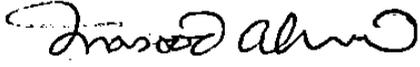
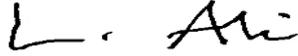


LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Meeting / Date	Cabinet/ 21 June 2016	
Report Title	Review of Support for Victims, Community Safety Scrutiny Committee	
Chair of Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Masood Ahmad, Chair, Communities Scrutiny Committee	Signature  *Chair to present report to Cabinet
Cabinet Portfolio	Councillor Liaquat Ali MBE JP, Portfolio Lead Member, Community Safety and Cohesion	 * Signed if Lead member considers they have had sufficient time to respond at point of publication of the report
Report Author/ Contact details	Kate Bell, Interim Head of Policy & Public Affairs Culture & Communities 020 8496 4933, kate.bell@walthamforest.gov.uk	
Wards affected	All	
Public Access	OPEN	
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Safety Scrutiny Committee review, Support for Victims 2. EIA Screening – Community Safety Committee review 	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the Community Safety Scrutiny Committee report into Support for Victims which was produced in March 2016.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to note the findings of the Community Safety Scrutiny Committee report, which can be found in full in Appendix 1, and to agree the recommendations contained in the report in Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet is recommended to:
 - 2.1.1 Note the findings of the report as set out in Appendix 1

- 2.1.2 Agree to ask officers to implement the recommendations of the Community Safety Scrutiny Report into Support for Victims, as set out in paragraph 3.7, noting that the implementation of those recommendations must be met within the existing budget allocation, and reporting back to Cabinet if they cannot be implemented or cannot be met from within the existing budget allocation.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 As part of the 2015/16 work programme, the Community Safety Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of support for victims in Waltham Forest. The findings and recommendations of the report were agreed in the 23 March 2016 meeting of the Committee and are set out in full in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Although support for victims is an element of many items taken by the Committee over the year, it was considered at two specific meetings which looked at:
- the work undertaken by the Metropolitan Police Service
 - the work of the Neighbourhoods Team to introduce the community trigger and tackle anti-social behaviour.
- 3.3 The Code of Practice for Victims (The Victims' Code) defines a victim as someone who has made an allegation to the police in England and Wales that they have directly experienced criminal conduct, or that an allegation has been made on their behalf. However, the Victims Commissioner works to a wider definition: "I include victims of all crime, not just crime that is classified as 'serious'. I consider that individuals and communities who suffer from anti-social behaviour are also victims."
- 3.4 There has been a steady fall in recorded crime in Waltham Forest since 2011, and in 2014/15 there were 20,770 recorded offences in Waltham Forest and 16,866 in the first seven months of 2015/16. The Mayor of London has designated seven 'neighbourhood crimes' as priorities. Between 2012/13 and 2014/15, these were down by 22.4 per cent in Waltham Forest, and they had further fallen by 7.3per cent in the six months to September 2015.
- 3.5 Despite reductions in the rate of crime in the borough, over the past year there has been a seven per cent fall in the percentage of residents that are satisfied with what is being done to tackle crime locally. This has been accompanied by a significant increase in the proportion of residents that are worried about crime, from 26 per cent to 38 per cent, as shown by the .Residents Insight Survey.
- 3.6 The Council has five priorities for the services it will deliver to residents between 2015-18, one of which is to 'keep your neighbourhood clean and safe'. The measurement of progress against this priority includes the specific crimes of robbery and anti-social behaviour.

- 3.7 The report made a number of findings on support for victims, and these are reflected in the recommendations of the report, which are presented in full in Appendix 1 and also outlined below, which Cabinet are asked to agree and to ask officers to progress:

Recommendation 1: We recommend that Victim Support are invited to come to a Community Safety Scrutiny Committee meeting next year, perhaps when progress in implementing the other recommendations in this report are considered.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that in setting its targets for the 16/17 financial year, the Council's key performance indicators are set within the first quarter so that the public can better understand the Council's priorities and how it is working to keep them safe.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the Portfolio Lead Member for Community Safety and Cohesion write to the Mayor of London after the election in May seeking assurances that: previous policing commitments made to Waltham Forest Council and its residents continue to be fulfilled and maintained; and that local policing arrangements, including the role of the borough commander, are protected as part of any cross-borough reorganisation of services.

Recommendation 4. We recommend that an update is provided to the Community Safety Scrutiny Committee next municipal year about monitoring arrangements for Neighbourhoods out of hours service.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that as part of this refresh information about the Neighbourhoods Teams and reporting ASB be made more prominent on the Council's website so that it is easier for members of the public to find.

Recommendation 6: We recommend that as part of the move to a "digital by default strategy", the Council monitors how people who are not able to access the internet, who will often be vulnerable individuals, access ASB services to ensure that their needs are properly met.

Recommendation 7: We recommend that as part of its commitment to "keeping your neighbourhood clean and safe", the Council considers creating a key performance indicator measuring action aimed at reducing the impact of drunk or rowdy behaviour.

Recommendation 8: We recommend that the Portfolio Lead Member liaises with the Borough Commander to consider drawing up a specific strategy setting out agreed actions from the Council and the MPS

addressing public concerns about the impact of drunk or rowdy behaviour.

Recommendation 9: We recommend that the Portfolio Lead Member for Community Safety write to the MPS asking if it would consider presenting the Code of Practice in a simpler way.

Recommendation 10: We recommend that the Council considers creating a victims charter, clearly setting out what the Council's responsibilities are in relation to offences classed as anti-social behaviour. This should also include the service standards that residents can expect, information about how to complain, and information about the new Community Trigger.

4. OPTIONS & ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

4.1 The alternative option is to not ask officers and the Portfolio Holder to action and implement the recommendations. However, it is the view of Overview and Scrutiny that not asking for these recommendations could be a missed opportunity to improve community safety and support for victims of crime.

5. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRIORITIES (AND OTHER NATIONAL OR LOCAL POLICIES OR STRATEGIES)

5.1 The recommendations outlined above have been developed to complement and build on existing policies with regard to crime and anti-social behaviour in the in the borough.

5.2. In 2015 the Council also identified four priorities for the borough covering 2015 - 2018. These recommendations support the objective of 'keeping your neighbourhood clean and safe'.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 A formal consultation process did not take place in the development of this report because it simply seeks to review the work that has been undertaken by the Council and look at what improvements can be made going forward. There is also no statutory requirement to consult.

6.2 The committee received evidence from officers. These are outlined in section 2.2 of the report in Appendix 1.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk

7.1.1 The recommendations have been developed so that they can be implemented within the existing approved budget for the Community Safety Department.

7.1.2 However, if in preparing to implement the recommendations officers find that this cannot be done without additional expenditure, a report

should be brought back to Cabinet to explain why the recommendations cannot be implemented.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 Part 6 of the Council's constitution sets out the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules including, in paragraph 6, the procedure for policy review and development. This report has been prepared as part of the annual work programme agreed by Council following consultation with the relevant Directors and portfolio lead member (Part 6 para. 5.1). The procedure rules provide that in carrying out any such policy review or development Overview and Scrutiny must have regard to available budgets and resources (para. 6.2) and make recommendations to cabinet (6.1.1).
- 7.2.2 The local authority has a responsibility to address anti-social behaviour (ASB) through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, alongside the police, housing and health partners.

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

- 7.3.1 An initial screening exercise of the equality impact of this decision was undertaken which determined there was no potential for negative impact on those with protected equality characteristics.
- 7.3.2 The implementation of the recommendations on domestic violence is likely to bring about positive benefits for all residents.

7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

- 7.4.1 The report makes recommendations that will improve the work of the Council to reduce crime and disorder. It also improves community safety through improvements to services for victims of crime and their families.
- 7.4.2 No impact has been identified in other areas of sustainability.

7.5 Council Infrastructure

- 7.5.1 The recommendations that Cabinet is asked to agree are intended to be cost neutral, with a process for referral back to Cabinet if this is not the case. As such the recommendations do not impact on the Council's transformation programme.
- 7.5.2 The proposals will be met within the existing Council infrastructure and resources.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)