

## HARROW STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

### Safer Harrow - Update

13<sup>th</sup> March 2013

<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>This paper provides an update on the work of Safer Harrow, the local Community Safety Partnership.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Action</b></p> <p>To welcome and support the partnership initiatives that have been developed over the last year and encourage further partnership action to continue to enhance community safety in Harrow</p>
<p><b>What are you asking the Partnership Board to do</b></p> <p>The Board is asked to note the progress being made on a number of community safety issues and continuing benefits of partnership action to address these underlying and cross cutting issues.</p>

### Introduction

Safer harrow is the local Community safety Partnership. It includes representatives of the Police, the Council, the Fire Brigade, the Probation Service, the local Magistrates' Court and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). It co-ordinates, oversees and/or receives reports on the work of the Police, the Drug Action Team, the Youth Offending Team, Violence Against Women and Girls, Hate Crime and Community Tension, Community Champions, Anti-Social Behaviour, the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and the Integrated Offender Management Scheme (IOM). It also oversees the production of the annual Strategic Assessment of crime trends in Harrow which provides the basis for the development of the Community Safety Plan.

### 2012-13

#### Integrated Offender Management (IOM)

In the last year, Safer Harrow has seen the development of two significant projects Integrated Offender Management and Mothers Against Gangs. Harrow's IOM scheme is part of a north west London pilot. It involves the Probation Service, the Police, the Council, Job Centre Plus and voluntary sector organisations, most notably P3. The scheme identifies offenders at the

highest risk of re-offending and brings a combined support and supervision offer to try to reduce or eliminate re-offending.

Often, people leaving prison have no accommodation to go, no prospect of employment and as little as £46 until their benefit applications are processed. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that a high proportion tend to re-offend, perhaps believing that they have little or no stake in ordinary society. The IOM scheme ensures as far as is possible that offenders have somewhere to live on release from prison, that their benefit application has been made and processed before their release, that they are registered with a GP within a few days of release, that, if necessary, they have access to drug and/or alcohol services and that employment opportunities are identified.

Perhaps most importantly, offenders are met at the prison gate and found an immediate place to stay and the opportunity to start a new life free from crime. At the same time, the Police and Probation Service maintain a strict supervision regime designed to support and maintain the resolve to avoid trouble in future.

While the scheme has not been running long enough for there to be meaningful outcome statistics, the following case study of one of the ex-offenders that has been supported gives an indication of the sort of work that is undertaken and the results that can be achieved:

- TR joined IOM - 19/06/2012 and immediately engaged with Community Worker, Probation and Police.
- Offence type - Prolific Shoplifting, with multiple breaches of Orders, Assaults, and Disorderly Behaviour.
- Has 55 sanctions.
- First offence in 1989.
- In 2011 alone he had 10 convictions.
- In 2012, up until 27/07/2012, he received 6 convictions, with last offence taking place on 17/05/2012
- TR signed up to IOM on 20/06/2012.
- Since signing up, 1 arrest which was no further action.
- No other arrests, convictions or variances of sentencing

Upon signing up to the IOM scheme, TR has been provided with support through the Community Worker to deal with benefits, housing, CV, job applications, agency work, electrician's course, educational courses, application for driving licence and more. TR is currently in part time education, stable accommodation, benefits, and undertaking an apprenticeship. He is no longer coming to Police notice. This is evidence of effective Partnership working.

IOM aims to reduce reoffending & increase social inclusion of offenders and their families by working with identified offenders to challenge their behaviour and address the underlying issues that lead to reoffending. This is achieved by assessing individual need & supporting access & engagement with services across the nine resettlement pathways to prevent reoffending;

- Attitudes, thinking & behaviour
- Accommodation
- Children & families
- Drugs & alcohol
- Education, training & employment
- Finance, benefit & debt

- Health
- Support for women offenders who have been abused, raped or have experienced domestic violence
- Support for women offenders who have been involved in prostitution.

The Community Worker intervention serves to help break the cycle of offending and is the individual that is able to co ordinate this challenging group, win trust and turn lives around as indicated earlier. No IOM scheme works in isolation. The Strength of an IOM scheme is with the Partnership multi agency approach and information sharing

Harrow's IOM scheme includes a small number of prolific non-statutory offenders (people sentenced to less than 12 months imprisonment) who would otherwise receive no support since they are normally excluded from the Probation Service's remit.

## **Mothers Against Gangs**

The other major initiative has been the development of the Mothers Against Gangs (MAG) organisation. This stems from the spate of gang related stabbings early in 2012 and which threatened to escalate. The Police sought a new way of countering the pull that gang membership has on some young people and to help parents recognise the signs of gang affiliation in the first place. They brought together the mothers of some of the young men involved and supported them to establish a self help group, provided access to experts and training and provided them with the encouragement and skills they needed to address problems in the own families and their wider community. MAG has grown over the year and is fully established as a charity with a web presence.

The website says: "Mothers Against Gangs (MAG) is an independent support group of mothers from all backgrounds who have come together as a result of our personal experiences with family members. By using these experiences and collective knowledge we are able to support families with concerns or issues regarding young people. We offer support and advice to parents and young people involved in or on the on the cusp of gang involvement.

As parents ourselves, we believe if you can detect the signs early you may be able to prevent things from getting out of control. We have connections with statutory services so if there's anything we feel we are unable to help our clients with ourselves, we will either refer them to these services or point them in the right

We wish to reassure the parent or young person. We want you to know that at Mothers Against Gangs we have mums who have been through similar experiences to what you may be going through and we are always willing to help. We are aware of signs to look out for.

We know how traumatic the experience of attending police stations and courts can be for the whole family and how daunting it is because most people don't know how the legal process works or what to expect. These can sometimes drag on for months and months and have a knock on affect with schools, jobs, relationships, family, health, etc.

Our ultimate goal is to create a safe and peaceful environment in which there is understanding, respect and harmony between the mothers of different cultures so that our children do not become rivals but work together as one. That our children develop respect for authority, become good citizens and no longer feel the need to choose the life of gang culture but to be self sufficient and reliant.

At the end of January, two MAG mums completed Restorative Justice training, a three-day course from Restorative Solutions.

The course covered the history of Restorative Justice and its role in modern times. It focused on the positive impact it has had on many communities that have utilised it as part of everyday life to restore order between an offender and victim. It allows both parties to express their opinions on:

- What happened
- What they were thinking
- What they were feeling
- Who was affected by the incident
- What needs to happen now

The principle aim is that both parties get to hear, feel and think about what it was like to 'be in the other person's shoes'. This helps give a greater understanding to the cause and effect the incident has had in a wider context. Such an approach allows for feelings to be vented to a safe and positive environment and seeks to allow closure for all parties involved.

Offenders may often be reluctant to agree to Restorative Justice, as might victims, due to shame, blame, fear, anger, despair and so on.

However, the track record for success has been high. 27% of offenders who take part are less likely to re-offend. That's 27% less crime! This seems like an obvious tool that should be used. Restorative Justice will be encouraged within the MAG group to allow young people to talk through incidents and help them reach move on.

Restorative Justice begins by challenging the behaviours that are unacceptable. It calls on the offender to:

- Acknowledge responsibility for causing that harm
- Make reparation to victims
- Begin the process of reintegration back into the community

Unlike mediation, where both parties feel wronged, this process requires one party to accept they were the aggressor."

## 2013-14

Safer Harrow has already received the draft Strategic Assessment examining the recorded crime trends in the period October 2011 to September 2012. This has led to the adoption of the following crime types as priorities for 2013-14:

1. **Residential burglary.** Residential burglary is still relatively high in Harrow. Residential burglary also has a major impact on victims with each offence usually resulting in two or more victims.
2. **Anti-social behaviour (ASB).** While Harrow has low overall crime compared to other London boroughs, a high proportion of Harrow residents are concerned about issues such as vandalism, teenagers hanging around, public drunkenness and drug dealing in their local area.

3. **Domestic violence and sexual offences.** These offences make up a large proportion of offences in Harrow, with sexual offences often unreported.
4. **Youth violence.** While there are relatively low levels of youth offending in Harrow, last year saw a spike of serious youth violence with youth groups/gangs in the Wealdstone and Rayners Lane areas. .
5. **Personal robbery.** While this crime is relatively low in Harrow, it has increased in recent years. The victims are also increasingly young.
6. **Violent crime.** Violent crime is the most serious offence category which residents expect to be prioritised by Safer Harrow.

Work on the development of the Community Safety Plan to address these and other crimes is underway.

### **Funding Bids**

Safer Harrow has also submitted bids to MOPAC for funding from the new London Crime Prevention Fund. The applications address the crime priorities identified in the Strategic Assessment and include:

- Continuation funding for the Community Worker supporting the IOM Scheme;
- Funding to support the creation of a virtual single ASB Team across the Council, the Police and, hopefully, one or more social landlords;
- A project to secure the reduction and prevention of violence against women and girls in Harrow. The key outcome is to prevent girls and young women from becoming victims, and boys and young men becoming the perpetrators of sexual violence and abuse;
- Funding to support the West London Rape Crisis Centre;
- A continuation of the Autumnal Nights anti-burglary initiative;
- A programme to supply personal alarms to people likely to be a risk of personal robbery;
- Funding for the continuation of the Drug Intervention Project; and
- Funding to extend the Drug Intervention Project to deal with alcohol.