

Future Meetings 2008

- 8 January Room 8, Lambeth Town Hall
Theme: Tasers
- 5 February St Leonard's Church, Streatham
Theme: Domestic Violence Research Project
- 4 March Assembly Hall, Lambeth Town Hall
Provisional Theme: Violent Crime
- Additional The Police and Young People.
Event
Likely to be late January, to tie in with MPA Youth Scrutiny (see below)

Tasers

Having declined, on two previous occasions, to approve MPS involvement in a Home Office led, nation wide pilot of the extension of Taser use to non-firearm trained police officers, the MPA's full Authority meeting on 22 November gave a qualified approval with the following statement from MPA Deputy Chair Cindy Butts.

"Once again, members raised legitimate concerns about broadening the use of Taser to routine policing. We remain worried about the message this sends out to London's communities about the escalation of confrontation and need further reassurance that vulnerable people who may behave differently - the young, old and those with disabilities - will not be adversely affected.

"However, we have to recognise that the national Home Office pilot is now underway. Without the Met participating, this Authority will be unable to influence a final decision about future use of the Taser.

"Consequently, today we agreed that the Met participates in the trial with the following rider: I will lead an MPA working group, working with the Met to jointly monitor and evaluate the trial. The group will receive weekly updates and hold monthly meetings to discuss progress and address concerns.

"We want to move forward and influence the national debate. Our concerns have not gone away, nor have they been answered. Disproportionality of those the Taser is used against, the vulnerability of certain groups who may experience the threat of Taser use, and the extent of officer training remain of concern. We will monitor these areas rigorously and ensure that the experiences of London influence national policy for the good."

Later on the 22nd, a routine meeting of Chairs of London CPCG's, attended by Anna Tapsell and Jim Toohill, was briefed by Commander Bob Broadhurst who is ACPO lead for Restraint. He explained the lack of prior consultation, pointing out that the pilot was Home Office sponsored. He pointed out that it would be unbalanced if the MPS were omitted from the pilot given that one third of all Taser use nationally is within London. Key points were:

- Use will be restricted to the Territorial Support Group when they are acting as Commissioner's Reserve;
- Tasers will probably be issued at two per carrier;
- The pilot will run until September 2008;
- There will be no age restrictions on their use;
- There has been no evidence from DOMILL (Defence Scientific Advisory Council's Sub-Committee on the Medical Implications of Less Lethal Weapons) of lasting damage from TASER use or of TASER related fatality;
- There will be an ongoing programme of community engagement.

For our part, we pointed to:

- Concerns over the incremental de-escalation of TASER use,
- Concerns in respect of use by TSG,
- Ambiguities in the DOMILL results, much of which are based on pigs, *in vitro* tissue preparations or computer simulation, especially in regard to people affected by drugs or alcohol, people of 'small stature' or pregnant women;
- Concerns over the potential damage to police-community relationships following injury, illness or fatality following TASER use, whether or not caused by it;

CPCG's January meeting will have a full presentation of this pilot.

Monthly Police Report

CPCG is working with Supt Paul Wilson to review the format and content of this report. If you would like to be involved in this, or have particular suggestions, please contact the Group office.

MPA Youth Scrutiny

The MPA has requested that, as part of their Youth Scrutiny (see October Briefing), CPCG's London wide include the issue of Young People and the Police as part of their agendas, in order to feed into the scrutiny, in much the same way as the London Wide Terrorism Debate.

Mindful of the feedback at the last CPCG monthly meeting devoted to Youth Issues, CPCG Board has decided to work with voluntary and statutory partners to mount a special event to address this issue. This will need to be held by early February at the latest, to fit the Scrutiny timetable. If you, or your organisation, would like to be involved, please contact the Group Office. We shall keep members informed of plans as they develop.

Stop and Search Monitoring Sub-Group

The Sub-Group has met once since the last Group meeting and work progresses with the School's Resource Pack and in developing, with Lambeth Mediation, a proposal for an Early Conflict Resolution project. Members of the Sub-Group joined a workshop run at Stockwell Mosque based around a new DVD by British Transport Police relating to s44 Stops and Searches. Issues concerning entry of recent TSG Stops and Searches into the central database have held up the most recent statistical report from the Sub-Group, and are being resolved.

Domestic Violence Research Project

The project is on target to report to the Group in February.

Victim Support Lambeth

CPCG members Victim Support voted at their AGM on 27 November to go forward with proposals to merge with other Victim Supports into a single, national charity. This will take effect from 31 March 2008 but, under our Rules and Regulations, will not effect Victim Supports membership of CPCG.

CPCG Quarterly Forum

The MPS is seeking to establish a quarterly Forum, relating specifically to the new Communications infrastructure (previously called 3Ci), for south London CPCGs and with a launch date aimed for 23 January 2008.

Lambeth Serious Crime Reduction Strategy

On 14 November, Gill Kenealy attended the Serious Crime Reduction Strategy meeting at Frank O'Neill House. The definition of serious violence within the strategy is Murder, GBH, Weapon (gun & knife) Enabled Crime, Rape and Robbery.

http://cms.met.police.uk/met/boroughs/lambeth/04how_are_we_doing/news/lambeth_serious_violence_reduction_strategy

Community meeting – Moorlands Estate, Brixton

On 19 November, a meeting organised and chaired by Gill Kenealy took place on the Moorlands Estate to discuss the extension of the dispersal zone in Brixton to that part of the borough. The extension gives police the authority to disperse groups of two or more people. Sixteen people attended the meeting, including six young people, which was called at short notice.

Plans were made to hold further regular meeting to review the dispersal zone and the next meeting takes on 17 December. The meeting also agreed that families would try to keep log of how many times children were moved on and for police to bring statistics to each meeting on the number of dispersals and data concerning those dispersed. Cllr. Rachel Heywood agreed to enquire about the use of Lambeth-owned hall on the estate for youth activities run by local young people.

Other Meetings Attended

Since the last CPCG meeting, CPCG Board members have attended a number of meetings on the Group's behalf. (for more information, contact the named individual through the Group office)

7 November Conference held by the Latin Front (organised by Gloria Gomez, Latin Front) at St. Peters in Walworth, where a packed church of people from all over South America discussed their experiences of an inhumane immigration policy that was splitting families and penalising those who were working hard and making valuable contribution to our community. The conference was attended by officers from immigration and the police and was also addressed by internationally renowned solicitors and others who serve the Latin Community (Anna Tapsell)

12 November, met with chair and policy lead of Independent Police Complaints Committee's Stop and Search Group (Paul Andell)

12 November, Monthly with the Borough Commander, Ch. Supt. Sharon Rowe at which, amongst other matters, they discussed were the levels of violent crime in Lambeth and the issues of coordination between agencies (Anna Tapsell)

12 November, Gangs, Guns and Knives Commission at the Town Hall to review the first draft of the final report (Anna Tapsell, Ivelaw Bowman)

13 November, Lambeth Safety Partnership Board meeting, minutes are now published on the Council's website; (Anna Tapsell)

17 November, All-day conference organised by Somali women in south Lambeth to discuss their specific issues with local voluntary and statutory representatives. Further informal but regular gathering were being organised with the Safer Neighbourhood officers and Streatham Town Centre for this group in the near future (Anna Tapsell)

21 November, Meeting with the Serious Crime Unit to review the progress of a murder enquiry which had failed, so far, to secure sufficient evidence to charge. Also, on the same day, attended the local Multi-Agency Risk Committee on domestic violence. This is a process by which agencies seek to work together to secure the safety of victims at very high risk (Anna Tapsell)

26 November, Steering Group of the REACH Project which provides support and advocacy for women who are brought into A&E and minor Injuries at Guys and St. Thomas (Anna Tapsell)