1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the findings and recommendations of a Communities Scrutiny Committee report on the Council’s gang prevention programme.

1.2 Cabinet is asked to note the findings of the Communities Scrutiny Committee report, which can be found in full in Appendix 1, and the response of officers to the recommendations, which can be found in Appendix 2.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet note the content of this report.

2.2 That the Cabinet Members note the suggested response from officers, which suggests that Cabinet adopt recommendation 7 and agree to amended versions of recommendation 1-6, as set out in paragraph 3.5.
3. **PROPOSAL**

3.1 In July 2016, the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee agreed to carry out a themed review into the Council’s gang prevention programme. The Committee were interested to look at the Council’s programme because of the impact gangs have on individuals and the impact on the wider community as a result of their anti-social behaviour, violence and drug-dealing. This was also a timely review for the Committee to undertake as the Programme is currently being refreshed.

3.2 The Committee looked at the gang prevention programme at three of its meetings:

i. On September 7 the Committee heard from the community safety team about gangs and drugs. The Borough Commander also attended this meeting and provided the Committee with an update about the work of the MPS on gangs.

ii. On November 9 the Committee heard from the community safety team about gangs and weapons.

iii. On January 11 the Committee heard from the community safety team about gangs’ exploitation of vulnerable individuals. The meeting was also attended by the MPS who provided an update about Operation Teague.

3.3 The report (Appendix1) was considered and adopted after the final meeting on 15th March. The report puts forward recommendations to further support and improve the Council’s gang prevention programme. It is not anticipated that the recommendations will result in any additional expenditure.

3.4 The recommendations made by the Report were:

**Recommendation 1:** The council should engage with MOPAC to ensure their programme is complimentary and that adequate funding is secured for east London.

**Recommendation 2:** Any refresh of the gang prevention strategy should be based on principles of building awareness of the opportunities that the scheme provides, being community focussed and zero tolerance where appropriate.

**Recommendation 3:** The local MPS need to ensure their ward priorities are written with greater clarity, so that the public knows when they refer to gangs.

**Recommendation 4:** The council should review its relationship with local authorities outside London, and in particular with the neighbouring district of Epping Forest, to ensure that we have the necessary strategic relationships in place to tackle gang-related crime when it crosses county-lines.

**Recommendation 5:** The Council should ensure that the Youth Independent Advisory Group gets a chance to talk about their work.
and be given opportunities to advocate for the gang prevention programme.

**Recommendation 6:** Following Operation Teague, the Council should use this intelligence gathering capability to seek to work with the MPS on similar operations in other parts of the borough.

**Recommendation 7:** The Portfolio Lead Member for Community Safety and Cohesion to write to the Mayor of London and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to ensure there is continued commitment from the MPS to neighbourhood policing.

3.5 Officers have commented on the recommendations. They are recommending that the Cabinet endorse recommendation 7, and agree to amended versions of recommendations 1 – 6. The amended recommendations are:

**Recommendation 1:** The council should engage with MOPAC to ensure their programme is complementary and that regional resources are deployed according to need.

**Recommendation 2:** Any refresh of the gang prevention strategy should be based on principles of building awareness of the opportunities that the scheme provides, being community focussed and using comprehensive enforcement approaches where appropriate.

**Recommendation 3:** The Portfolio Lead Member for Community Safety and Cohesion should write to the Borough Commander to request that the local MPS ensure their ward priorities are written with greater clarity, so that the public knows when they refer to gangs.

**Recommendation 4:** The council should review its relationship with local authorities outside London, to ensure that we have the necessary strategic relationships in place to tackle gang-related crime when it crosses county-lines.

**Recommendation 5:** The Council should ensure that the Youth Independent Advisory Group continues to get the chance to talk about their work and be given opportunities to advocate for the gang prevention programme.

**Recommendation 6:** Operation Teague is on-going, and joint work of a similar nature will be initiated where there is sufficient evidence to do so. The recommendation should be amended to reflect the requirement for evidence of need as a precursor for operations.

4. **OPTIONS & ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

4.1 It is established practice for the Cabinet to consider each individual scrutiny committee themed review and to make comments on issues contained within the report.
5. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRIORITIES (AND OTHER NATIONAL OR LOCAL POLICIES OR STRATEGIES)

5.1 The recommendations contained in this themed review report take into account the Council’s priorities and aims to implement those where relevant to the themed review’s topic.

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 2.3 of the report in Appendix 1.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk

7.2 The recommendations have been developed so that they can be implemented within the existing budgets available to relevant services. However, if in preparing to implement the recommendations contained within the themed review report, they are not sustainable within existing resources and officers find that additional expenditure is required, a report should be brought back to Cabinet to explain either: a) why the recommendations cannot be implemented; or b) proposals to finance their implementation.

7.3 Legal

Part 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).

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

The Council must further take into account its wider Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 when making a decision. The Council will consider the impact of changes that might arise as a result of implementing the recommendations on those with protected equality characteristics, in particular where there is likely to be an impact on residents or service users from any changes to, or decommissioning of existing services. An EA screening was conducted and is attached at appendix 3.
7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

As outlined above, the report and its recommendations are expected to have a positive impact on all residents. Sustainability issues will be carefully monitored to identify any adverse effects from the implementation of any of the recommendations. Where a negative impact arises, mitigating action will be taken. The sustainability implications of the recommendations that are adopted should be actively monitored.

7.5 Council Infrastructure

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 in the themed review report do not impact on the Council’s transformation programme.

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

None.