

HAVERING FABIAN SOCIETY

HAVERING FABIAN

Volume 2 Edition 38 March – 2019

**Havering
Fabian Society**
Covering recent
meetings with
Lord Roy
Kennedy,
Hannah Dixon,
Unmesh Desai,
Dewi Evans and
Ashley Dalton
and a major
articles on knife
crime by Tele
Lawal, a review
of Vice (the
Film) and details
of future
meetings

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VOLUME 2 EDITION 38 March 2019

Introduction

Welcome to the new edition of the Havering Fabian Newsletter.

This edition contains an in depth article by Havering Councillor Tele Lawal on knife crime, and what needs to happen next. The fatal stabbing of Jodie Chesney has caused the Borough to come together in grief. Long term solutions are needed.

Our AGM was a success with an expanded committee and a full agenda – membership and attendance at meetings remains a key issue for us, remember to pay your annual subscription!

Roy Kennedy was the speaker after the AGM, and his talk is summarised below. Shadow Police and Crime Minister Louise Haigh had to cancel at the last moment, but we arranged three speakers in her place – details below.

Our speaker in March was Labour PPC for the now marginal Rochford and Southend East Ashley Dalton. Details of her presentation below.

We now have over 1,188 followers on twitter. Keep up to date at our twitter site @haveringfabians for the latest news.

We have a blog now as well as our website <https://haveringfabians.org/posts/>

You will need to follow us to get updates.

We are affiliated to the four local Labour Parties, and will do all we can to support their campaigns. Havering and Dagenham Young Labour are on twitter @HavAndDagYL and hope they reflect a growing interest in Labour politics in Havering.

As opinions are the lifeblood of politics, we welcome a reply to any of the articles. The Fabian Society exists to promote political debate, both within and outside the Labour Party. Progressive politics extends beyond the Labour Party and contributions from the Labour Movement as a whole are welcome.

Attendances at recent meetings have remained good and the quality of speakers remains exceptional. We are glad to see a number of new people attending the meetings, and have an ever increasing number of followers on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.



Our website address is <http://haveringfabians.org> - a little different from the previous one so please update your Favourites. As you are no doubt aware GDPR means we need to keep our mailing list up to date. If you are not on our mailing list (we use MAILCHIMP – please check your spam folders!) contact us via the website and we will add you in.

Havering: The fight to tackle knife crime and save the lives of young people

Young people should not pay the price for austerity with their lives” – **Labour Party Leader**

Across the capital, senseless killings have shocked communities and the recent surge in knife crime has led me to evaluate the policing, council services and community efforts to tackle youth violence in the London Borough of Havering.

70% of police funding comes from the Tory government. Since they came into power in 2010, our police have been dealing with eight years of consecutive cuts. The impact of reduced funding from the Tories has resulted in the following:

- Over 3,000 **PCs axed,**
- Over 3,000 **PCSOs gone**
- 5,000 civilian **staff reduced &**
- The Metropolitan Police has had to make **£850m in savings**
- Funding to national police commissioners has fallen by 30% in real-terms since 2010-11
- Under a Labour Government we had over 32,000 MET officers, we now have under 27,000 MET officers – for a growing population

Last year, the National Audit Office (NAO) published an in-depth review covering police funding across England and Wales which can be found [HERE](#). In summary, it called for the Tory government to **WAKE UP**. The report highlighted that the situation "could get worse" if the Home Office does not "direct resources to where they are needed." The NAO report accused the Home Office of a "light touch" approach, with falling funding and staffing levels in the last eight years contributing to **INCREASED** levels of "high harm" crimes.

Metropolitan Police Chief, Cressida Dick recently said: "I think that what we all agree on is that in the last few years' police officer numbers have gone down a lot, there's been a lot of other cuts in public services, there has been more demand for policing." She added, "**I agree that there is some link between violent crime on the streets obviously and police numbers, of course there is, and everybody would see that.**"

Well, not everyone, and certainly not our Prime Minister, Theresa May who stated there is "no direct correlation between certain crimes and police numbers," and accused leaders who are speaking out for their grieving communities of "crying wolf." I guess the Prime Minister has not had the time to read the NAO report or speak to the MET Chief.

The Prime Minister is relatively busy handling Brexit negotiations so positively well and throwing away £33 million of tax-payers money, which could have been invested into tackling youth violence, but was instead paid out to Eurostar thanks to the sheer incompetence of the Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling.

SO, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

1. Report all crime to the police, so we can receive further resources in Havering

If residents want more police patrolling the wards of Havering, then residents need to report every crime, in order, for this Tory government to know that we have real safety concerns in Havering because for some reason they don't seem to understand despite the below increase since 2014 (stats available on Havering Council's website):

Table 1. Havering Crime Figures from Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime

Snapshot of offences on a rolling 12 month basis from July 2014 - July 2017					
Crime Type	Jul-2014	Jul-2015	Jul-2016	Jul-2017	Increase or Decrease since 2014
Knife Crime	125	181	185	276	↑ 121% Increase
Knife Crime with Injury	51	70	58	85	↑ 67% Increase
Robbery	250	341	325	469	↑ 88% Increase
Gun Crime	40	53	56	67	↑ 68% increase

As a member of Havering Council's committee which looks at policing and community safety in the borough, I have been informed by the police and council officers who attend the meetings that "Havering residents, unfortunately, are not reporting as much crime as they should be." If you do not report crimes for what-ever reasons then Havering will always have relatively lower crime figures compared to inner-London (check the MET data), and we will not receive the policing/funding for the services we critically need, because we are not seen as "priority" to the Tory government, despite the above stats.

Oh, and there is proof to this...

In November 2011, the Ending Gang and Youth Violence (EGYV) report was published, which was led by former Home Secretary, Theresa May. The reported identified 29 areas nationally facing the biggest challenges in relation to youth violence.

Out of the 29, there were 18 London boroughs identified as part of the EGYV work programme who received funding ranging from £195k-344k for 2012-13. Since then an additional 23 areas have been added to the list of EGYV areas, of which **Havering** is one.

One would think as Havering has been deemed as an area of concern regarding youth violence, we would receive additional funding from the EGYV.

Unfortunately, our young people's lives in Havering does not matter to the Tory government. Havering has **NOT** received any EGYV funding despite being added to the EGYV list and the following changes in the borough:

- Since 2011, there has been an inward migration of gang members and offenders involved in serious youth violence into Havering
- In 2014, Havering borough was the third largest importer of gang members identified by the Metropolitan Police Trident Gang Crime Command matrix
- Havering has the 10th highest rate of serious youth violence compared to the whole of London

The reason for Havering not receiving the funding, according to the Tories was because Havering has “lower levels of serious youth violence” (not a priority).

Let me understand correctly, we need to have more young people murdered in Havering, before we receive the additional resources? What a flawed approach. surely, early intervention would make more sense.

MET Tri-borough – Mayor of London

In the past year we merged with Redbridge and Barking & Dagenham to form a new Tri-borough police unit. A decision the Mayor of London had to make across the capital because the MET have to save £325m-400m by 2022 (a result of cuts from the Tories).

How did this impact Havering in tackling youth violence?

Well, Havering gained a Gangs Unit, which we did **NOT** have before, this has enabled the police and Havering Council to target the highest risk gang nominals across all three boroughs.

Havering Council was also able to **RELAUNCH** the Serious Group Violence (SGV) panel in August 2017 to work in conjunction with the Gangs Unit and share vital intelligence. This leads me on to Havering Council's work.

2. Engage and support Havering Council’s work to tackle knife crime

Here’s a breakdown of young people in Havering charged with carrying a weapon (not exclusive to knife carrying) in the period 2015-2018 (data available on Havering Council website).

Breakdown of Weapon Offenders by Age 2015-2018							
Year	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17
2015-2016	0	1	0	0	2	5	3
2016-2017	0	3	7	6	6	8	9
2017-2018	1	2	2	1	10	9	7
Total	1	6	9	7	18	22	19

Table 1: Source- 2018 Annual Strategic Assessment Problem Profile

The year 2017-18 was the first time that Havering had a weapon offender aged **11-years-old**. Let’s be clear about why that is; **eight years of Tory cuts** to policing, youth services, mental health, education and other vital public services.

Offensive Weapons Bill and Public Health Model

In response to the above, the government recently introduced the Offensive Weapons Bill which is currently passing through parliament and will update laws relating to the sale, delivery and possession of and threatening with offensive weapons, including firearms, knives and corrosive substances.

Part of the bill will include new preventive measures, such as the introduction of Knife Crime Prevention Orders, basically, an “Asbo-style order.” I welcome the bill, but I am interested to see how the powers will be exercised when police numbers are failing, as well as cuts to services.

Home Secretary, Savid Javid announced that the government would also take a ‘public health’ approach to tackle youth violence – similar to Glasgow. Meanwhile, the Health Secretary, Matt Hancock appeared on the radio and didn’t seem to know this was the plan.

He told LBC Radio: “I think if you try to say that knife crime is a public health issue, it implies that there aren’t individuals who are personally responsible for

these terrible crimes and you've got to start from the point of the perpetrator needing to be brought to justice."

Responding, Louise Haigh MP, Labour's Shadow Policing Minister, said:

"It is disturbing that the Health Secretary doesn't seem to be aware of his own Government's strategy to tackle violent crime.

"Rather than taking real action to address the national knife crime epidemic that has arisen on its watch, the Government's own strategy has been revealed to be nothing more than warm words.

"How can the Tory government possibly be serious about taking a public health approach when the Health Secretary doesn't even know about it?

"Labour advocates real investment in community safety and a public health approach to knife crime."

There is no real leadership from the Tory government, which is failing our young people. It is disappointing that there is no consensus, and the Tories are not willing to call Cobra, despite emergency calls from the Labour Party.

Unlike the Tories, Havering's Labour Party Councillors will be clear on our approach in Havering, we believe in a multi-faceted approach to tackle knife crime in our community. We need politicians, Havering Council, schools, Metropolitan Police, Mayor's Office for Police and Crime, London Ambulance Service, voluntary organisations, charities, community, businesses, faith groups and families working together. **EVERYONE!**

Havering Council is already embracing this approach and commissions/delivers preventative and enforcement opportunities across the borough. Some of the programmes already in place include the following:

- Street Doctors
- No Knives in Schools
- Gangs Awareness Training
- Mentoring Scheme
- Schools access to Search Wands
- Safer Schools Officers
- Junior Citizens Programme
- Youth Offending Service Intensive Weapons Programme
- Operation Sceptre
- Knife Amnesty Bin
- Knife Arches
- Safe Haven Schemes
- Sales of Knives and Noxious Substances
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- Spark 2 Life
- Drug dogs
- Work with BTP
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Serious Group Violence Panel
- Regular weapons sweeps
- Counselling
- And much more...

Havering Council have also created an ambitious Serious Group Violence & Knife Crime Strategy 2018-2021, which will be reviewed by the Cabinet in April. I would strongly urge residents to read the report once available and share any views.

I have reviewed the document and put forward recommendations through my committees, but in light of recent events, I will be taking a further look. I am very keen to see the programmes rolled out in Havering, with an even further joint-up effort to save young people's lives. The focus of the strategy will be:

- Intelligence and information sharing
- Intervention
- Prevention
- Enforcement

Havering Council have already submitted a number of bids to contribute to the strategy, such as to the Home Office Early Intervention fund (successful) and the government's Troubled Families programme

(awaiting an outcome), and they intend to submit a bid to the Young Londoners fund when applications open later in 2019.

Predominately, funding for youth violence in Havering comes from MOPAC, through the London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF). A new system has been introduced where boroughs receive a committed allocated amount of funding on a 2-yearly basis. £114,000 per year was allocated for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. I am waiting for the funding announcement for the period 2019/2020 to 2021/2022.

Havering Council’s Children Services said: “A further note should be taken of the financial restraints being put on the Public Sector. Depending on where the future [Tory] cuts are made, this could impact upon the boroughs ability to carry out various tasks within the Serious Group Violence Strategy post 2018/2019.”

Havering’s Labour Party Councillors are concerned about the funding for the programmes, and we have put forward a motion urging the Tory Councillors to review its provision for youth services:

“This Council urges the Executive to urgently review its provision of Youth Services as part of a multifaceted approach with its strategic partners to address and reduce the level of knife crime and serious youth violence in the Borough including the adoption of a public health model in the medium and long term.”

We hope all Councillors in Havering support our motion at the next Full Council, by putting party politics aside for the sake of all young people’s lives across the borough.

I would also like to thank Havering Council for their work during this tragic time. Havering Council are offering bereavement counselling to schools affected by the tragedy, as well as other support.

3. Community cohesion to support our young people is the key ingredient to tackling knife crime

“Although we need more officers on the street, policing is not the only answer to addressing the rise in violent crime. We need to come together

as a community investing time and resources to rebuild the safety nets that this government have taken away.” – **Jon Cruddas Labour MP**

Here, Here.

Havering has really come together after the tragedy in the community, we have seen petitions for more policing, purple ribbons across the borough, a knife crime campaign launched in Harold Hill and a peaceful march to honour all victims of knife crime.

The community is needed to tackle knife crime and save young people’s lives. With that in mind, residents need to be properly involved in key decisions, strategies or programmes before they are implemented into their area, to ensure they are effective and targeted.

We need to rebuild the community and police relationship. Residents must have a healthy dialogue with their local officers, work in conjunction and share that ever so important intelligence.

Havering needs to work smarter. The pockets of groups need to combine their resources and funding to reach more young people. We also need to see greater community cohesion and individuals being more proactive than reactive.

There are many ways the community can play their part:

Communities creating Street Watch Teams is a way for people to come together, wearing high visibility jackets and patrol hotspot areas in their ward. This is an effective way to show a presence of unity and protect others. Further information here: <http://www.street-watch.org/havering/index.html>

‘Safe havens’ in public places should not only be limited to community centres or youth hubs. It is widely known that a lot of serious youth violence happens between 15:00 – 21:00 pm and in public places, such as town centres/high streets.

Therefore, I would encourage businesses in Havering to have visible signs outside their organisations, which state this is a ‘safe haven,’ so, a young person who is running away to save his/her life, knows they can enter that organisation for shelter, and then they’ll be referred to the relevant professionals.

How many times have we seen young people fighting in the town centre and then they run into a shop because they don’t want to be harmed, and then they are told to get out... a young life could be saved with this measure.

It also shows a sense of unity to see a visible sign which is associated with protecting young people.

Sharing our skills, knowledge and experiences with other residents can save the lives of young people. Do you know how to do CPR? Have you been a victim of knife crime? or maybe you carried a knife? We need individuals to communicate and share their expertise with others across the Borough. You never know when that information will be useful.

Public and private organisations should give young people further opportunities. By proactively contacting schools, colleges and pupil referral units to offer young people a range of experiences across Havering.

This also helps with lowering NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) statistics in Havering and gives young people a better chance in life.

Arts and sports clubs or organisations are key! Young people being active is an effective way to tackle youth violence and utilise their talents.

Residents sharing intelligence with the police and Havering Council is extremely important. This will ensure the right resources are allocated. There are many ways residents can engage with relevant authorities by taking part in the following:

1. Stop and Search Monitoring Group
2. Independent Advisory Group
3. Safer Neighbourhood Board
4. Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panel Meetings
5. Crime and Disorder Committee
6. Street Watch

Schools need to work better with young people. Although OFSTED can rate a school as ‘outstanding’ or ‘good’ there is always room for improvement. A lot happens in schools which does not always surface in the public realm. I believe more conversations need to be had about money laundering, drug selling and weapons.

Youth forums in the Town Hall. I was never engaged with politics or my local authority when I was young. I was not a member of my Youth Council, nor did I engage with them or even know who they were.

Local authorities should hold quarterly youth forums in their Town Halls for under 25s. This will empower young people to come together and talk

about what is happening, decisions which will impact their community and what they would like to see, all of this can be useful for when planning priorities for the next budget year.

Conclusion

Serious youth violence and knife crime is not a new phenomenon. This has been happening for years.

We cannot continue to have the same conversations. It is time for further action to ensure our young people reach their full potential. Enough of burying our young people before their time, or seeing children ending up in the justice system because no one cared about them too.

I would also like to see women and girls have a more active role in tackling knife crime, as their voices are usually either muted or rarely heard.

On that note, I urge everyone to play their part



Councillor Tele Lawal

Lord Roy Kennedy

Following the AGM in January, the guest speaker was Lord Roy Kennedy, Labour Shadow minister for Housing and Local Government. He is also Vice Chair of the Fabian Society and had been Labour Party Member for 40 years.



Figure 1 Roy Kennedy in full flow, Keith Darvill listens on

He was brought up in South London, and lived in the Elephant and Castle before moving to Walworth Road. He had been a councillor in Lewisham and before that Southwark, where he had been Finance Lead and Deputy Leader. He has worked for the Labour Party for 21 years, as Regional Director in the West Midlands and then Director of Finance and Compliance. In 2010, he was included in the honours list and entered the House of Lords.

He would not invent the House of Lords, but while it is there Labour need to make the most of it. He favours reform, and there is the ability to change legislation, and the Labour Lords do occasionally win a vote.

Angela Smith is an effective leader in the Lords. Roy is assisted in the role on Housing and Local Government by former TSSA General Secretary Richard Rosser. He also has a role on the Home affairs team.

Housing is moving up the agenda, currently third behind Brexit and the NHS in terms of public concern, across all age groups. Housing provided

safe warm and dry conditions for all and decent provision is therefore essential to ensure people have a fulfilled life.

Home ownership in a London is now a remote possibility for the young; Roy himself would no longer be able to buy the House he currently lives in, which he moved into in 2004. He grew up in the Aylesbury estate, and in 1979, 40% of the population lived in council houses, now its 9%.

The Conservative government has been hostile to council housing and has become more so towards housing associations. Affordable rents at 80% of market rent were anything but affordable and what could have been afforded even 15 years ago is now beyond many of the population. Rents can often exceed the income of one partner, and can be beyond single people on average earnings. There is a need for a large number of social houses to address this.

Housing benefit costs have multiplied, and billions are spent on which the government gets not return. If Labour can get this right, there are billions to be saved.

Right to buy has seen council stock move into the private sector, with a huge expansion of the private rented sector. In Newham for example, there are now 35,000 private sector rented properties. Roy had been out with Sadiq Khan and Rokhsana Fiaz, and had seen both good and bad landlords. Regulation and licensing has improved the standard, and the Newham model has been adopted elsewhere.

There is a need for a revolution in housing. British homes are among the smallest in Europe. Much of the 60s and 70s Housing is of poor quality, and some has been pulled down.

The housing and planning act in 2016/17 had attempted to drive up quality standards. Ensuring new homes meet quality standards adds to cost, but is cheaper than retrofitting. Key areas are insulation and resulting fuel costs.

There is a rogue landlord database, but is not publicly available. The legislation that would enable this is delays by Brexit, even though parliament has shown a willingness to adopt it.

Lifting the Housing Revenues Account borrowing cap allows councils to build new homes, now there is a need to meet this challenge.

Roy has also been a long standing Co-op Member, and co-op Housing, led by tenants is a potential way forward, and is free from right to buy. Tenant Management -co-ops have potential worth exploring further.

The current housing crisis has many unanticipated side effects, including Councils buying back properties they had previously sold under right to buy to address an increasing homeless problem.

Homelessness has got so bad that a man had died outside parliament, people sleep in doorways, and as mentioned by Tom Copley, there are people sleeping on night buses.

The housing list reduction act has built on work done by the Welsh government to try and address this. Early intervention is the key. A similar project has been trailed in London, but lack of funding meant it was undermined.

Local government is struggling with a lack of funding, 60 pence in the pound of government funding has been lost and several councils are on the point of financial collapse (e.g. Northamptonshire, Surrey). Northamptonshire had outsourced almost every service, and suffered as a result.

Council tax is a regressive approach, hitting the poorest disproportionately. The lack of revaluations means it's not working as intended. There is a need to reassess how we fund Local Government, and a better system is needed.

When Labour was elected in 1997, there was a strong devolution agenda, to Scotland, Wales, Ireland and London. England remained centralised, and this is an issue to address for the next Labour government.

Metropolitan Mayors have been introduced on a patchwork basis, with mixed results. Cambridgeshire has five different local authorities, which is confusing for everyone.

While devolution is a big issue for the Party, do people care? We need to look at this and deliver a rational solution. It is rare for a Party in government to give away power.

One of the Labour victories in the House of Lords was on tenant fees, where a five-week deposit was banned. If deposits are withheld, landlords need to say why. Tenants standing up against landlord's risked bad references, but now have a right to know what has been said.

Linking council rents to income was removed from the legislative proposal - there are too many people whose income will be subject to fluctuations to make this workable. Forced sale of council houses would result in the largest houses being sold, which was also a nonsense.

Roy's other role on Home Affairs raises policy issues around the trade-off between remaining safe and having rights and liberties, a particularly difficult issue in respect of counter terrorism. For example, there was a proposal that an accused person could not see their lawyer without the police being present, which strikes at the principle of entitlement to a defence - Roy was proud that the government had backed off from introducing this.

The prevent programme is aimed at dealing with Radicalisation. Some communities oppose this, and the government has opposed a judge led review. As part of the disruption to the parliamentary timetable the government moved on this, and conceded a review.

Roy was an excellent speaker, and we look forward to his next visit.

February meeting – Brexit vote means three speakers!

With Louise Haigh having to cancel due to the ongoing Brexit position and potential for a key vote, we moved rapidly to arrange alternative speakers and ended up with three; Hannah Dixon spoke on "Layers of London", Unmesh Desai on his work on the London Assembly and Dewi Evans on Mental Health issues. Hannah's session will be included in detail in the next Newsletter, due at the end of June, as the site is being updated.

Unmesh Desai

The second speaker was a welcome return visitor, GLA Member for City and London East, Unmesh Desai. His remit on the GLA is Police and Crime.

The Mayor Sadiq Khan is effectively the Police Commissioner for London, with Deputy Mayor Sophie Linden having lead responsibilities. The budget and strategy are administered via MOPAC (Mayor office for Police and Crime) while Cressida Dick is the Chief Constable.

The Mayor has real powers and can direct the boroughs. The boroughs feedback and this is used to determine police numbers. Assembly Members hold the Mayor to account with two meetings per month.

At the first, there are question and answer sessions with the commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Deputy Mayor.



Figure 2 Unmesh makes a point

They can look at for examples enquiries from the Tower Hamlets Mayor, but do not deal with complaints, for which there is a separate process.

At the second meeting each month, the focus is thematic, covering subjects such as violence, terrorism etc. - the aim is to be topical, with

recent sessions on knife crime. The committee is very active, and is far more than a talking shop.

The budget situation is grim. Since 2010 has made cuts of £840 million, with a further £263 million due by 2022. The service cannot survive as is in its current form. Elsewhere the situation is equally serious for example, -Norfolk no longer has Police Community Support officers (PCSOs). The Metropolitan Police see these as important, and the assembly, including the Conservative members, agree.

The crisis of funding is not helped by Government. The Met's radio need to be replaced, but this has taken longer than expected and cost £52 million more - delays are caused by the Home Office, who should pay. If they don't then the extra costs will fall to the Met.

Government grant to the met reflects the extra responsibility that flows from being a Capital city, with Embassies, Royal Protection and the greater terrorist threats.

There is a need for £281 million to fund this each year; grant provided is £164 million, a major shortfall. Despite making sympathetic noises the Home Secretary has done little to redress the position.



Figure 3 Unmesh fact checking

The recent Police Federation survey sought views on demand, capacity and welfare across England and Wales.

- 90% said not enough funding was in place,
- 60% had a traumatic experience in the last 12 months

Stress and anxiety levels were high, and morale was low.

There is a similar response in the Fire Service. Staff still do their jobs but with less enthusiasm and are less motivated.

Ken Marsh from the Police Federation has led a campaign “Care for our cops” to address this. This in turn links into the Jon Cruddas campaign to “Call time on crime” in Dagenham and Rainham.



#CallingTimeOnCrime

There had been 9 fatal stabbing s this year (at this point in the year - the meeting preceded the fatal stabbing in Harold Hill). There were 100 last years.

The Met had restructured in Havering with tri borough policing replacing previous borough based approach. This has not been well received by Havering, Barking and Dagenham or Redbridge Councils. The impact had been the same number of officers covering a greater area.

This should not be a competition between areas - we don't want crime anywhere. It's important we don't play one area off against each other.

Sadiq Khan has got some praise in maintaining the police precept and seeking a £24 increase to ensure additional funding. Police numbers have stabilised at 30,000 rising to 31,000 by the end of 2019/20. The Tories on the GLA welcomed the additional precept, an indication of how dire funding shortfalls had become.

Knife crime has become endemic. Unmesh favoured a “public health” solution - this is not new but to be effective needs to be sustained. This involves treating crime as a disease and then looking at the underlying causes. Multi agency working is essential.

The violence reduction unit is a new unit so will take time to have an impact.

The violent crime task force has 272 officers - deployed from elsewhere rather than new resources. The aim is to stop crime before it happens, and intersect with gang members. There is some knife crime relating to domestic violence but this is predominantly a gang related issue. There are concerns about how long we can keep this going.



Figure 4 Unmesh and Sam Gould take questions

The Gang trauma unit at Queens Hospital is doing excellent work dealing with the results of knife crime, but is self-financing and it's the doctors on the unit that raise the funding- this cannot be the way forward long term.

Social media can be used for good in this area, although there is concern over effective regulation the impact of drill music, and insults over social media used to provoke tensions.

There are campaigns “London needs the life”, and borough knife plans, which are steps on a route to change behaviour, although an awareness this will take time to have an impact.

Stephen Timms had campaigned on acid attacks, although the bill to deal with this had been delayed by Brexit. The aim is to stop on line sales deal with underage purchases, bringing in licensed distributors.

Moped crime had been an issue when Unmesh last visited, and there had been some successes. There were now specially trained police officers, bikes had been made harder to steal, and spikes were used to deal with tyres. Officers are allowed to chase if offenders remove their helmets, although need to do so using their judgement. There is no blanket ban.

Hate crime and the rise of the far right has increased as a result of tensions arising from Brexit. There is a threat to community cohesion. There are a range of strategic issues arising from Brexit.

- The impact on no deal on treaty arrangements could adversely impact on security
- There is a fear of far right extremists exploiting the tension caused by Brexit.

The London Labour Party will be launching a campaign, London United spearheaded by unions with Barking CLP seconding at the recent London Labour Party Conference.

Funding has been allocated to deal with modern slavery, a big issue in respect of nail shops and car washes. Gang masters are behind this, and there are issues throughout the supply chain. The position is being monitored across agencies, but there have been a low number of prosecutions- a good law becomes a bad one if not used.

The first prosecution in respect of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) had been a matter of weeks ago.

The local policy was to have two dedicate officers per ward supported with one PCSOs. This did not always happen, and the Assembly's job was to ensure it did. Officers should not be taken out of the area,

Dewi Evans

The final speaker was Dewi Evans

Dewi introduced himself as bi polar, (a term replacing the previously used manic depressive) went on to explain what this meant. He had experienced dramatic highs and severe depression, at times becoming delusional. With drugs and support he has been able to reduce the impact of the symptoms.



Figure 5 Dewi in full flow

The treatment he had received was excellent, and his message for anyone who felt the need to seek help to do so. Contrary to what might have been expected the referral system worked well and (comparatively) quickly. It was critical to ensure the right level of support is provided, and it helps greatly to have consistent contact with clinicians.

Locums can help, but the lack of knowledge of cases can on occasions mean miss diagnosis.

The increasing engagement of employers and society generally means an increasing awareness of mental health issues and the consequences.

With support, Dewi is able to maintain employment and is in a stable relationship. However, the issues remain, and don't all manifest themselves during times of depression- there are issues when highs result in damaging behaviour, which require management on an ongoing basis.

Dewi was commendably open about his condition, symptoms and ability to cope. None the less the message was a positive one; treatment helps, is readily available. If you have symptoms, seek help. If you want to talk to Dewi, he can be contacted via e-mail contact@dewievans.co.uk

After Dewi had delivered his presentation, Unmesh and Dewi answers questions together. As at the earlier meeting with James Croft from the Labour campaign for mental health, it was clear that the police have a clear and unplanned role in dealing with mental health issues, and a more planned approach is required.



Figure 6 Sam and Dewi reflect before responding

Ashley Dalton

Ashley is the Labour prospective parliamentary candidate for Rockford and Southend East. In 2017 she came second in 2017, 5,548 votes, behind the Conservatives, so is contesting a seat Labour could win for the first time.



Figure 7 Ashley enjoying a cuppa before we get underway

She has lived in the area for 25 years and worked there for 15. She previously worked in Havering at the Robert Beard youth centre, ran the youth volunteer programme and worked in Regeneration; so she knows the Havering area well.

She has a passion for a community involvement and empowerment. The key is to turn this into a transformational change and not just a rubber stamping exercise for what decision makers wanted to do from the outset. It is important to work with those who challenge us to generate ongoing community support.

This is based on empowering people to do things for themselves, which in turn means different things to different people. On the right, this

manifested itself in the Big Society, on the left a greater role for the public sectors.



Figure 8 Keith Darvill begins the meeting

Empowering requires involvement in decision making, not consulting on decisions in effect already decided on. It is important to allow the community to announce how it sees the world, as perceptions of the problem issue may cloud what the real issues are. The key is to find solutions working with the community, and not to patronise.

Close involvement with the community e.g. door knocking- can provide the intelligence on what the real issues are and enable the left to respond accordingly.

We need communities to challenge what we do. In this sense being elected is for politicians the start of a process of engagement, and an ongoing dialogue is essential to provide meaningful discussion with the community.

The Labour government in 1997 began the empowerment of neighbourhoods, with power and resources as key part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme. We are no longer in the same era;

with less resources, the approach now focuses around training neighbourhood leaders.

Community budgeting had been tried in some areas, ranging from £10k for each ward to millions in others. Real decision making rests in the latter, and requires devolving power to take decisions.

Labour had sought to engender community cohesion, although one of the first acts of the 2010 coalition had been to reduce funding, with the move towards the Big Society and a “do it yourself” approach.

This had some small successes mainly environmental, around issues such as cleaner parks, action on fly tipping and community capacity building. While important, this has no great substance and had been introduced alongside a large reduction in local authority funding. Critically this happened alongside a reduction in people feeling part of the decision making process. This in turn led to fragmentation and was one of the underlying causes of the 2011 riots.



Figure 9 Keith takes questions from the floor

Alienation continued and was similarly a factor that had underpinned an increase in violent crime, knife crime etc.

For those with no stake in society, they do not feel listened to and are not in control of their destiny. People alienated by the system start to worry and edge towards protectionism and this is an underlying cause of some voting for Brexit as “taking back control” appeals to this group, if this group had been listened to the vote may have been very different.

We need new solutions. We need to renew the left from where we are now. Communities will come with us if they have helped to design the offer.

Community organising is not enough. The Labour Party is a community focused organisation and rooted within the areas we live in. People do not want representatives or ideas that are parachuted in from elsewhere, they want to be involved.

Labour councillors and candidates have a key role to define and shape this. They are community leaders and facilitators but need assistance to engage with the community. People are crying out to be heard and do not trust politicians.

We need to speak a language that people understand, and we should mirror the language they use back to them, meeting them where they are on particular issues. This means working beyond social media and door-knocking. Social media does not give meaningful conversation with the community, and there is a danger we have collectively become too fixated on social media and the echo chamber effect of talking to the same people whose opinions we probably know already.

We need to go to the community, they won't come to us. We have to work harder.

We need to build and inform the generation of ideas and trust people We should share stories and encourage engagement. Policy development should involve housing estates as much as universities and academics. We need to engage with real problems or risk dealing with problems that do not exist. We want people to have political representation that they can relate to,

We need to talk to people in order to build relationships. We will go down blind alleys, make errors and things will go wrong - this is all part of the learning process and we should not be scared of it.

Pitfalls to avoid

- every problem is not an accusation
- don't relentlessly defend our record - listen
- don't say the problem being raised does not exist
- don't say we have solved the problem - if people feel it's a problem it is
- do not expect too much too soon. (Edison worked on 100 lightbulbs before he got one to work - be tenacious).
- watch the usual suspects - you will know their view on most subjects anyway and, they are not necessarily the voice of the community they claim to represent. They do often have a key role in communication of the message, so need to get beyond them to seek wider involvement.

We need to develop skills and feed these back into workable policies, generating confidence as we progress.

This will take time and incremental steps. This is not a money issue. The Party has a mass membership that can be used to engage. We should build these into networks to support new ideas and go into the community. Many skills the party has reside with people we never see, and they may help is asked.

Ashley then took a range of questions. plenty to think about, and if you are interested in getting involved in local campaigning, please get in touch.

Film review - Vice

Vice is not a film to google! but deals with the invisible rise to power of Dick Cheney, Vice President to George W Bush. Christian Bale is unrecognisable in the lead role, and supported by Amy Adams as his wife. Both are Oscar nominated, and rightly so.

The film begins with Cheney on the verge of breaking up with his then girlfriend due to his drinking. He is given an ultimatum to change his ways or she will leave - he does. Lynne Cheney is a major presence in the film and portrayed as the power behind the throne implying that in a different era she may have been the one to ascend to power.

Described as an average student and an average athlete (the former probably unfairly - while not sharing his politics, he seems to have done quite well for himself, and did attend Yale). He wins a scholarship to Washington and becomes an intern with a leading congressman and works for Donald Rumsfeld during the Nixon presidency. He was chief of staff under Gerald Ford and won a congress seat. The election of Carter stalls the rise of the Republican right, and he is off to earn vast sums in commerce (again suggesting that while keeping a low profile he was far from average), as CEO of oil giant Haliburton.

His rise through the Republican ranks continues, as he becomes a senator, although. Heart attack during the campaign puts the election at risk until Lynne steps in and campaigns on his behalf.

The election of Reagan sees him return to the edge of power, rising to Defence Secretary, sixth in line to the Presidency.

Cheney's eldest daughter was a lesbian, and although counter to the ultra-conservative Republican's policy at the time, he was loyal to her and did not join any campaigns against gay rights. This made him feel politically vulnerable to the republican right flank and risking unwelcome publicity, ruled out a run for the Presidency.

None the less as the end of the Clinton era nears, George W Bush asks him to be vice Presidential running mate. He accepts on condition that he will not campaign against gay rights. Bush agrees and becomes President by winning Florida by 531 votes with no recount allowed. Hanging chads

will forever be a source of what if...

Cheney is aware that the Vice Presidency is seen as a nothing role, no more than waiting for the President to die. However, Bush is presented as an instinctive decision maker not one for detail or interest in foreign policy and Cheney redefines the role to build power. The Republican right have a legal opinion that the President can do no wrong and is therefore above the law. This allows rendition, torture of suspects and some other less than democratic practices without oversight.

When 9/11 happens, Bush is out of Washington. As the chaos unfolds Cheney is briefly in charge and using Presidential powers, authorises force to be used to bring down planes.

The agenda has been changed, and the US has to respond. Links between Afghanistan and Iraq are needed to justify war and are manipulated to facilitate invasion. Colin Powell is compromised by having to give a briefing to the UN on flimsy evidence, naming an obscure Iraqi as the mastermind behind the terrorists. The film has a clip of Tony Blair addressing the commons in support, a real low point in British history.

The invasion happens, but with no planning for the aftermath, chaos ensues and ISIS rise, led by the leader effectively created by the USA. The caliphate causes all manner of unforeseen issues, including terrorist attacks across the world - there is a horrible scene showing the aftermath of 7/7 that I had not seen before. Rumsfeld is cast aside, Powell leaves the Cabinet and the Republican right assumes absolute control.

Cheney leaves office alongside Bush when Obama becomes President. There is a twist as his youngest daughter stands for the senate on a platform which includes opposing gay marriage. The film implies strongly that Cheney backed her, leading to a split between the sisters that lasted many years.

The final credits feature a focus group discussing Trump, and degenerating into a fight between supporters and opponents. The message is clear - the current division has its roots in the Bush era, and Cheney should take his share of the blame. As someone once said, beware the quiet man....

This is a film well worth watching- remember to watch the credits.

Future Speakers

Louise Haigh MP shadow Policing Minister has offered to attend following the recent cancellation, watch for a new date later in the year.



Figure 10 Louise Haigh, who had the joys of a Brexit vote rather than the District Line to deal with

11th April Jannike Wachowiak will be the speaker, 7.30pm at Hornchurch Library



Figure 11 Jannike our speaker in April

Jannike Wachowiak is a project manager at the London office of the German Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and a mentee with the Fabian Women's Network mentoring programme. She will talk on her recent Fabian Review article on the future of the SPD in Germany.

7th May GLA Assembly Member Fiona Twycross will be the speaker, venue to be confirmed



Figure 12 Fiona Twycross AM our speaker in May

Dr Fiona Twycross is London's first Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience and was appointed to this role, by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, in April 2018. Prior to this, she was Chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) from May 2016 until its abolition in 2018 and was Vice-Chair of the Authority from 2013 until 2016. She has been Chair of the London Resilience Forum since 2016.

Fiona is the Labour Lead on fire at the Local Government Association (LGA), Vice-Chair of the LGA Fire Services Management Committee and a member of the LGA Fire Commission. She is also a member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Advisory Board and on the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.

Dr Twycross has been on the London Assembly as a London-wide member since May 2012 and was re-elected in 2016. She is a member of the Assembly's Economy Committee and the Education Panel. She is Deputy Leader and Whip of the London Assembly Labour Group. Fiona led Labour's London-wide campaign, *999 SOS* against the cuts to the emergency services.

Fiona is a passionate campaigner on food poverty and universal free school meals. She produced a report in London on behalf of the Assembly's Health and Environment Committee, [A Zero Hunger City: Tackling Food Poverty in London](#). Fiona's work on economic inequality includes the report [A Zero Sum Game](#), on zero hours' contracts.

Prior to her election Fiona worked for the health charity Diabetes UK. She is a Trustee of the Encephalitis Society.

International Workers Memorial Day 2019
Invitation from Barking Dagenham and Havering
Trades Council

Join us to remember all those who lost their lives
on 14th September 1916 in a terrible fire at
The JC and J Fields Factory on Ferry Lane Rainham

On Saturday 27th April 2019 at 12.00pm
A stone memorial will be placed on the green
opposite Rainham Library

Refreshments available in the library after the commemoration.



No one should leave their homes to attend their workplace and not return home to their loved ones. Trades Unionists will always fight for the right of every worker to be employed in workplaces that are safe. Our campaigning and representation have saved thousands of lives and improved the working conditions of thousands of men and women.

On International Workers Day we will;

Remember the dead and fight for the living

Contact: Secretary Barking Dagenham and Havering Trades Union Council at
s.aitouaziz@hotmail.co.uk

Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival Sunday 21st July 2019

Barking, Dagenham and Havering Trades Council have extended an invitation to join their coach for a return trip to the premier Trades Union Summer Festival. Featuring live music on the main stage and in the marquee. Beer tent and the Martyrs Arms. Numerous food stalls catering for all tastes and pockets. Speeches from the great and the good. Take part in the traditional March of the Banners. Learn about the Tolpuddle Martyrs struggle to form a union.

Coach Leaves: Barking Town Centre from Loading Bay North Street London Road Junction (at the side of Asda) IG11 8LA at **7.30am**

Dagenham Rainham Road North RM10 7BN (at the side of Dagenham Civic Centre/Coventry University Campus) site **8.00am**

Coach departing at the end of **the Festival at 6.00pm**. Seats can be booked for a **£5.00 returnable deposit**.

This year's coach has only been possible due to a generous donation from the NEU. Your Trade Union Branches or Associations are invited to make a donation to keep future trips affordable.

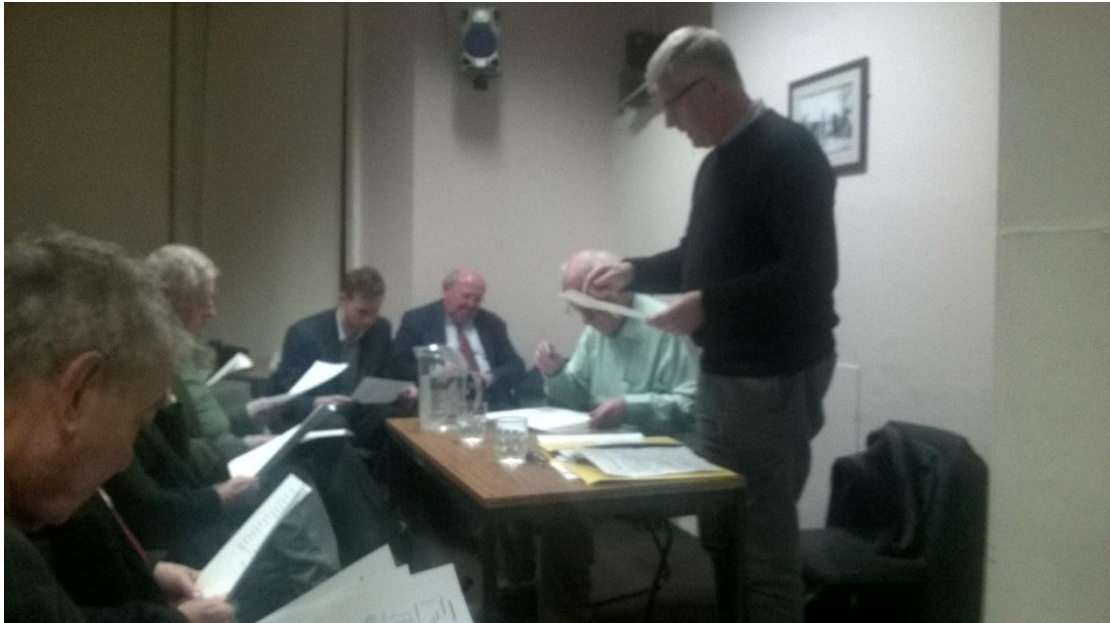
Cheques made payable to "Barking, Dagenham and Havering Trades Council" or by bank transfer to A/C No. 59020028 Sort Code No. 08-90-04

We value your input!

The Society invites speakers on a range of subjects; if you would like us to invite speakers on a particular subject let us know and we will try to oblige. The Society has a policy of rotating meetings around the Borough; if you need or can offer a lift or if you know of any suitable venues we could use, contact David Marshall.

Local Fabian Society Contacts

Chair Councillor Keith Darvill	Secretary David Marshall	Contact David Marshall
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Committee Members		
Cecile Duerinckx	Graham Lane	Sanchia Alasia
Mike Flynn	Ed Glasson	Hannah Dixon
Ian Rusha	John Reid	



Chair Keith Darvill reports ...

Future Editions

Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. The Fabian Society exists to promote progressive ideas from within and outside of the Labour movement. As such we are happy to publish articles in keeping with this broad ethos, but reserve the right not to include all or part of any material which falls outside of this parameter. Our next edition will be in June 2019,

and given the speed with which politics changes at present, topical issues could cover any subject.

Havering Fabian Society is affiliated to

- National Fabian Society
- Dagenham and Rainham Labour Party
- Romford Labour Party
- Upminster and Hornchurch Labour Party
- Barking Labour Party
- Havering and Dagenham Young Labour

Havering Fabian Membership

To join Havering Fabian Society, please complete the following and send to David Marshall. You can also join the Society nationally; David has more details. You do not have to be a member of the Labour Party to join Havering Fabians, but you will need to be a Labour Party member to take part in Labour Party selections and elections.



Havering Fabian Society

Founded in 1974, the Society promotes progressive political thought in Havering and beyond. Membership of the Society is not necessary to attend meetings, and neither is membership of the Labour Party.

However, to participate in nominations to the Local Labour Parties or in selection conferences, membership of both is required. The Society meets regularly throughout the year, apart from the summer and during election campaigns. Local Membership is currently £10 waged, £5 unwaged.

.....

I\ we wish to join Havering Fabians

Name

Address

.....

.....

.....**postcode**.....

E-mail.....

Phone number

Waged (£10) unwaged £5