at risk of significant harm. There is also an appetite from Children’s Social Care Leaders in other parts of the capital for the wider use of CAIT co-location.

Regardless of the model of police command units in operation, the key elements of effective police engagement in safeguarding include the following:

- Ensuring sufficient specialist child abuse investigation officers;
- Ensuring single agency and multi-agency risk assessments take place within the statutory time frames;
- Ensuring joint visits and investigations, and multi-agency Strategy Meetings, are all held within the statutory timescales;
- Ensuring a move to vulnerability hubs does not reduce the chances of a child being seen by a specialist officer in the child abuse investigations;
- Ensuring officers who respond to safeguarding incidents that fall outside the remit of the vulnerability hubs (which include large numbers of lower level domestic abuse reports

- which would likely impact significantly on the well-being of children), are sufficiently well-trained and supported to identify and address risks to children and young people; and,
- Ensuring that the police are represented locally, and at the right level, at the range of child safeguarding meetings they are required to attend.

## Background Information & Connected Activity

In 2018, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) made the decision to close Uxbridge Police Station as part of a policy to close 65 police stations across London, leaving just one publicly-accessible station in each Borough.

Hillingdon Council offered to purchase the site to continue to keep the station open, but the Metropolitan Police refused to accept this offer. As such, the £5,000k provision for the purchase of the site was removed from the Capital Programme.

However, a £1,000k increase in the CCTV programme was included in the budget to expand and improve CCTV coverage across the Borough with a view to reducing both crime, and the fear of crime. In addition, a further £188k towards an enhanced CCTV / Community Safety offer was also included in the budget.

The Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP) is a statutory body made up from a number of statutory members that operates within the Borough and aims to keep residents of Hillingdon safe and able to participate in the full range of community activities without the fear of becoming a victim of crime. The multi-agency partnership is a statutory Community Safety Partnership, and, under the terms of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Police and Crime Act 2009, these Community Safety Partnerships are responsible for anti-social behaviour, behaviour affecting the environment, crime and disorder, reducing re-offending and substance misuse.

The SHP meets every three months, and comprises a number of representatives at an executive level from a number of responsible authorities (the Police, Local Authority, fire and rescue authority, health service and probation service), the elected Cabinet Member responsible for Community Safety at the Council, the Director of Public Health, a representative from MOPAC and the Chairman of Hillingdon's Safer Neighbourhood Board.

The Safer Hillingdon Partnership Board is responsible for:

- Decision making, direction setting, links with national and regional developments and operations;
- Ensuring adequate and appropriate levels of data sharing;
- Ensuring effective co-ordination of delivery at a borough-wide and neighbourhood level;
- Ensuring appropriate Links are made with national and regional developments and operations;
- Preparing and implementing the strategic assessment and partnership plan for the borough, determining the key priorities;

- Receiving and reviewing reports from the Council's Community Safety team on performance and delivery across the partnership plan; and,
- Receiving and reviewing reports as and when required from delivery partners who are accountable for the delivery of targets within their remit, performance management of all strategies, agreements, contracts and commissions.

The Hillingdon Safer Neighbourhood Board is the means by which the Mayor of London (through the Deputy Mayor and MOPAC) holds Borough Police Command Units to account for performance, to ensure that local residents have a voice in setting policing priorities, and giving access to a crime prevention fund for local delivery. This board is independent from Hillingdon Council, the Metropolitan Police and other statutory bodies.

The Council's External Services Select Committee also has the responsibility to scrutinise the performance of the Safer Hillingdon Partnership. At its meeting in September 2018, members of this Committee questioned the Metropolitan Police Service on the changes that were recently implemented, as well as its performance on a number of issues.

# Evidence & Witness Testimony

## Scoping the Review

In scoping and agreeing the review's Terms of Reference, which are set out in the appendices, the Committee sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the new policing structures in Hillingdon.

During its information gathering and call-for-evidence sessions, the Committee considered it important to take into account a selection of views from both Council officers and the Metropolitan Police to better understand how the policing changes had impacted upon their respective organisations and relationships.

Additionally, the Committee thought it was important to include CCTV within the review, following the Council's recent investment in the local CCTV systems and the CCTV Control Room, and agreed it would be helpful to discuss how footage was used and shared between the Council and the Metropolitan Police.

Therefore, any witnesses would be asked to touch upon the current working relationships, the impact the changes have had, and how the CCTV upgrade and new Control Room have had an effect on tackling crime within Hillingdon.

The following sections will outline the evidence received and these witness testimonies.

## Community Safety Team Testimony

The Community Safety Team (CST) identifies the needs of the Borough, with regards to crime prevention, and works alongside partners in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership to tackle a number of issues, such as youth violence, burglary, anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse. The team works alongside other Council departments, such as Housing, Anti-Social Behaviour and Social Care, as well as the Police, Fire Brigade and private sector landlords, to identify the issues that need to be tackled. Once these issues are identified, the CST's partners can pass on any resident feedback regarding local issues to the relevant partner, and action can then be taken to tackle the problem with their partners, such as the Police, truancy officers, environmental enforcement teams or Trading Standards, among others.

The Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP) receives progress reports on crime and sets targets for crime prevention. The SHP also completes needs assessments for the Borough and compares

Hillingdon with other neighbouring local authorities, and, once a year, sets a plan to tackle local issues. It is also able to hold partners to account for the delivery of local action plans to tackle these concerns. Information from the SNT and Ward Panels were also fed into the CST, and the changes in the structure means that there is now an Inspector for Neighbourhood Policing for all of Hillingdon, and one sergeant for every three wards.

The Service Manager for Community Safety meets with the Inspector and both local sergeants on a fortnightly basis, as well as other officers who bring cases to the Tasking Teams. There is also the opportunity to directly task the Police with issues that have been raised via Member Enquiries. Furthermore, the Police would be able to use a Tasking Team to deal with these issues. The Tasking Teams are also ring-fenced to Hillingdon, with money allocated for officers in Hillingdon only. In the absence of the Service Manager for Community Safety, a senior officer from the Community Safety Team attends the tasking meetings.

Officers confirmed that the Council are confident the Tasking Teams have a robust structure. One sergeant has changed since the formation of the new BCU, but this did not alter the relationship between the Council and the Police. Furthermore, it can be helpful for changes to take place, as it allows officers to bring best practice from other Boroughs or areas of the country. The two local partnership sergeants also meet at the end of each month with Council officers to discuss their day-to-day works results and examine what actions they have taken, to give the Council a better idea of what actions have been taken over the previous month.

The use of Tasking Teams allows the Council more ownership over local issues, as officers can be directed specifically to areas where they have heard local issues have arisen or may arise. The Service Manager for Community Safety confirmed to the Committee that this was a good way to ensure the Council get value for money for their contributions.

A testimony from the Police regarding Tasking Teams can also be found attached to this report as Appendix A.

It was, however, noted that when large-scale Metropolitan Police operations take place, such as the Notting Hill Festival, then Police Officers who are usually on patrol in Hillingdon may be called away to help. Further to this, it is important to remember that there are occasions when officers must be given flexibility to deal with issues that could be related to high-level intelligence that cannot be shared.

Officers confirmed that there were a number of specific areas where the new policing structures have been beneficial, and one of these such areas was fly-tipping.

Previously, when incursions onto land led to fly-tipping, court / judiciary agreement to take enforcement action could take a couple of days to pass before the issue could be tackled, while the Police could act immediately. However, the new BCU structure allows officers to contact the Borough Commander or Superintendent directly, and these incursions can be dealt with as a priority, which action taken immediately to prevent fly-tipping or damage to the site. Historically, this has been a major concern for residents and has come at a high financial cost to the Council, as cleaning up from fly-tipping diverts resources away from other areas, as well as being a

financial burden. The direct link that has been forged with senior Police figures within the BCU has allowed the Police to act quickly and effectively, and also foster a shared understanding of the priorities of the Council.

When questioned whether there was a possibility that the Council could lose its direct contact with the Police under the new structure, and that resources may be diverted away from Hillingdon to neighbouring boroughs, officers rejected that notion. It was accepted that on occasions, Police officers may be diverted away to help with issues outside Hillingdon, but this works both ways, and Hillingdon had the opportunity to call on additional officers from Hounslow and Ealing to help should any major issues arise. Additionally, the new structure aids responsiveness to issues and fosters a mutual understanding that is beneficial, as it not only gives the Council further experience and knowledge, but also means the Council is able to rely on officers outside the Borough.

## Police Testimony

Both the Chief Inspector for Neighbourhoods and Partnership and the Inspector for Neighbourhoods and Partnership from the West Area BCU attended a witness session to discuss the new structures from a Police perspective. It was confirmed that before the new BCU-merger, one of the current Partnership Inspectors was already working within Hillingdon, while the other worked in Hounslow.

Both the officers present at the witness session confirmed that they had been in post since June 2018, and were new to Hillingdon, although the Chief Inspector had previously worked in Ealing Borough. The Inspector noted that her role included responsibility for Hillingdon, Hounslow and Ealing, and through regular meetings with various areas of the Councils, it was possible to ensure that the Police and Council were working towards the same goals.

The Police confirmed that the new structures meant that there was a period of profound change with the BCU, but the West Area BCU had undoubtedly been a beacon of success, and although there are always some issues with major structural changes of this nation, the success of the new structure suggested it was definitely the right way forward, and the benefits of the changes far outweighed any of the teething problems that the BCU had faced thus far.

The Chief Inspector stated that the only constant within the Police was change, but was confident that the BCU had absorbed these latest changes very well, and successfully found a way to work smarter with less resources. The most significant challenge that was faced was the loss of officers, but the teams were doing very well coping with this.

However, many officers were currently working to their capacity, and noted that fatigue was a concern for many. As such, sustainability could then also become an issue, but the Police hoped that a recruitment drive, that was in progress, would help to allay some of these fears.

Regarding the use of firearms officers, the Police confirmed that the West Area BCU is an unarmed BCU, but there has been a recent uplift in the Firearms Command Unit, and more



armed-response vehicle units are deployable. These units are managed on a daily basis, and can respond to an incident quickly, so are often the first unit to the scene.

The Police confirmed that under the new policing structure, there were more regular meetings taking place between the Council and Police, with other Council departments represented at the meetings to improve cross-working practices. The Council's Deputy Director for Housing, Environment, Education, Health and Wellbeing confirmed that these meetings help the Council to ensure that they are getting value for money with regards to their financial contributions, and this allows the Service Manager for Community Safety to look at the Borough's priorities and ensure they are considered and protected by the Police, while also leading to more cohesive working that is directed more regularly through intelligence.

Initiatives are in place to improve problem areas for the Borough, and substantial work is taking place to tackle current issues, such as violent or knife crime. The Council's work alongside the Police has helped with these current concerns. For example, knife arches and plain-clothed police officers, coupled with the Safer Neighbourhood Board using companies to go into schools and deliver messages to pupils on the consequences of actions and knife crime, have been used to tackle this issue. Ward Panels have also reported that drug and knife crime have reduced lately, and this was promising news that reflected the good work happening to tackle these local concerns.

Appendix B, attached at the end of this report, outlines a number of examples where the Tasking Teams acted recently to tackle some of these issues within Hillingdon.

The ability to manage strategic relationships across the three boroughs were important to the new system, as each borough has varying objectives. However, regular meetings between the Police and Service Manager for Community Safety help the organisations work together and ensure that the best solutions come through a joint use of powers.

The new structure also helps each Borough benefit from good practice of the other; Hillingdon is now able to import good practice from both Hounslow and Ealing councils, and vice versa.

Information sharing is key to the BCU, and a daily digest of information was helpful, while day-to-day information sharing was a vast improvement on previous practices. The sharing of co-locations where possible also benefited all parties, and should be encouraged. With one Chief Inspector working across three boroughs, challenges could be expected, but the harmonising of meetings, and booking these meetings in the diary early, would help limit any problems. Furthermore, quick contact was often vital to clarify actions or prevent events, and the increased access to the Chief Inspector, usually via phone, increased the local authorities' access to the Police.

The Inspector for Neighbourhoods and Partnership agreed that the ability to share resources between the three boroughs was very helpful, and this cross-borough working has helped on large scale operations, such as a traveller eviction in June 2018, when a large police presence helped prevent any problems. The Chief Inspector also noted that shared interests and resources

across the three boroughs could be very advantageous, while secure MOPAC funding that was received helped all the local authorities.

The increased use of ward panel intelligence was seen as a potential benefit, particularly when information came from Ward Panel Chairmen. Additionally, Members' Enquiries lead to daily contact between ward sergeants and the Inspector for Neighbourhood Policing, which allows intelligence to be passed on immediately. As such, this led to improved information sharing.

The Police confirmed that with one sergeant for every three wards, it was not always possible to have a sergeant at every quarterly Ward Panel meeting to discuss ongoing crime trends, and often a less experienced officer may be present. The Chief Inspector for Neighbourhoods and Partnership confirmed that the BCU was, however, recruiting new talent as Dedicated Ward Officers (DWO), and an increase in numbers would help improve attendance at Ward Panel meetings.

Community Safety Team (CST) meetings were attended by ward panel representatives and Councillors, and this, coupled with the meetings that the Police have with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team (ASBET) and CST to share priorities, allow opportunities to feed in information from Ward Panel meetings if a Police Officer is not present. The Inspector for Neighbourhood Policing, who is in charge of the Safer Neighbourhood Team, also holds a monthly meeting with the service Manager for Community Safety, ASBET, and the other relevant teams, which provides another important opportunity to share information between the Council and Police.

The Inspectors informed the Committee that joint tasking meetings were key to the new structure, as each local authority is different, and it is important to keep a finger on the pulse and meet every fortnight to discuss any trends in criminal behaviour or ways to deal with problematic areas. These meetings have been very successful in Hillingdon, and the Police confirmed that they were very happy with the links that had been set up with Local Authorities. In contrast to the fortnightly meetings in Hillingdon, meetings between the Police and Hounslow took place on a monthly basis. This demonstrates that one size does not fit all, but it does allow for practices to suit the relevant Council, and the system was working well in Hillingdon currently. Furthermore, if good practice is in place in a neighbouring local authority, Councils can alter their own practices if they see fit and believe it will benefit crime prevention in the area.

The Chief Inspector and Inspector informed the Committee that they were very happy with the links that they had with Local Authorities, and the solutions for tackling major issues, such as moped crime or high-risk anti-social behaviour, have a strong level of buy-in at the local level. These shared priorities have also helped the MPS foster a strong working relationship with the Council.

The BCU could see major investment in the Police had taken place by the local authority, and funding led to a sergeant in both the north and south of the Borough, which is a significant asset and means that there is capacity to service a large borough. Furthermore, teams that are funded by the Council are ring-fenced to the borough of Hillingdon, and the Chief Inspector confirmed that this will remain the case.

The Chief Inspector also confirmed that the Council's major investment into the upgraded CCTV cameras and new CCTV Control Room was very welcome and CCTV was essential for the Police as evidence, as well as playing a role as a helpful crime reduction tool.

It was agreed that the local authority funding was generous, but the BCU was also stretched, as not all the vacancies have been filled, as the Police's emergency function and criminal investigation functions were both prioritised. The DWO teams remained under monthly pressure to deliver, and stability was necessary; as such, the Police informed the Committee that any support from the Council was very welcome.

The officers noted that there was a strong focus on the south of the borough, particularly with regards to knife and drug-related crimes, and three major operations had taken place recently. Outside of these forms of crime, the police targets were in-line with the priorities of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), but also the objectives of the local authority.

The Committee was informed that issues often arise during periods of change, and it was no different this time with the management-level significantly thinned down, but despite the learning curve and changes under the new BCU layout, the new system was working well and the Police were encouraged by the changes.

To conclude the evidence session, the Inspectors confirmed that the current structure was working really well from the Police perspective, and it allowed greater focus on problem areas and issues throughout the Borough.

The Committee thanked the Inspectors for taking the time to attend the meeting, and was encouraged to hear of the work that was being done, and that the Police and Council officers both feel similarly positive about the new policing structures.

## The Council's Digital CCTV Upgrade

CCTV infrastructure was a key area of investment for the Council to not only tackle crime, but also reduce the fear of crime around the Borough. There are around 900 CCTV cameras in Hillingdon, but many of these had been in operation for around twenty years, which led to the decision taken by Cabinet in July 2018 to agree a three-year programme to upgrade the CCTV cameras in the Borough.

The Council had invested £1.65m in over 800 state-of-the-art cameras, which store recorded data from across the Borough for 32 days, and the project also involved a major upgrade of the Borough's CCTV control centre, which a number of Committee Members had recently visited. This project was a joint effort by the Council's Programme and Asset Management and Community Safety teams, in conjunction with the Council's CCTV term contractor, security company, DSSL, and this new system will significantly enhance the surveillance capabilities of the Borough.

The Council's CCTV infrastructure was identified as in need of replacement and upgrade in 2017, as the current system was at the end of its life, with a number of faulty cameras producing either no images, or very low quality images.

The previous analogue system used by the Council was replaced with new digital, high-definition, wireless cameras that are connected to the control room hub.

The investment in new technology brings with it new opportunities for maximising the contribution of CCTV to community safety, as it means more cameras can be connected to the CCTV Control Room wirelessly, which in turn increases the surveillance capability of the Council.

Additionally, the new system has the potential of sharing information or images with police officers on the ground, and those within the control room can guide officers to an incident on the ground.

The upgrade included Town Centres, housing estates or fly-tipping hotspots, and will be extended across the Borough to include automatic number plate recognition, review mobile camera positions, and introduce body cameras for Enforcement Officers in ASBET. A demonstration of facial recognition cameras is planned and will be looked to roll out in the future to assist both Council and Police Officers. These additions will reduce crime and the fear of crime, which, in turn, assists in developing the economic well-being of the Borough and encourages greater use of the town centres, green spaces, estates, car parks and community facilities.

The installation of new CCTV High Definition (HD) cameras with 32-day recording capacity have already been installed across the Borough in the following locations:

- Town Centres;
- Libraries;
- Green Spaces;
- Adult and Children's Social Care sites;
- Housing upgrades;
- Fly-tipping hot spots; and,
- Council amenity sites.

The priority, to date, for the programme was to improve Town Centre cameras, upgrade the Control Room infrastructure to a modern working technology platform, and address issues where cameras had failed or were failing.

Promoting the new CCTV capability to the Police is continuing to raise awareness of the upgrade programme and ensure the Police are using the evidence available from the cameras to support law enforcement and keep residents safe. CCTV demonstrations took place during November and December 2018, and the Police informed the Council's Head of Repairs and Engineering that they are now using the CCTV systems on a daily basis.

The Council will next extend the use of CCTV across the Borough, which will involve connecting more cameras to the Control Room, thus increasing surveillance capability, and also installing

cameras in new sites. Additionally, the introduction of Body Cameras to assist Enforcement officers in ASBET, and potential facial recognition cameras to assist Council and Police Officers with support uses in special cases, were planned as future developments, while Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) was being progressed with the Police, and a review of all mobile CCTV locations and the replacement of 25 mobile cameras with fixed cameras is planned, and it is hoped to be completed by the end of 2019-20.

Feedback on the new Hayes Town Centre CCTV cameras has been very positive, with first rate images that have allowed an improvement in the identification of suspects via CCTV, due to the higher quality imagery. The BCU and local authorities must both take advantage of such an upgrade, and an open line for the Service Manager for Community Safety to the control room was a helpful addition. A line of communication between the Police and the CCTV Control Room was also fundamental, as was the ability to view live feeds of major incidents as Police Officers could receive images directly on phones or tablets to help operations.

The new technology also allows the cameras to “auto-track” someone or something, as the cameras can turn to follow a moving person or vehicle, and provide sharp, clear images, even in low-level light. Additionally, attempts to smash the new CCTV cameras have taken place, but these were unsuccessful due to the robust nature of the cameras. As such, the cameras continued to record without damage, and produced images to assist in identifying individuals responsible for the vandalism.

Police Officers were able to watch live imagery on static cameras, but there was no control over mobile cameras currently. In the cases where mobile CCTV cameras were required for evidence, Police officers need to walk the route of the crime to discover where CCTV was situated. However, all crime reports include a question regarding whether there was CCTV footage on an incident, and as such, the new system allows for a phone call to the Community Safety room from the responsible Police Officer, which allows the Community Safety Team to provide the location of cameras, and help the officer find out whether CCTV footage may exist. In addition to this, CCTV images could be sent live to the Police, and the Inspector confirmed that this was an invaluable tool as it gave officers a picture of the issue before they had even arrived at the scheme.

When locating cameras, the Council and Police work together to look at all options to ensure that cameras have the most impact on preventing crime. There have even been cases when the Police were concerned about the lack of CCTV coverage, but in these cases, CCTV was installed. The process for moving a ‘stand-alone’ camera involved a number of steps, including ensuring that the camera move adhered to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and a privacy impact assessment. Once these steps were cleared, current evidence must prove that the camera was justifiable and other less intrusive actions had failed. In this case, the Council would engage with the Police and contact centre to gather the relevant evidence, and then put it a request to the Cabinet Members to move the camera. Once agreed by the Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce & Regeneration and Leader of the Council, often following a site visit, the

installation and move of the camera is approved and its installation can take place, which could take up to ten days.

The Inspector did note that the location of all mobile cameras was not required for all Police Officers, and some operations will not be known to other units who are not involved, so a level of access to information is not required. However, access to CCTV resources must be communicated well to officers, and the Police noted that they would explore the possibility of keeping the locations of all CCTV cameras, both static and mobile, at the top levels of the BCU.

With regards to image requests, the process is also working very well, and although it can take a couple of days to process a request, the images are rarely required immediately.

One potential concern regarding the system was that the control room was not staffed for 24 hours a day, which limited its effectiveness at some hours. Both the Police and Council were, however, in agreement that 24/7 staffing would further improve the service, as CCTV can carry a lot of weight in investigations, but finances would need to be allocated to provide this service.

## The New CCTV Control Room

The new CCTV control room is considered a resounding success, and the Police are very happy with it. The major upgrade of the Borough's CCTV control centre has led to the control room being fully equipped with new screens, furniture and equipment, giving operators a much more sophisticated system and an unprecedented ability to monitor different parts of the borough at the same time. The room also has space for police colleagues when required. Furthermore, the security desk at the Civic Centre has also been refurbished to make it compatible with the new system.

The Control Room is linked with neighbouring boroughs too, which has led to improved communications and warnings from these boroughs, and vice versa, which is considered one of the major benefits of the new tri-borough structure. Information sharing among the Police is considered very good, with the relevant teams and officers able to react very quickly to local issues.

Some of the CCTV cameras' systems are not yet linked back to the control room via WiFi, but they can be viewed locally on the ICT network in the Control Room. Currently, 668 cameras were not linked back to the Control Room via WiFi, but roughly half of these are due to be as part of the continuing CCTV upgrade programme throughout 2019 – 2020, with the remaining cameras due to be linked to the Control Room in a future programme. Additionally, 426 of these cameras are already linked back to the Control Room by WiFi, allowing their footage to be recorded in the Control Room. It is also confirmed that this WiFi system is encrypted and secure from 'hacking'.

Members of the Committee were invited to visit the new Control Room during November, and were very encouraged by their visit.

CCTV footage is made available for the local police force, courtesy of police operators within the Control Room. Images can then be provided to officers on the ground immediately if the Control Room becomes aware of an issue via footage from a camera. The Police can also formally request footage, and this can be provided by the Control Room much faster than previously. These developments were considered very encouraging, and any methods that helped speed up the process of information sharing with the Police were welcomed by the review.

When local residents report issues to the Police or Council, the new CCTV system can also be beneficial, as the Control Room is tasked with locating CCTV images of the area to pass onto the Police Force. This practice has led to successful arrests already, following the case of a spate of car break-ins.

Further improvements to technology, such as facial recognition, were also seen as excellent potential developments. CCTV demonstrations took place during November and December, and the Police are using the CCTV Control Room on a regular basis for their operations.

## Possible future upgrades to the CCTV System

Other future upgrades to technology that might impact positively on the CCTV systems were also raised as part of the review. Officers confirmed proposals for automatic number plate recognition technology, which could help populate a database to flag vehicles that did not have tax or insurance, as well as vehicles that were of interest to Police and suspected of being used in relation to crimes. This would also allow the Police to build an idea of vehicle movements, which would give a broader picture of suspicious vehicles' locations that would better combat crime.

Facial recognition through cameras was also a further development that would help the Police in their role. This could be achieved by using both frontal and side images, and initial indications suggested the technology is being developed to a very high level. This could be used in both town centres and targeted areas at first, before being rolled out to the rest of the Borough, and officers from both the BCU and Council were positive that it should lead to further successful prosecutions.

The Council's CCTV contractor is due to deliver a demonstration of facial recognition in Hillingdon. A camera will be programmed with the software to recognise a case studies' face to demonstrate the capabilities for facial recognition, which in the future could assist Council and Police officers to identify persons in the Borough. This technology will be considered to assist with identifying criminals and people who commit anti-social behaviour and fraud, but additionally, it may be able to assist Council Officers with identifying missing children and missing or vulnerable adults.

Body cameras for Police Officers were also proposed that could transmit real-time images from officers to the CCTV Control Room. There will be an option to purchase a mixture of 4G and non-4G body cameras, with the former linked to the genetec CCTV system and able to be viewed

live by CCTV operators in the Control Room, but non-4G body cameras would only be able to record locally.

The Committee noted that necessary safeguards would need to be in place to protect any personal data as a result of using such technology.

## Testimony from Anti-Social Behaviour Team

The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Manager attended on behalf of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team (ASBET) and discussed how anti-social behaviour was being combated in the Borough under the new policing structures.

ASBET is an enforcement team, and considered an 'extended arm of the policing family', which is governed by the same rules as the Police in the vast majority of cases.

The team is responsible for tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB), waste management issues ranging from rubbish being put out on the wrong day to large fly-tipping instances that were tackled alongside the Environment Agency, tenancy management breaches, noise, dust and odour nuisance, abandoned vehicles, and oversaw services such as animal welfare and pest control that were looked after by contractors. The team is also involved in "action days" alongside environmental enforcement officers and ASB officers.

ASBET have a very strong working relationship with the Community Safety Team, particularly after the move to a Tri-Borough policing structure, as weekly meetings were held with the Community Safety Team to discuss concerns, successes and areas of cross-over between the two teams. In addition to this, fortnightly meetings were held with the Police Tasking Team, where officers could submit tasks for the Police to complete, such as combating ASB reported to the Council by residents in the area affected, including, but not limited to, street-drinking, harassment, drug use, drug dealing and intimidation.

The ASBET Manager confirmed that when the assistance of the Police was required, this could be arranged with the help of the Service Manager for Community Safety and CST, and on these occasions, support from the Police was received very regularly, considering the limited resources that the Police are working with. When urgent requests were needed to be made to the Police, the Service Manager for Community Safety was able to pass these on directly.

ASBET and CST share a very strong working relationship, largely because the two teams' work is heavily interlinked. Prior to the new policing structure, ASBET officers approached Police Officers in the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) directly with issues, and this led to varying degrees of success. Some SNT officers were keen to be involved in issues, while others were less enthusiastic. However, the new arrangements make it much easier to pass on information to the Police, and this leads to a greater success in dealing with issues, courtesy of the bi-weekly tasking meetings, while responses to tasks are more positive too.

In the cases of persistent dumping of rubbish, ASBET work closely with the Waste Services Team to identify potential fly-tipping "hotspots", and visit these sites throughout the week to collect



materials and search the refuse for evidence, before taking appropriate action. However, due to the increased public awareness of fraud, and anti-fraud measures such as removing names or addresses from letters, it is increasingly difficult to find evidence. Additionally, when CCTV has identified a culprit, the footage cannot currently identify who the person is, and ASBET must investigate this, which can prove difficult as many people are reluctant to share their knowledge of who are person may be. However, it is possible that the new proposed facial recognition system would help identify suspects who are fly-tipping, and lead to more successful prosecutions.

With regards to the working relationship between ASBET and the Police, it was confirmed that when ASBET are notified of an issue, they look at all aspects of the report and consider whether it is within the remit of the Police. If this is the case, then a tasking form is completed and submitted to the Police. Urgent issues, information, or requests are passed on to the Police outside the fortnightly meetings are priorities.

Various information is sent from ASBET to the Tasking Teams, and this information is presented to the Tasking Officers fortnightly, while the Community Safety Team also pass on other issues that have arisen from other boards. This information could be received from all over the Borough, and is passed to the Police when necessary, with the Police then stating what action can be taken, and what issues are for others, such as dedicated Ward Officers. It is then up to Tasking Officers to prioritise the issues that they have received, as there may be information on cases that the Council is not privy to.

As crime does not stop at borough borders, there is crossover between Hillingdon and its neighbouring boroughs on certain issues when affordable, such as traveller incursions. On these occasions in the past, neighbouring local authorities have gathered together to share information and look for an emerging picture of the scenario, including potential future issues that may arise, and intelligence sharing. It is important to build on these scenarios and invite other local authorities to participate and help combat arising problems, and in the past, regular meetings with the London Boroughs of Hounslow and Ealing and Buckinghamshire County Council took place, and it has been suggested that these meetings are regenerated in the future.

A monthly meeting between the Service Manager for Community Safety and the CST Managers in both Hounslow and Ealing does already take place, which helps foster closer working relationships and the sharing of resources, and the Inspector for Neighbourhoods and Partnership also attends to inform the Council of any emerging borough-wide trends. Additionally, the Partnership and Prevention Hub, based in Hounslow, sends a daily update of crimes to the CST, some of which are cross-borough crimes.

The ASBET is also building relationships with social landlord colleagues. In the past there were issues in this area, and restructuring had held relationship-building back, but regular meetings between ASBET and social landlords were helping to build relationships. These regular meetings allow the Council to question landlords on actions that have been taken, and social landlords are also able to refer issues back to the Council or ask for information regarding CCTV or ASB concerns. It is considered important to build a two-way working relationship, and while this has

been achieved with some social landlords, it is important the Council continue to try and achieve this with all involved. The Committee agreed that it was vital the Council is proactive, and not just reactive to issues, and it may be useful for Housing Associations to also have a voice at the table to express concerns over ASB and other issues in time.

The ASBET Manager was confident that the right structures and systems were in place for his team, while communications were good and there was no need for extra resources or officers as things stand. Furthermore, the use of the Service Manager for Community Safety as the single point of contact worked very well. While it was accepted there are good and bad moments in any working relationship, bad moments were few and far between, as the structure was good, processes simple, and currently everything was fit for purpose.

## Online Community Safety Community (OWL)

Hillingdon is considered to be leading the way with regards to OWL, which allow the BCU to contact local businesses, residents and Neighbourhood Watch directly. OWL has been a very good news story for Hillingdon, and is beneficial for both the BCU and local residents. The local authority has been very supportive of OWL, with nearly 5,000 views and 16,000 addresses signed up to the system. Private CCTV can also be used as part of the system, which has proved to be very helpful.

The Police confirmed that officers and local residents were supportive of OWL, and the potential to upload images of suspects to OWL would be very helpful. The Police have promoted the system heavily, and agreed that it is helpful for the Council to also publicise OWL, as it was confirmed the OWL system has huge potential and use of the system is steadily improving.

OWL had been rolled out across all 22 wards of the Borough, although the uptake by local residents remained varied. The Committee, however, agreed it was good to make residents aware of the system, but it was important to ensure that good news stories are also circulated widely to residents.

# Findings & Recommendations

From the evidence provided, the Committee concluded that the new BCU system was working well, and both the Police and Council officers require the continuing support of the Council, wherever possible, to ensure the system carries on delivering results.

All the evidence collected allowed the Committee to agree review findings which aim to help the new BCU system continue its work, and this led to a number of recommendations that were aimed at helping allow the Police and relevant Council departments continue their work to keep Hillingdon safe. These recommendations are outlined below:

The Committee agreed that the Community Safety Team had taken the new structure in its stride, and that the department has worked tirelessly to help the transition to the new BCU. It was considered vital that the Community Safety Team continue to be supported by the Council in its work to allow this good work to continue, and it is important that the department have the resources to maintain these standards. On that basis, it was recommended that:

**1**

**That the Council recognise the significant improvement in performance by the Community Safety Team over the past year, and ensure that the department remains adequately resourced to continue to carry out its work.**

It was clear throughout the review that information sharing and close working relationships with neighbouring boroughs would be crucial to the success of the new BCU. These cross-borough relationships must be maintained, as it will not only help to reduce crime across the area, but allow successful procedures and working practices to be shared across the three boroughs. These working relationships and close ties with the London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow will help tackle crime, and the prevention of crime, and must be maintained. The Committee, therefore, recommended:

**2**

**That Hillingdon's Community Safety Team continue to share best practice and remain in constant communication with the other boroughs that make up the West London Basic Command Unit (BCU).**

It was considered vital that teams within the Council were able to liaise with each other, and outside bodies with ease, to ensure the safety of the community. Housing Associations are an important part of day-to-day life, and it is important that the Council work closely with these organisations to ensure the safety of their tenants. This may require working together to look after residents, but also using CCTV to ensure that those who commit crimes or anti-social behaviour do not avoid prosecution, and thus, protect neighbouring residents. Having given regards to these issues, it was recommended:

**3**

**That regular and improved communication takes place between the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Community Safety Team with Housing Associations, in order to proactively share video evidence of anti-social or criminal behaviour that may be carried out on housing estates.**

The Committee heard a lot of evidence regarding the CCTV upgrade programme, and agreed that the CCTV upgrade was a positive for the Borough, that would not only help tackle crime, but also offer assurances to those residents who fear crime. The new CCTV system was spoken of in glowing terms by officers in Community Safety, ASBET and the Police alike, and the upgrades should provide a huge boost to Hillingdon when tackling crime. It was important for the Council to continue to ensure that CCTV is used to benefit the Borough, and as such, the Committee is keen that officers report back on the developments and the use of CCTV to make sure that it has as great an impact as possible on Hillingdon. The Committee, therefore, recommended:

**4**

**That the current CCTV upgrade programme is considered a success, to date, and that the ongoing roll-out is continued, as planned, with confirmation provided to the Committee upon completion. Upon conclusion of the roll-out, it is requested that officers return to the Committee, in a sensible timeframe, to provide quantitative analysis to show the impact the CCTV Programme has had on Hillingdon.**

The CCTV Control Room upgrade was considered by the Committee to be a resounding success. Members who visited the Control Room were very impressed with the new room, and understood that its impact on tackling crime within the Borough would be very positive. The upgrade would allow better surveillance of Hillingdon, and the Police and Council to work together to prevent crime, and prosecute those who have acted unlawfully. The Control Room must be open to the Police when they require evidence to help tackle crime, and it remains imperative that the Police Force can continue to use the CCTV room whenever required. Furthermore, the Control Room should remain accessible for Police Officers who may not be on active duty, to allow them to operate effectively, even if they are not working outside in the Borough. With this in mind, Councillors recommended:

**5**

**That Council Officers are congratulated on their impressive upgrade of the CCTV Control Room, and that the Council continues to work in partnership with the Police, and allow access to Members of the Police Force who may not be able to operate in active duty.**

During the review, it was noted that the Control Room was not manned overnight. However, it was widely accepted that, in times of financial restraint, it was difficult to finance the staffing of the Control Room for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Despite this, it was noted that extending the hours of operation for the Control Room would be very beneficial to tackling crime. As such, the Committee noted that additional resources had been allocated in the 2019/2020 budget to fund the manning of the Control Room for additional extended hours. This extension of hours would give the Police added support throughout the day, with officers able to direct officers to areas where crime has taken place or is at threat of crime through the use of CCTV. The Committee propose an increase in the hours of operation of the control room consistent with the additional funding approved in the 2019/20 budget for this purpose. Having considered all of this evidence, it was therefore recommended:

**6**

**That consideration is given to extending the hours of operation when the Control Room is manned, in order to achieve the maximum possible results of identifying crime and anti-social behaviour when it is happening.**

The Out-of-Hours Team remains an important port of call for emergencies that take place outside the usual working day. This team is required to respond and act on the issues that are reported from residents, and, as the Council and Police continue to improve information sharing practices and work together to tackle crime, it would be beneficial to aid links between the Police and Out-of-Hours Team as well. The Committee agreed that it would help the work of the Out-of-Hours Team if they had the opportunity to use, or work closely with officers in, the CCTV Control Room, which may help both the Council and Police when emergencies arise. As such, it was agreed to recommend that:

**7**

**That the Out-of-Hours Team, rather than being based at a desk during night shifts, are located in the CCTV Control Room to alert operators to any issues that are being reported.**

It was noted that, with technology improving at a fast rate, facial recognition could become a vital part of the Council and Police CCTV function. This would allow for criminals to be identified by CCTV, and would remove the need for the Police to have to ask residents for help when identifying those accused of criminal behaviour. As facial recognition is likely to become a part of the CCTV function, Members argued that this system could be developed further to help in situations where vulnerable residents were missing.

In the cases of missing children, once consent is received from the parent, guardian or responsible party, facial recognition could be used to help identify missing children through the use of CCTV. This would be an efficient, cost-effective, and time-saving method to help search for a missing child, and, if CCTV did help identify a missing child, the CCTV system could be used to track the child while Police officers were dispatched to the location.

With the case of a missing vulnerable adults, this facial recognition could also be used, to ensure the safety of the missing person. The CCTV would be able to use a photo of the missing person, and its facial recognition system would be able to match this person to the image to ensure that, if they were within the Borough and on CCTV, they could be identified quickly and found before coming to harm.

The use of facial recognition CCTV software would need to be subject to a successful pilot to ensure that the technology was suitable. Additionally, the use of any facial recognition software would also have to comply with Data Protection regulations. However, as the Council own and manage the CCTV infrastructure, the Council is also the data controller and would, therefore, be responsible for any data protection-related issues associated with CCTV.

It is requested the Cabinet commission a study into the use of this facial recognition software to understand the benefits and cost implications of such a scheme, and explore how the technology may be used most efficiently to help locate missing children or vulnerable residents in particular.

Along with ensuring the necessary privacy safeguards and protocols required using this technology, the Committee, therefore, recommended that:

8

**That Cabinet is requested to agree officers undertake a study into the use of facial recognition CCTV software to enhance community safety, including action to find missing children and vulnerable adults, and to ensure compliance with Data Protection requirements, reporting back to the Cabinet Member for Communities, Commerce and Regeneration on the way forward, and thereafter, the Committee for information.**

The Committee noted its support for the work of the Community Safety Team and the Borough's Tasking Teams, and it was clear that this work was very effective under the new structure. The successes of the Tasking Teams, in line with the Council's priorities, meant it was considered vital to continue the working relationship to as high a standard as practicable. The funding of additional officers was considered an important aspect of the Council's work to tackle crime, as

these Tasking Team Officers played a significant role in keeping the Borough safe. As a result of this, it was recommended that:

9

**Where possible, Hillingdon Council continues to fund additional officers who form the Borough's Tasking Teams, who receive instruction from the Community Safety Team on where to target, and focus efforts based on local knowledge and priorities.**

The Council have received information from the Mayor's Office that the new policing partnership offer will give councils in London the option to 'buy' police officers at a discounted price, subject to some caveats, but the Committee noted that it was not the same offer as the present scheme, which allowed Councils to 'buy one and get one free'.

The current funding scenario allowed the Council to appoint another 7.5 constables as part of the Tasking Teams, and these constables have been crucial to the BCU, to allow the Council to tackle its priorities alongside the Police. The Committee noted that the potential loss of this match funding would have a significant detrimental impact on the Council's ability to tackle crime in targeted areas, as it would be difficult to find the resources for 7.5 constables without the match funding.

It was noted that Hillingdon's current agreement with the Council expires on 31 March 2020, and the changes would not affect the Council until 1 April 2020.

As such, the Committee urge the Council to raise with MOPAC in the strongest possible terms the continuation of match funding of police officers to and support councils in their important work to tackle crime. As such, it was recommended that:

10

**That the Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce and Regeneration be requested to submit the Council's comments to the Mayor of London and MOPAC's review of the possible withdrawal of match funding previously given to Tasking Teams, supporting the continuation of this scheme to provide additional officers for our Borough.**

# Terms of Reference

**The following Terms of Reference were agreed by the Committee from the outset of the review:**

1. To understand the role played by, and, if required, what changes are necessary for the Community Safety team to work alongside the new, emerging West Area Basic Command Unit for the Metropolitan Police;
2. Consider how interface works on a daily basis, how contact takes place at a strategic level, and what synergy comes from the Council's investment in upgraded CCTV, in particular, the use of town centre Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras by the Police;
3. Confirming links to the Anti-Social Behaviour and Housing Teams, and defining clear lines of responsibility for the Police, Registered Social Landlords, and other external bodies from issues arising;
4. How can the Council-funded Tasking Teams, both north and south of the A40, be managed going forward, and what good news results can be expected to reassure residents that Hillingdon is safe?; and,
5. Confirming that the Council is receiving value for money for its contributions to the West Area Basic Command Unit, and ensuring that money is not redirected away from Hillingdon to the other neighbouring Boroughs.



# Witnesses

The Committee received evidence from the following witnesses:

<p><b>Witness Session 1</b> <b>20 September 2018</b></p>	<p>Mr Dan Kennedy, Deputy Director of Housing, Environment, Education, Health &amp; Wellbeing Ms Jacqui Robertson, Service Manager for Community Safety</p>
<p><b>Witness Session 2</b> <b>11 October 2018</b></p>	<p>Ms Lisa Cronin, Inspector, Neighbourhoods &amp; Partnerships Mr Andrew Deane, Chief Inspector, Neighbourhoods &amp; Partnerships Ms Jacqui Robertson, Service Manager for Community Safety</p>
<p><b>Witness Session 3</b> <b>6 November 2018</b></p>	<p>Mr Bill Hickson, Anti-Social Behaviour &amp; Environment Manager Ms Jacqui Robertson, Service Manager for Community Safety</p>
<p><b>Witness Session 4</b> <b>8 January 2019</b></p>	<p>Mr Gary Penticost, Head of Repairs and Engineering Ms Jacqui Robertson, Service Manager for Community Safety</p>

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# Appendices

## Appendix A - Police Testimony of Partnership Tasking Teams

Both Partnership Tasking Teams (PTTs) are directed to patrol areas and conduct activities which are identified by Hillingdon Local Authority. These are brought to the PTT's attention directly by Council Members or via the bi-weekly tasking meeting, which is held at the Civic Centre.

These taskings are recorded individually on a Tasking Request Form, which is generated by the Council and sent to the relevant PTT. At the end of every month, a work return is sent to the Council Community Safety Team by each of the PTTs. This is a detailed report, which includes statistics around arrests, crime reports and stop/searches. There is also some more detailed explanation around some 'Good News' stories. I believe this to be an effective and efficient tasking process, which is both transparent and detailed enough to withstand scrutiny.

Both of the PTTs have a sergeant in charge of day-to-day activities, and report to an Inspector who works closely with them. Both PTTs appreciate and understand that they are in a privileged position, which enables them to generate their own work and deal with their own case files from start to finish, which is a rewarding process.

Any performance issues with individual officers are identified early and dealt with effectively. The PTTs are relatively small and, therefore, every team member has to be competent and productive, notwithstanding the fact that there is consistent supervision. This means that a close professional working relationship is formed within the PTTs.

## Appendix B - Case Studies from Partnership Tasking Teams

*Below are some case studies from each of the Partnership Tasking Teams, which provide insight into some of the good work which they are engaged with.*

### Case Study I

One case was the arrest and conviction of a male, who was sentenced to five years, seven months at Isleworth Crown Court for the following offences:

1. Possess with intent to supply a Class A drug - Heroin
2. Possess with intent to supply a Class A drug - Cocaine
3. Possess an offensive weapon in a public place - Two Machetes
4. Possess an offensive weapon in a public place - Knuckle Duster
5. Possess a controlled drug of Class B - Cannabis / Cannabis Resin

On Monday 8 October 2018 at approximately 1335hrs, funded team officers were out on patrol in plain clothes in Yeading. When they entered the car park on Friar Road, they noticed a number of known Class A drug users were congregating in the location. As they entered the car park these noticed two silver vehicles parked up, a Skoda Fabia and a Seat Leon.

The Officers noticed a male suspect sitting in the Skoda. Officers have approached the Skoda and noticed a large quantity of what they believed to be Class A drugs in the middle console. The Driver got out of the vehicle and started running. The Officers have given chase, and after a few minutes the suspect was detained and officers recovered all of the drugs he had tried to discard.

The officers searched the Skoda and located a large amount of drugs, believed to be Class A in a carrier bag, along with various drug paraphernalia, including cling film, rizla papers and a digital set of scales with remnants of a brown powder, believed to be heroin, on the plate.

Numerous large balls containing small wraps of what officers believe to be Class A drugs, along with two large machete knives, either side of the driver's seat, and a knuckle duster, have all been recovered from inside.

The suspect was arrested, charged and remanded for court. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to five years, seven months for the offences. This story was published in the local newspaper at the following link:

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/west-london-news/hayes-man-jailed-after-police-15539048>

## Case Study II

Another story that made the headlines was a knife arch operation, planned and executed by the funded team in Hayes. As part of the Metropolitan Police's fight against knife crime, the funded team in Hayes organised a knife arch operation at the major train stations in the Borough, namely Hayes and Harlington train station, West Drayton train station and Uxbridge tube station.

Train passengers had to go through a knife arch during rush hour, and the team also invited a team of specialist behavioural detection officers from the Counter Terrorism Command to assist with the operation.

The operation saw the arrest of two suspects who tried to avoid the officers. One of the suspects was arrested for drug supply offences. He had a large amount of drugs when he was intercepted and succeeded in swallowing the drugs. He was taken to hospital by the ambulance service and, a few hours later, secreted the drugs in hospital. His home was subsequently search by officers and more drugs were found at his home address.

The suspect was charged with numerous offences, and the case will be going to Isleworth Crown Court soon. Local media also published the story, which can be found below for further reading:

<https://www.getwestlondon.co.uk/news/west-london-news/dramatic-arrest-outside-hayes-harlington-15044179>

## Case Study III

The funded team has been at the forefront in the use of community protection notices and criminal behaviour orders (CBOs). The team has succeeded to impose criminal behaviour orders on prolific offenders who are making life miserable for local residents. As part of the new powers given to the Police in the new Anti-Social Behaviour Act, the Police has imposed CBOs on several offenders after their convictions prevented them from operating in the Hayes Town area. Some of the offenders are not allowed to associate with certain people, have more than one mobile phone or sim card, and/or are banned from certain areas in Hayes for the duration of the order.

The team also uses Community Protection Notices to prevent further escalations of anti-social behaviour from people who have not been convicted in a court of law, and whose offending is at a low level. This had been used on three offenders so far; two offenders breached the notice and were charged, sent to court, and convicted for breaching the notices.

## Case Study IV

On 3 January 2019, funded team officers arrested two suspects in a stolen vehicle. Intelligence was received that a stolen vehicle had been parked in a residential area. Officers attended the location in plain clothes and waited for the occupants to return to the vehicle. A male and female returned to the vehicle and were subsequently arrested after a brief foot chase. Both were charged for theft of a motor vehicle.

The male suspect, whilst in custody, was further arrested by officers when his DNA came back in relation to another stolen vehicle that was abandoned after an accident. His DNA was recovered from the driver airbag of the vehicle when it was involved in an accident.

The suspect was also charged with aggravated vehicle taking, driving without insurance, driving without a licence and making off from the scene of an accident.

## Case Study V

During the months of October and November last year, as part of the team's open door strategy, some Hillingdon Councillors were invited to come out on patrol with the Police to see their work.

Several Councillors took up the invitation and, on 19 October 2018, three Councillors went out on patrol with the Police, accompanied by the Service Manager for Community Safety, to see what the tasking team do and the difficulties they face on a daily basis.

The Councillors went to Heathrow Police Custody to see how prisoners are dealt with after arrest, and went on patrol with the team in the Red Brick Estate, Hayes Town Centre, and other anti-social behaviour hotspots. A second batch of Councillors went on patrol with the Police in November.

The opportunity to see first-hand the work taken with Police and how anti-social behaviour was dealt with in the community was welcomed by the local Councillors, and the feedback was very positive.