

**COMMUNITY-POLICE  
CONSULTATIVE GROUP  
for LAMBETH**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**2 May 2006**

**West Indian Ex-Servicemen's &  
Ex-Servicewomen's Assoc.**

**PRESENT: CPCG BOARD** Paul Andell, Greta Brooks (Churches Together in Brixton), Canon Ivelaw Bowman, Lee Jasper, Jim Toohill (Victim Support), Anna Tapsell (Ind. Membs), Wesley Stephenson (Your Story). Abdul Sultan Virani (Lambeth Pensioners' Forum) **COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP**

Nick Abengowe (Herne Hill Forum); Robert Holden (Friends of Brockwell Park); Pauline Bower (Churches Together in Clapham); Rod Brown (Lambeth Leaseholders Forum); Wally Channon, Peggy Tyler (Clapham Town N'hood Watch); Neil Flanigan (West Indian Ex-Servicemen's and Servicewomen's Assoc.); David Hart, Ros Munday (Clapham Community Partnership); Stuart Horwood, John Gordon (Brixton Market Traders Federation); Hedley Johnson (West Indian Standing Conference); Dr Brian Mantell (Assoc. of Jewish Ex-Servicemen & Women); Ros Munday (Clapham Community Partnership); The Most Rev. Dr Bancroft McCarthy, Phyliss Jackson (HMP Brixton Independent Monitoring Board); Hazel Saunders (Lambeth Victim Support); George Tuson (Streatham Southern Sector Working Group); John Wainwright (Clapham Sector Working Group). **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS** Shane Collins, Peter Harris; Lena James; Gill Kenealy, Richard Moore, Fernando Senior, Jane Warwick **STATUTORY MEMBERSHIP**; Lloyd Leon Panel of Independent Custody Visitors **LAMBETH COUNCIL** Cllr. Peter O'Connell, Chris Lee (Asst. Ch. Exec), Simon Harding (Asst. Dir. Community Safety Team) **METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** Brgh. Cmdr.

Martin Bridger, Supt. Stewart Low (Brixton), Supt. Alistair Sutherland (Kennington); Supt. Jonathan Tottman (Streatham), Supt. Paul Wilson (Community Partnership), Sgt. Ronnie Whelan **SECRETARIAT** Ben McKendrick

**Apologies:** David Corderoy, Insp. Graham Croucher, Gary Dando, Sheila Draper, Maude Estwick, Rowena Estwick, Bushy Kelly, Sally Rance, Paul Reynolds, Cllr. Darren Sanders, Cheryl Sealey, Hazel Watson

**Introduction**

1. The Group held a minute's silence in memory of Alfie Howard, Lambeth Town Crier, who had passed away on 28 April. Lee Jasper said that Alfie had been an institution whose presence at many events throughout the borough brought smiles to many faces.

**Minutes of the Meeting 4 April 2006**

2. The Minutes of the Meeting of 4 April 2006 were accepted without amendment.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes 4 April 2006**

3. Mr Jasper said the Group's Board would continue to consider S.44 legislation in relation to stop and search [Minute 5, 04/04/06].

4. Although Borough Commander Martin Bridger had said he would provide statistics for the abstraction of officers from Brixton Town Centre, Mr Jasper said that the Group needed to be clear of the purpose of asking for the breakdown of statistics provided by the police [Minute 6, 04/04/06].

5. With regard to the police response to an incident in Brixton Market, Sergeant Ronnie Whelan said that police had responded in time, i.e. within twelve minutes, but was prepared to further discuss the details with Stuart Horwood [Minute 13, 04/04/06].

**Information from the CPCG Board and Members**

6. Pauline Bower announced that she had resigned as the official representative of Churches Together in Clapham. A replacement had yet to be decided. She said that she would be concentrating her time and energy on a project concerning the 2007 bi-centenary celebrations of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.

7. However, Ms Bower said that she had loved being part of the Group although sad to be leaving with some unresolved questions related to the Group's governance. She said that the expertise of former members Paul Twyman and Paul Reid had been lost to the Group as a result of having been treated guilty, despite unsubstantiated allegations and no evidence of wrong-doing against them.

8. Similarly, Ms Bower expressed her concern about the lack of help afforded by the Group to Kelly ben-Maimon who, she said, had suffered discrimination, while another former member John Howard had also not been treated well. Furthermore, she said that Abdul Sultan Virani and she had still not received a letter of apology promised for the way they had been treated over the former Racial Harassment Committee.

9. Ms Bower concluded saying that she hoped future procedural matters and internal problems would be handled more justly, openly and properly by the CPCG Board members and that the Group would become a real and respected force for good in the borough.

10. Mr Jasper thanked Pauline Bower for her contribution over many years of working on the Group's behalf, which was appreciated and recognised. However, he said that some of the issues she raised had been heavily disputed and subject to discussion and correspondence for many years. Mr Jasper

added that while he understood the importance of her undertaking in respect of the bicentennial anniversary of the abolition of slavery, he hoped she would attend as many Group meetings as she possibly could.

11. Jim Toohill drew the meeting's attention to the Group's May briefing paper (see attached) for information from the CPCG Board. Items included were: IPCC Stockwell Investigations; Lambeth CCTV Strategy; Fridge Nightclub Drugs Raid; No Deal in Brixton; MPS Position on Drugs.

12. Lambeth Crime Statistics. Mr Toohill reported that, at a recent meeting with the IPCC, the Community Reference Group had urged that, in the event of the CPS not bringing charges, the IPCC should publish as much of their report as they could, in order to build community confidence in the process. He also drew the meeting's attention to the ACPO review of police response to suicide terrorism, which did not mention the Kratos tactics specifically but rather placed the response firmly in the context of the long-standing ACPO guidelines on the use of firearms by the police.

13. Mr Bridger also gave an update from the IPCC investigation which stated that the main investigation report's supplementary report, setting out its recommendations, was still being considered by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The IPCC had previously stated that it had hoped to receive a decision from the CPS around Easter. However, this would not now occur, although the CPS was hopeful; for a decision fairly soon.

**14. Mr Bridger said that the CPS had also confirmed that all interested parties would be provided with the actual date of the decision release one week in advance. He added that he would inform the Group of the actual decision once he had received the notification.**

15. Mr Bridger stated that the IPCC investigation into the direct complaint from the family of Jean Charles de Menezes, concerning incorrect information released into the public domain and the subsequent failure to correct it was still ongoing. It was expected that the investigation would be completed shortly.

#### **Lambeth Police Report and Review of 2005/6**

16. Mr Bridger reported on a conference in Madrid, Spain, he had attended with Gloria Gomez and Toaha Quereshi. Mr Bridger said that the invitation to share good practice was the result of the recognition for the collective good work done by the borough in the aftermath of the killing of Jean Charles de Menezes and the bombing incidents in July 2005.

17. Mr Bridger reminded the meeting that the people of Madrid had suffered the loss of over 200 people in a terrorist attack, and said that he was proud to deliver the good practice carried out in Lambeth during a time in which cohesion in the community was maintained by not allowing the Muslim community to become isolated.

18. Further to community engagement issues and Lambeth leading as a community, Mr Bridger said that he would be going to Pakistan the next day. The reason, he said, was due to the fact that three of the four suicide bombers of 7 July were young British born Muslims to whom something had happened, whereby they became terrorist bombers. Furthermore, one of those arrested and accused of the 21 July bombings came from the Lambeth community and attended a Stockwell mosque.

19. While the terrorist threat remained, Mr Bridger commended the sharing of good practice. He said that in Pakistan there were people who could contribute and help Lambeth in addressing the issues concerning

the would-be bomber who grows up within a Western culture, and the challenge of identifying such people in the future.

20. Mr Bridger said that he had been approached by people in the community to hold a street party to celebrate how Brixton had changed 25 years after the uprising and had become a place for the future. Mr Bridger said that he and the Lambeth Ch. Exec. had given their support for the celebrations to take place on 29 May.

21. Mr Bridger reported on a raid on the Fridge nightclub on 15 April the details of which were included in the police report (see attached). Mr Bridger said the Fridge would need to address certain issues with the local authority and satisfy the courts. However, he said that it would hopefully be up and running again but that it would have to be run responsibly. He added that another club in Kennington had previously been closed and that he would not tolerate drug dealing and drug abuse in such establishments.

22. Canon Bowman congratulated the police for the raid on the Fridge nightclub. However, he said that he was amazed that the Fridge had been closed for 28 days while the Mass, scene of shootings and stabbings and an endless list of trouble, was still open.

23. Supt. Low said that with regard to the Mass, police had been aware of things going on and police had hence been very robust in dealing with the club. Having linked up with the local authority, he said that the Mass had been served a final letter in relation to the club's management, security staff and a host of other issues. He added that the club was now subject to a robust regime in respect of compliance.

24. In response to Paul Andell, who sought an explanation for the difference in approach to dealing with the two nightclub,

Supt. Low said that in relation to the Mass there had been a build up of issues and it too had been subject to the same tactics as the Fridge in terms of gathering evidence of drug dealing but none was found. He added that the problems at the Mass were associated with violence and violent crime.

**25.** Mr Andell said that he could not understand why the Fridge, which was not associated with violence, was at the end of a more robust approach while the Mass, with a history of violence, was dealt with through a partnership licensing means.

**26.** Supt. Low said there had been an escalation of violence occurring at the Mass, while the Fridge was subject to an intelligence led operation linked to drugs on the premises. The issue of closure, he said, came after the operation when police evidence of mismanagement of the club in relation to public safety was highlighted. Another matter concerned the Fridge operating without a proper licence to sell alcohol.

**27.** Supt. Low said that it was not his decision to close the Fridge but he had appeared before a magistrate alongside the Fridge's owner and his solicitors. He said that the magistrate felt that the case was sufficiently serious to close the premises for 28 days for the licensing authority to review the matter. Supt. Low that the police were not looking to see the club closed down but rather expected effective and proper management, and a safe environment for people to enjoy themselves, which they also sought of the Mass.

**28.** On 24 April, Mr Bridger said that two police officers had been shot at after stopping suspects in a vehicle that had been carjacked at gunpoint. He said that one officer had received a gunshot wound to the leg, though fortunately not serious, and people had been arrested and charged in connection with those offences.

**29.** In relation to No Deal, Mr Bridger said that the stop to arrest rate was still falling although it remained above the MPS average.

**30.** Mr Bridger gave a PowerPoint presentation (see attached) on the Lambeth police performance during the last financial year (1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006). Mr Bridger said that the performance was one to be celebrated with the efforts and achievements of the Partnership, the community and the police acknowledged.

**31.** Mr Bridger said the performance showed that there had been 3,816 less victims of crime compared to the previous year. However, Mr Bridger acknowledged the work of his predecessors, Borough Commanders Brian Moore and Richard Quinn who had overseen a year on year reduction in crime in Lambeth.

**32.** In response to Shane Collins' question on police policy concerning free community events of over 2,000 people having to be surrounded by a fence, causing events to be cancelled, Mr Bridger said that there were issues of health and safety, and once the number of people anticipated exceeded 2,000 another set of criteria was applied. While this was not of his doing, he said he would be prepared to meet Mr Collins and talk about the matter further.

**33.** In response to Mr Jasper, Mr Collins said he could provide the number of applications made for events in the past year in order that they could be compared to the number that had not been pursued due to the restrictions brought about by numbers exceeding 2,000 persons attending.

**33.** Mr Jasper congratulated the police for the ongoing level of crime reduction in a number of key areas and driving down crime in many other areas. Although some challenges remained, he said these had been identified

and strategies, such as the Gun Crime Initiative, had been designed to deal with the problems.

**34.** Lloyd Leon said that in view of bad publicity being at the forefront of media reports of Group meetings, in this instance the media should be informed about how much the police working together with the people of Lambeth the police have achieved.

**35.** Greta Brooks said that she was impressed with the police performance and the way the police had looked at the whole of the community and asked: "How can we work with you, so that we are all together on the same road?"

**36.** Mr Toohill said that it was clear from the picture that it got harder every year for certain crime reduction, as seen with the small decrease in street crime and robbery. However, he said that the use of technology could perhaps help in the future. For example, the ability to use mobile phones on the underground could lessen the number of robberies above ground.

**37.** In respect of mobile phone thefts, Mr Bridger agreed that there was the potential for an increase in crime on the underground and that there could still be issues when people came out of the tube in terms of the targeting of victims, which the police needed to think about.

**38.** In response to Jim Toohill's query about violent crime he said that there been no change to the mix and it had been reduced overall. However, he conceded that ABH and GBH had increased, which was street related e.g. occurring on Friday and Saturdays in town centres, about which progress could be made.

**39.** With regard to a Mr Toohill's conjecture of a possible reduction of resources via the RAF, Mr Bridger gave reassurance that there was no need to worry for

the present. He said that over the past four years Lambeth had received significant resources from elsewhere to support the borough achieve its crime reductions. During the last year the support had been less than previous years, yet the police in Lambeth were still delivering despite the greater challenges. In view of this, Mr Bridger said that he did not believe the present number of officers in Lambeth would be affected for some time. However, he said that if he became aware of any changes afoot he would report back to the Group.

40. In response to Mr Horwood, Supt. Stewart Low said that it was his responsibility to ensure that the police presence in Brixton Town Centre was not lost. In terms of deciding upon the number of officers used, Supt. Low said that in the initial stages it has been a difficult call since the police have to serve the whole of Lambeth not just Brixton Town Centre.

41. In response to Rod Brown, Mr Bridger said that some of the crimes that were deemed cleared-up, i.e. detected, were subsequently found not guilty in court.

42. In response to Lena James, Mr Bridger said that providing a future for young people needing drug treatment and being released from prison was a big challenge for the community. He added that much was going on around a range of activities, although the Partnership still had a lot more to do such as providing life skills.

43. In response to Richard Moore, Mr Bridger said that the police were always working on building people's confidence to report crime. He added that while recognising that all boroughs suffered from the problem, Lambeth police were rated the second highest in terms of victim satisfaction.

44. Mr Bridger also said that a new telephone system would be

inaugurated in August that would make contacting the police easier. On the hand, he said that there was a degree of false reporting by people making bogus insurance claims.

45. Supt. Paul Wilson added that Lambeth Council had made a huge investment in wardens with 90 additional personnel being rolled out over the next year. He added that it had been proven that wardens worked well with vulnerable groups and assisted with reporting of crime.

46. In relation to Transport for London (TfL), Mr Bridger said the police worked very closely with them and if analysis identified crime taking place on the buses and bus routes police Superintendents would link directly in with TfL, who very supportive of the work the police did. He added that crimes that were committed on buses in Lambeth were counted within Lambeth police statistics.

47. In response to Mr Horwood, Mr Bridger said the repeat offenders operating in Lambeth were the borough's prolific, priority offenders. He added that they represented a challenge and required being identified which was an ongoing Partnership effort.

**48. Mr Jasper asked if, at some point in the future, the extent to which the borough was affected by foreign nationals who ought to have been deported but returned to Lambeth could be revealed. He said that it was of particular interest to the Afro-Caribbean community since it was not unknown for those convicted of Trident gun crimes to have been subsequently released back into the community only to wreak havoc against those members of the community that they thought had been involved with their imprisonment. Mr Bridger said that he would look into doing some work on the issue.**

49. Canon Ivelaw Bowman congratulated everyone who had contributed to the success of the Lambeth police performance and reiterated Mr Toohill's view about the fear of crime that kept the elderly locked indoors. He added that something needed to be done to instill confidence in such people.

50. Canon Bowman said that extortion and organised crime were big issues in Lambeth. He said that he saw the criminal fraternity every day standing around the doorways of shops in Brixton market without purchasing anything. He said it was a matter for the police and the Lambeth Chamber of Commerce to look into. Mr Bridger said that the police did note what was going on and that the police would put in place some tactics to deal with the matter.

51. Simon Harding, LBL Asst. Dir. for Community Safety, gave a PowerPoint presentation (see attached) on the successes of the Lambeth Safer Partnership during the past year. Mr Harding said that he headed a 45 strong team that dealt with community safety issues ranging from crime to drugs and drug treatment issues.

52. During the five months of his current role, Mr Harding said that he had found there was very strong partnership working in Lambeth, not just between the Council and the police, but also with other services such as Probation, Fire Service and Primary Care Trust.

53. Mr Harding said that his team and the Council as a whole worked very hard to support Lambeth police reach its targets. Some of this he said was quiet, behind the scenes activity although some of the work was more up front, such as the closure of crack houses, which involved staff from Housing Services and those working on substance misuse and drug treatment.

54. In partnership, Mr Harding said that there had been success in moving street drinkers in Brockwell Park, which involved local people and street drinkers themselves. Meanwhile, at the South Bank an innovative 'Turning Heads' scheme, whereby upon entering public conveniences people were reminded by a spoken message of leaving items such as handbags at their seats, had successfully reduced the number of thefts.

55. In Streatham, Mr Harding said that wardens were working with the Somali community in relation to perceived anti-social behaviour (ASB), while in partnership with the Fire Service, a LIFE Project for young people between 8-12 years who went through a series of training events of life skills.

56. Mr Harding said that other schemes and campaigns deemed successes included:

- The 'Best Bar None' Scheme in Clapham to encourage responsible licensed premises and discourage binge drinking.
- Dedicated hate crime staff dealing race and faith hate crime, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) crime and domestic violence.
- Dedicated community safety staff in each town centre responsible for driving forward ASB initiatives.
- Improvements to the Youth Offending Team through working in concert with the Youth Justice Board
- Roll out of Wardens throughout Lambeth, the number of staff of which was increasing.
- Gang Intervention Programme and Gun Crime Programme which were unique to Lambeth
- Drug Intervention Programme which aimed to

increase the number of people, particularly the young, receiving drug treatment, while there were also plans to increase drug treatment capacity.

- Targeted counselling towards LGBT young persons in respect of alcohol and drugs, and the launch of a series of initiatives aimed at young Portuguese persons involved in substance misuse, which had led to a report that would aid future initiatives

- The reduction in the number of abandoned vehicles by the Environment and Culture department

- Town centre events for women in each of Lambeth's Town Centres

57. In the forthcoming year, Mr Harding highlighted a number of issues that would be addressed, including: Wider Community Engagement; Community Consultation; CCTV Audit & Strategy; Street Lighting (Public Finance Initiative; Coordinated ASB activity strategy; Business crime (Lambeth Business Against Crime); Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act strategy and training for key Lambeth Council staff.

58. Finally, Mr Harding said that in partnership with the police he would be putting together all the information he had reported to the Group in an Annual Report, which would be available online and in hard copy by the middle of June.

59. Mr Jasper said he thought that the Group would very much like to see a measurement of the Crime and Disorder Strategy's performance presented in a similar way as the police's annual review, for example targets and figures in relation to the number of people placed on drug treatment programmes.

60. In respect of community involvement and representation, Nora-Anne Sheehy said that she wanted an assurance from Mr

Harding that he would involve the community as partners. She added that it was not acceptable for people on high to say who community representatives should be and what they should be saying.

61. Gill Kenealy asked Mr Harding to look into whether the Fire Service LIFE Project would continue, as she had heard that because of a budget deficit it would not do so. She also asked whether there were any drugs services being made available to under 18 year olds and support for young women victims of domestic violence.

**62. Due to the time limits, it was agreed for Mr Harding to return and respond to questions at the Group meeting in July. Mr Jasper proposed that people could submit their questions to the Group office thereby giving Mr Harding an opportunity to give the fullest response.**

63. Mr Jasper said that there was a great deal of press attention concerning three alleged racist attacks on Asian shopkeepers by an Afro-Caribbean male suspect. The latest incident on Clapham Road resulted in one death with three injured, one of which was life-threatening.

64. Whatever, the motivation for the attacks, Mr Jasper said that he was neither aware nor believed it to be part of a broader crisis or tension between the Afro-Caribbean and Asian communities in Lambeth. However, he added that there appeared to be a media attempt to categorise the crimes as being in part a reflection of events that occurred in Birmingham, which he believed to be specific and peculiar to that area and that the same such problems did not exist in Lambeth.

65. Commander Alan Gibson, of the Specialist Crime Directorate (SCD), said that SCD became involved in the case following the fire bomb attack at the Pricer Food & Wine shop on

Clapham Road on 27 April. The shop was run by a Pakistani, Suni Muslim businessman, who died in the attack, while another person was in hospital with life threatening injuries. Two others escaped by running through flames.

**66.** Mr Gibson said that he soon became aware of another, similar incident that had taken place on 14 April at the News at Nine in Tulse Hill, run by a Sri Lankan Hindu. There, a customer received burns to his legs. On the basis of the two incidents, Mr Gibson said that police became concerned that there could be a sinister dimension to the attacks.

**67.** Mr Gibson said that in view of the exceptional nature of the incidents he called a Gold meeting, one that examines critical incidents, in order to gauge an appropriate response to the community and the media. After this meeting, Mr Gibson said police linked in yet another incident that took place at an off licence in West Norwood run by another Sri Lankan Hindu.

**68.** Mr Gibson said that the suspect of the first incident was described as a black male in his early thirties, 5' 6" to 5' 8" tall, who used a petrol bomb. In the second incident a petrol bomb was thrown through the open door of the shop. The shopkeeper, who had to run through flames to escape, received burns to his arms. The description of the suspect on this occasion was not dissimilar to that of the first incident.

**69.** Mr Gibson said that police now had two suspects in custody but that it would be premature to say that the risk to the community had disappeared. And while all the attacks using similar methods took place in a small geographical area in a relatively short space of time against Asian businesses, Mr Gibson said that there was no indication of a possible motive.

**70.** In the absence of a motive, Mr Gibson said that under his

instruction the police were treating the attacks as racist incidents, although it was not known if they were racially motivated. For reassurance, Mr Gibson said that leaflets had been delivered to small businesses in Lambeth as well as part of Croyden. Also, with London Fire Brigade, police had visited 148 Asian businesses in the borough.

**71.** Mr Jasper proposed that the Group write to the victims of the incidents and express its condolences where appropriate. He also said that there was not the level of divisiveness in Lambeth as was seen in some press reporting and Group should show its common grief and solidarity.

**72.** Mr Bridger agreed with Mr Jasper's idea of using Lambeth United and the communication network it had to express the community's togetherness. However, he said that the dead man's family and that of the seriously injured man lived in Pakistan, but they had been contacted.

**73.** Abdul Sultan Virani said that that he could not understand why the incident had been treated as racist incident and that it did not help towards integration and trust building.

**74.** Mr Jasper said that in previous times when racist attacks had taken place the racist element of such incidents was discounted far too early during the course of investigations. He added that it had taken a long time to convince the MPS that racism could not be ruled out as a motive where the victims were consistently from one community. Therefore, he said that the police were taking the proper course action by keeping their minds open. Unfortunately, while the police had not ruled it out as a motive, the media had taken it to mean that it was one.

**75.** Mr Gibson said that the designation of being a racist incident was about the individual

committing the crime and the victims of the crime and not the community.

**76.** Canon Bowman congratulated the police for their alacrity in dealing with the incident, particularly the leafleting. He said he also agreed that it should be treated as racist incident but decried those who sought to make mischief. He added that there had never been any race riots in Lambeth.

**77.** Anna Tapsell agreed that in the absence of any evidence of a motivation for these crimes, which may well be the actions of an isolated individual, it was irresponsible to infer community tensions of any sort. At the same time, just as she (as a Jew) acknowledged that Jewish people are capable of Facism, we should recognize that individuals in all parts of the community are capable of racism.

**78.** Mr Gibson explained that an incident could be called racist by anyone who believed it was so. However, the term 'racially motivated' was a legal test and was an aggravating factor to a charge that could lead to a greater sentence. As for the mentioning of religion, he said that it was part of the investigation to find out if a particular faith was being targeted.

**79.** In response to Wesley Stephenson, Mr Gibson said that the idea of a Shop Watch was a matter for the borough, although they were known to work successfully in parts of London using early warning systems to pass on messages effectively and quickly.

**80.** Mr Bridger said that he wished to thank Cheryl Sealey for all her assistance she had given around the incidents.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

6:30 pm Tuesday, 6 June 2006  
Lambeth Accord, 336 Brixton Rd