

Community-Police Consultative Group for Lambeth

Minutes of the Meeting 6 June 2006 Lambeth Accord 336 Brixton Road SW9

PRESENT: CPCG BOARD Paul Andell, Greta Brooks (Churches Together in Brixton), Canon Ivelaw Bowman, Jim Toohill (Victim Support), Anna Tapsell (Ind. Membs), Wesley Stephenson (Your Story), Abdul Sultan Virani (Lambeth Pensioners' Forum) **COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP** Doye Akinlade (Brixton Society); Rod Brown (Lambeth Leaseholders Forum); Wally Channon, Peggy Tyler (Clapham Town N'hood Watch); David Corduroy (Lambeth Chamber of Commerce); Gary Dando (Cressbrock N'hood Watch); Maude Estwick (Milkwood Road Residents' Association); Rowena Estwick (PopUlar Youht Association); Jim Fairweather (West Indian Ex-Servicemen's and Servicewomen's Assoc.); Stuart Horwood, John Gordon (Brixton Market Traders Federation); Dr Brian Mantell (Assoc. of Jewish Ex-Servicemen & Women); Ros Munday (Clapham Community Partnership); The Most Rev. Dr Bancroft McCarthy, Phyllis Jackson (HMP Brixton Independent Monitoring Board); Paul Reynolds (Herne Hill Society); Hazel Saunders (Lambeth Victim Support); George Tuson (Streatham Southern Sector Working Group); Cathy Valentine (Brixton Northern Sector Working Group); Arulini Velmurugu (Lambeth Towers/Road T&R Assoc.); Kathy White (Tulse Hill T&R Assoc.) Clapham Sector Working Group). **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS** Peter Harris; Gill Kenealy, Richard Moore, Fernando Senior, **STATUTORY MEMBERSHIP**; Lloyd Leon (Panel of Independent Custody Visitors) **LAMBETH COUNCIL** Cllr. Kingsly Abrams, Cllr. Mark Bennett, Cllr. Rachel Heywood, Chris Lee (Asst. Ch. Exec) **METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** Stewart Low (Brixton), Supt. Jonathan Tottman (Streatham); Supt. Paul Wilson (Community Partnership), Sgt. Ronnie Whelan, PC Andy Hewlitt **SECRETARIAT** Ben McKendrick

Apologies: Ch. Supt. Martin Bridger, Neil Flanigan, Cllr. Andrew Gibson, Robert Holden, Lena James, Lee Jasper, Chris Lee, Bushy Kelly, Cllr. Darren Sanders, John Roberts, David Tomlinson, John Wainwright, Jane Warwick

[Note: These minutes were accepted at the October 2006 Meeting of CPCG with the following amendment:

Add at the beginning to Minute 36: 'A young woman asked what was the furthest the police could search on the road because she said that she had seen police on Brixton Road searching in someone's boxers, and that wasn't right'.]

Changes in representation: Neil Flanigan (representative), Jim Fairweather (deputy representative) West Indian Ex-Servicemen's & Ex-Service Women's Association; Elizabeth Gibson (representative) Churches Together in Clapham

1. On behalf of the Group, Paul Andell congratulated Brixton PCs Paul Bennett, Anthony Conroy, Mark Guppy, Richard Hall and Scott Penney who had received commendations for pursuing armed criminals in two separate incidents despite being shot at

2. Mr Andell offered commiserations and congratulations to CPCG Councillor members who had fought in local Council elections.

Youth and Community Safety in Lambeth

3. Gill Kenealy explained that the past month had been spent trying to gathering together a group of young people to attend the Group meeting, and said that she was delighted that so many had come to long. However, she said that there had been a great deal of

reluctance on the part of many young people to do so, or even be interviewed, in case raising their concerns in front of the police could put them in a vulnerable position in the future. This, she added, perhaps indicated a lack of confidence that some young people had in the police.

4. Young people who spoke at the meeting raised a large number of concerns around Stop and Search, such as the "unprofessional" manner of police in dealing with young people during a stop and search, using comments such as "I'll put you in the back of the van and think of something to charge you for."

5. Wesley Stephenson recounted testimonies from young people (garnered during outreach work in preparation for the meeting) who spoke of negative encounters, such as first contact with police who were sometimes provocative and bullying, which led at times to arrests but no charges brought. He said that youths also referred the displacement of criminal elements through police operations into estates where some youths lived, which caused inter-estate conflict.

6. However, Mr Stephenson said that some youths had told him that there had been some improvement in engagement with some police officers and that they could see the balance in the ethnicity of officers better reflecting the community they served. They also said that sometimes officers even built up a rapport with them but there was an issue about when there was a problem, those officers were nowhere to be seen.

7. Mr Stephenson said that another issue was trust and confidence of the youths interviewed, so much so that the filmed recordings had to be made from the neck down in order that they could not be identified. He added that even coming to the Group meeting made them feel vulnerable in respect of how they would be perceived by their peers.

8. Mr Stephenson said that youths spoke of their interactions with the police when reporting a crime, which they found difficult because of police perceptions of the significance of young peoples' clothing. For example, they said that wearing a 'hoody' did not make them criminals. On one occasion he had noted, Mr Stephenson said reports of youths carrying guns on an estate led to police being called. When confronted by police, one youth reached inside his pocket for his mobile phone to call his mother. Fortunately, Mr Stephenson said, an unarmed Lambeth officer communicated to the youth about what he was doing, warning that on another occasion a police marksman may take a different view.

9. Mr Stephenson said that the youths interviewed felt suffocated in their own areas and questioned their freedom in the borough and how they could engage with and use facilities. He said that some youths had been sent on anger management courses through venting their frustration and feeling of suffocation, but he questioned whether police provocation had

occurred that led to this. He added that kids needed to be innocent to be kids and not to take the blame when they really needed the police's help.

10. One youth at the meeting said that he had been stopped by police for riding his moped. After explaining to officer about the lack of facilities, the response he received that the more people the police arrested the more money and bonuses they were paid.

11. Another youth said that he had been stopped after leaving the Moving on From '81 event at the Tate Library on 31 May. The event was aimed at celebrating the change in police attitudes and Sus law operating at the time that had led to the Brixton uprising of that year.

12. One mother said that the facilities that were open were really disgusting with needles and broken glass lying around, and that young people could not be expected to use them.

13. A young woman related an incident in which she and her two friends were confronted by three other girls who acted in a racist manner and caused a fight. She said that when the police arrived they sided with the aggressors and started "kicking us down" although they had not started the trouble

14. A woman speaker said that a friend who worked at New Scotland Yard was stopped by police. The friend, who was wearing a hoody, was searched and his ID card found in his wallet. Even so, she said that one officer had said to the other that he had better look at it again to make sure it was genuine. She added that police were more likely to stop black people than white and asked "why was that?"

15. From interviews, Ms Kenealy said that some young people felt they were mistreated or disrespected by the police, and that an overriding comment was that if police were going to stop them they wanted a reason for it, and searches to be carried respectfully. She added that it was sometimes hard to believe that they were told "we'll find a reason [to arrest you]" and that offensive and sarcastic comments from the police only "raised the ante."

16. Ms Kenealy acknowledged the role that Lambeth Youth Council (LYC) had played thus far in respect of stop and search and that it would be involved in future initiatives. She added that LYC had outlined to the police that young people acknowledged the need for stop and search to occur but it had to be done with respect and not to take away young people's dignity.

17. Julie Wilkinson, Lambeth Domestic Violence Coordinator, said that she had worked in the South Bronx, New York, for three years whilst Mayor Guillian operated his zero tolerance policy. She said that the dispersal of young people, particularly ethnic minorities, killed the communities there.

18. Lloyd Leon said that there was a time when young black persons could not walk the streets without getting arrested and charged because of the 'Sus' law. However, he said that while things were not perfect today, they were much better than they used to be and parents and young people had to find a way of working with the police and the Council.

19. John Howard said that the police had to understand that the public's perception of them was very important and that they had to listen to people, and that it was good to see young people expressing their views. He said that there were some fine police officers, citing DAC Brian Paddick, but unfortunately not many. He added that though he supported the police when they did well, he reserved the right to criticise them.

20. The youths interviewed also pointed to the lack of facilities in their local area and access to those that did exist, because premises' managers were not around as much as they used to be. This meant that the only space available for them was the street where they would encounter the police. They also said that the local facilities were used for other means, about which they were not consulted, which limited their use for young people. Mr Stephenson said that from the youths' perspective, they felt that they had been bypassed and through their frustration came into conflict with the law.

21. Ivelaw Bowman said that one thing that came up time and again was the question of opening and closing times of youth clubs. He therefore asked for an indication of the opening hours that young people desired. In response, they said:

- 6.00-11.30 p.m. Although parents may disagree, some young people did not a happy life at home and spending time with friends could calm people down.
- 24 hours, seven days a week, which would help those with bad circumstances at home with nowhere else to go.
- Every day of the week. At present youth clubs only opened on Wednesdays and Thursday.
- One person offered to work for free, if given a building and funding, and would keep a youth club open till 4.00 a.m. if it kept the crime rate down.
- 6.00-10.00 p.m. It was more about the activities inside than staying open all night. Young people had to consider their school work.

22. Cllr. Mark Bennett said he had been given the Community Safety portfolio at Executive/Cabinet level and that it was something that the Council would be taking very seriously. He said that he looked forward

to working in partnership with the communities across Lambeth as well as the police. Furthermore, he said that the Council had a long way to go to ensure that the community safety function of the Council was working effectively, it being several years behind where it should be in terms of internal mechanisms. Cllr. Bennett added that he was supported by others such as Cllr. Rachel Heywood, the Brixton Champion for Community Safety, and Cllr. Kingsley Abrams, the Deputy Cabinet member for enterprise.

23. In terms of youth provision, Cllr Bennett said that there were a lot of opportunities and, despite financial constraints, the Council's youth provision was to be looked at very carefully from the very low base it was starting at. With regard to opening times, Cllr. Bennett said that there was a school of thought that said we should break away from the "church hall, ping pong, closing at 9.00 p.m. notion, and do what young people wanted, not what Council officers wanted. He added that he looked forward to working with everyone in the room.

24. Supt. Paul Wilson said that he first of all wanted to applaud the young people in attendance for standing up and being counted. Supt. Wilson said that it was his task to reduce and improve the stop and search arrest rate in Lambeth, about which there was clearly a problem. He said that it was a perennial issue, the one constant in his 23 years as a police officer, and that the police along with its partners had to get a grip on matter.

25. However, Supt. Wilson said he was pleased to hear that police actions had improved and that it was acknowledged that there were good police officers. However, he said that when stop and searches took place where people felt they had been disrespected and their human rights violated, it was unacceptable. As a police officer, Supt. Wilson said that good grounds were needed to conduct a search with the person subjected to the search told why and the details written down.

26. In response to being asked by Supt Wilson who had been given 'stop slips', one person said that he had had to ask for one. Another said that she had had to go the police station to get one. Supt. Wilson said that three days previously he had asked his officers to provide him with a sample of stop slips as he was interested in the grounds being recorded; his concerns being the appropriateness of the grounds.

27. Supt. Wilson said that he needed everyone's help to change the culture within the police service to stop and search. He therefore asked that the issue be on the Group's agenda on a regular basis with the young people present so that they could inform him and add some pressure to help think of new and innovative ways about how to address the problem.

28. In response to a young person, Supt. Wilson said that it had taken so long for change to come in respect

of stop and search because the pressure had not been great enough. He therefore said that he was inviting sustained pressure and dialogue from young people in order for the police to continue pursuing the commitment they purported to have regarding this issue.

29. Paul Andell said that the offer to discuss the matter on a regular basis with young people would be taken up.

30. *Supt. Wilson said that the police could bring statistics on a regular basis that showed stop and search/account rate but at the same time police needed to hear about people's experiences. He said that the stop slips would also give qualitative data about the basis for the grounds for stops, which he could bring back to the next meeting.*

31. In response to a young person, Paul Andell said that there was a Stop and Search Monitoring Group that looked at the issue in Lambeth, to which young people were more than welcome to participate. He proposed that those interested should give their names to Gill and Wesley or contact the Group office.

32. Jim Toohill suggested that the young people present should tell the Group how they thought it could listen to them, such as setting up a time and a place of young people's choosing to engage with the police, particularly those officers on the ground.

33. Throughout the previous year, prior to coming to Lambeth, Supt. Wilson said he had been addressing groups of predominantly black youths in Hackney and elsewhere about their rights and the responsibilities of police officers in conducting stop and searches. For instance, there was now a policy of Stop and Account whereby a police officer could stop and ask questions without searching. Nevertheless, officers still had to provide a stop slip within a certain timeframe, if not there and then.

34. However, a number of young people contested that the issuing of slips was occurring. Supt. Wilson said this could be for a number of reasons, such as operational ones, or for not wanting to detain a person longer than necessary e.g. it may be pouring with rain. Even so, he that copies could be obtained from police stations.

35. In response to a young person, Supt Wilson said that if a young person thought a police officer was abusing his or her authority then the officer's number should be taken and a person in authority, such as a parent, should be informed and a complaint made.

36. With regard to searches in the street, Supt. Wilson said that only outer garments could be searched and even hats should not be removed. In some circumstances people would be taken inside a police van or to a police station where a full search could be made.

37. Ms Kenealy said that LYC had been involved in training police officers about how they should approach stop and search but still there were stories about officers abusing their authority. She said while it was all very well and positive that we wanted to move forward and involve young people, "it needed to have teeth" and could not just consist of meetings with young people when nothing changed on the street. She added that engagement needed to be meaningful and any expectations of change should not be raised if nothing was going to happen with no change by officers on the street.

38. Anna Tapsell said that she questioned the point of stop and search and the intelligence behind it when only 10% resulted in an arrest and only a proportion of that progressing to charges being made. She added that the community needed to query the relevance of stop and search given that young people were more often the victims of crime, which in itself needed discussing. She added that some of those young people who were also the same as those criminalised and stopped under anti-terrorism laws. In view of the bitterness and anger it caused, she said the Group needed to ask to the leaders of society what were they trying to do to young people.

39. Supt. Wilson said that the issue of stop and search and its effectiveness as a tactic had been debated at very senior level and that the current MPS Commissioner believed it to be an important tool. ***In response to John Howard, Supt. Wilson said he did not know the conviction rate for stop and search but he would bring the information back to the next meeting.***

40. In response to the point made about police use of stop and search causing unrest in the community and eroding community confidence, ***Supt. Wilson said he thought it would useful for the Group to hear from Commander Rod Jarman, the police lead on stop and search, to hear exactly the MPS's thoughts and policy in that respect. He therefore proposed that the Group invite Commander Jarman to a Group meeting.*** Supt. Wilson added that there was increasing transparency, as shown by stop and search data published on the MPS website, and momentum to get it right.

41. Paul Andell thanked the young people and adults present for their contributions and for highlighting the issues of reasonable and meaningful grounds for stop and search, displacement, dispersal orders, confidence in the police from young people, and concerns about how to complain about officers' conduct.

42. Lambert Allman, Assistant Director (Children and Young People's Services C&YPS) gave an account of Lambeth Youth Strategy, which he said had been devised for all the reasons raised at the meeting i.e. that youth facilities were behind what they should be.

And in respect of those facilities, Mr Allman said that many people did not know what existed in the borough.

43. With regard to opening hours for youth clubs, Mr Allman said that thought had been given to a pilot scheme to take place at West Norwood Library, with a view of opening until 11.00 p.m. and opening on a Saturday, as well as being accessible throughout the whole year.

44. In addition to five maintained Council youth clubs, Mr Allman said that Lambeth Council contributed 20% of the youth budget to over 30 voluntary sector organisations to deliver youth services. Furthermore, the Council was working with trusts and partnerships to develop youth clubs. Extra funding had also been injected into play provision e.g. adventure playgrounds, with a £800,000 coming from central government.

45. Mr Allman said that for the first time there was a potential for having a strategy for critically pulling everything together and working to one objective of improving youth provision not just in terms of quantity but also quality. However, he said that the Lambeth Integrated Youth Strategy was not just about the Youth Service but was designed to address a host of issues around young people such as teenage pregnancy, sexual health, crime, sports, development, accreditation and outcomes such as going to college and finding employment.

46. In developing the Youth Strategy, Mr Allman said that the Council had consulted LYC, the voluntary sector, business sector and members of the Council, and had developed nine key priorities: accessibility and relevance of youth provision; targeted and diverse provision; increasing the range of opportunity for involvement in decision making; expanding and improving the quality of provision; encouraging volunteering and community involvement; a range of access points for information, advice and guidance; working with the police for better support for young people in trouble; better support and involvement of parents; measuring the effectiveness and seeking funding (a copy of the Lambeth's Draft Integrated Youth Strategy can be obtained from the CPCG office).

47. Mr Allman said to manage and monitor the Youth Strategy, it was proposed to create a Youth Board that would properly incorporate a number of different aspects, rationalising a number of different boards into one forum to which young people themselves could contribute.

48. In response to a question from a young person, Mr Allman said that 80% of the C&YPS budget was used to provide and support Council youth provision and staff, including the equivalent of 20-24 youth workers across the borough.

49. With regard to funding young people to provide their own youth services, Mr Allman said that £300,000 had been received from the Youth Opportunities fund,

and the Education Business Partnership (EBP) working with LYC were leading on getting young people together to decide how the money should be spent, thereby giving young people the chance to develop and deliver their own provision. **Mr Allman said he could provide information about the EBP through the Chair.**

50. Mr Stephenson related a number of issues raised in interviews with young people, which included: voluntary youth workers not being recognised for the work they did and volunteering work being taken for granted; youths not feeling adequately safe in their local area due to poorly kept youth facilities; lack of funding for some local youth groups with no equipment. Mr Stephenson also warned of the knife and gang culture that existed, which had been exacerbated due to the lack of youth facilities and provision

51. Having only one hand raised when young people at the meeting were asked who had participated in the Youth Strategy consultation, Paul Andell said that there was a need to think about other methods and processes of consulting with young people. Richard Moore asked if it could be revealed how many young people had been consulted about the Youth Strategy compared to older people.

52. John Howard said that Lambeth Council had to understand how much the lack of youth provision caused crime to rise and it needed to replace the number of youth facilities that it had been lost since the 1980s.

53. Mr Allman said that in terms of the process for consultation on the Youth Strategy, it had begun with professionals discussing what the priorities for the borough should be, and that the strategy was not written by committee but on the basis of what people were saying, including young people via a youth forum in Streatham, youth workers and partners of youth provision in the borough. Mr Allman said that the next stage was to contact young people and the voluntary and community services involved in the delivery of youth provision and ask them if what C&YPS had come up with was right. Mr Allman said that it was hoped by July that there would be a strategy that had been well consulted on and not just something that Council officers wanted.

54. Mr Allman said that the C&YPS could only spend the amount of money that it had been given on youth provision and he was pleased to hear testimonies about the really effective work going on in the borough targeting some difficult and challenging young people. He added that Lambeth had some excellent youth workers but needed more to improve the quality in order to deliver value for the money that was actually there.

55. To quantify, Mr Allman said that in 2004 Lambeth Council spent £75 per head on young people aged 13 -

19 years. Within the last two years this had risen to £95 per head which was not far off the national target of £100 per head. Nevertheless, Mr Allman said that even that would not be enough and the Council would need to go further.

56. In response to a young person's question of what police did outside of stop and search to engage people, PC Andy Hewlett gave an overview of the Police Voluntary Cadet (PVC) Corp. PC Hewlett said that Lambeth had 40 PVCs aged 14-19 years, some of whom would have been present but were currently involved in a Safer Neighbourhoods operation. The PVCs met once a week, in uniform, to learn about the police. They also took part in sports and games and were involved in charity work. Some, he said, had never left Lambeth before, but over the past year they had been to South Wales. PVCs were also used in operations such as test purchasing for underage sales for alcohol and cigarettes. PC Hewlett said that information and application forms had been tabled.

57. In response to a young person, PC Hewlett said that some people who had joined the PVCs had been on the edge of getting into trouble while others had been referred by the Youth Offenders Team. PC Hewlett said that while there were strict rules about being a PVC, as long as youngster were prepared to comply with the rules they could join.

58. In response to Stuart Horwood, Mr Allman said that engaging with young people who had been excluded was not his area of responsibility. Nevertheless, he said that because they were young people he took an interest in them. He said that seeing youths walking around Brixton Market during weekdays may be because that they were not at school or playing truant. However, he said that the Council did engage with excluded youngsters although there were not many in Lambeth. He added that one of the roles of detached youth workers was to identify such young persons and work with statutory services such as the Education and Welfare Service through which they could be placed back into school as soon as possible.

59. Nevertheless, Mr Allman said that it remained that there were young people out of school, and not working or training, and that work was being done (with TVG learning, through the Connexions Service) to ensure that there was somewhere for them to go. Mr Allman said that three years ago 23% of 16-19 year olds were not in education or employment. Presently, it was 13.3%, although, while still being too high, work was going on within the Partnership to make sure that those young people had somewhere to go to.

60. With regard to the Youth Service budget, Mr Allman said that the new administration had made a significant, public commitment around increasing youth provision around the borough, which the C&YPS would support through the Star Chamber process.

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61. In response to Paul Reynolds, Chris Lee said that the annual process of the Council reviewing its budget had begun for 2007-8 and that it was inevitable that the Council would be looking for efficiency savings, whilst looking to protect those services which it was prioritising, of which the Youth Service was one. However, he said that while there had been no cuts 2006-7, the Council would be under enormous pressure for 2007-8, although he was sure that the views heard at the Group meeting would be taken into consideration.

62. In response to Peggy Tyler, Mr Allman said that the Council would launch the Youth Strategy on 12 July at the Oval cricket ground, and that the Youth Board would be in place by October this year.

63. In response to Fernando Senior, Mr Allman said that £2.2 million would be spent on the Youth Service and another £3.3 million for Youth and Play. Mr Allman said that he did not know where the information about the freezing of the youth budget last summer came from. In respect of Summer provision, Mr Allman said that the Council had persistently adopted a collaborative approach working closely with the police, and last year had trained 40 youth workers who assisted with the delivery of the Summer programmes that would continue in 2006. However, he added that the PAYP, which provided a great deal of resources last year, had received a national cut in its budget this year. Therefore, the provision would not be on the same scale as the previous year.

64. Mr Senior said that when he was a youth worker in Lambeth he was one of 90, and that the present situation was an insult to young people and the community.

65. Mr Andell said that he, as others, was shocked that there would be a reduced youth service during the Summer in terms of the spend. He expressed his concern for the potential consequences, in terms of crime and disorder, and hoped that those in responsible positions were listening.

65. Mr Andell thanked all the young people who had attended for their fantastic, creative and productive contribution to the meeting in showing their commitment and sharing of experiences. Mr Andell said that they held everyone to account with their messages about confidence in the services, effectiveness of stop and search, and consultation on the youth strategy.

67. *The meeting supported Mr Andell's suggestion that the Group form a working group to progress the issues raised and to do so with the active participation of young people.*

68. *The meeting agreed to defer the Group's business and Lambeth Police update to the next Group meeting on 4 July 2006.*