

Community-Police Consultative Group for Lambeth

Minutes of the Meeting 4 July 2006 Assembly Hall Lambeth Town Hall SW2

PRESENT: CPCG BOARD Greta Brooks (Churches Together in Brixton), Jim Toohill (Victim Support), Anna Tapsell (Ind. Membs), Abdul Sultan Virani (Lambeth Pensioners' Forum)

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP

Wally Channon (Clapham Town N'hood Watch); David Corduroy (Lambeth Chamber of Commerce); Gary Dando (Cressbrock N'hood Watch); Neil Flanigan (West Indian Ex-Servicemen's and Servicewomen's Assoc.); Robert Holden (Friends of Brockwell Park); Stuart Horwood, John Gordon (Brixton Market Traders Federation); David Hart, Ros Munday (Clapham Community Partnership); Brian Mantell (Assoc. of Jewish Ex-Servicemen); The Most Rev. Dr Bancroft McCarthy (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); Martin Walsh (Lambeth Pensioners' Forum) (Lambeth Towers/Road T&R Assoc.); John Wainwright (Clapham Sector Working Group. **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS** Shane Collins, Peter Harris; Lena James, Gill Kenealy, Richard Moore, **STATUTORY MEMBERSHIP**; John Roberts MPA **LAMBETH COUNCIL** Cllr. Donatus Anyanwu; Cllr. Mark Bennett, Cllr. Rachel Heywood, Cllr. Darren Sanders, Simon Harding (LBL Asst. Dir, Chris Lee (Asst. Ch. Exec), Clive Simmonds **METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** Stewart Low (Brixton), Supt. Jonathan Tottman (Streatham); Supt. Alistair Sutherland, Supt. Paul Wilson (Community Partnership), Sgt. Ronnie Whelan **BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE** Insp. Graham Croucher **SECRETARIAT** Ben McKendrick

Apologies: Paul Andell, Canon Ivelaw Bowman, Ch. Supt. Martin Bridger, Gary Dando, Jim Dixon, Maude Estwick, Rowena Estwick, Lee Jasper, Chris Lee, Bushy Kelly, Paul Reynolds, Darren Sanders, David Tomlinson, Peggy Tyler, Jane Warwick

1. Anna Tapsell, Chairperson of the Community-Police Consultative Group (the Group) for Lambeth, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She said it was one of a series of themed meeting to which the Group was committed, and that most recently the Group had held meetings about gun crime in Lambeth and about the experiences of young people living in the borough and their relationships with the police. She added that as a result of the latter meeting, some of the young people had established a sub-group of the Group and would look at issues of stop and search, respect, confidence in policing and what the borough, with its new administration, was going to do to help young people.

2. Ms Tapsell said the issue of older people and crime, and the environment in which older people in Lambeth lived, had long been drawn to the Group's attention. However, they had not been properly placed as matters for the Group's agenda. She said that the Group intended to hold further meetings in respect of older persons in Lambeth but the present meeting would be a start to exploring how much they suffered from the fear of crime as well as crime itself, and the hidden issues that affected older people.

3. Ms Tapsell said that a number of people present were particularly concerned about elder abuse, whether it took place within families, in care homes or hospitals, and that it existed in many forms. The meeting, she added, would be a good place to begin some in depth work in raising awareness of elder abuse and trying to work together to put an end to it by first discovering how prevalent it was.

4. Ms Tapsell said that her experience of older persons in Lambeth was that they were anything but insular and, as leading members of their families and communities, they were also concerned about the young people living and growing up in the borough, and about the problems they faced such as succumbing to drug abuse, and about their education and interactions with the police. She said the elders of Lambeth were too valuable and that it was necessary to know how to use them, value them and respect them. By doing so, she said that she was sure the elders would give 100%.

5. Ms Tapsell said that should the meeting and those to follow be successful, it would free up a stream of experience about people's cultural roots, which were very important, and of their wisdom, thereby making a proper use of the borough's older people who were too important to be allowed to just 'sit back'.

6. Dot Gibson, Vice-President of the National Pensioners' Convention, and Secretary of the Greater London Pensioners' Forum, said that being an active pensioner it was always very difficult to talk about older people because discussion invariably centred on those who were not necessarily so active and whom you did not meet on a day to day basis because they perhaps stayed at home and were too frightened to go out. Nevertheless, she said that there was a need to find things out and that in the pensioners' movement, local groups and national pensioners' organisations there was at least a chance to discuss these issues and share experiences. She added that forums such as the Group meeting were very important towards that happening.

7. Ms Gibson referred to the large amount of discussion and consultation over the past eighteen months about the Mayor of London's older people strategy, which included the issue of crime and personal safety. Ms Gibson also said that a survey by Age Concern had revealed that older people were not the prime targets for street crime; accounting for only 2% of those directly affected. However, she said that 18% had had experience of anti-social behaviour such as verbal abuse and harassment in the streets, and that there were a great number of problems for older people from minority ethnic groups, especially the Asian section of our community who had language problems.

8. Nevertheless, Ms Gibson said that a good place to start would be with the perception that people had with their insecurity. As people grew older, problems with bones and impaired sight and hearing could lead to a sense of insecurity, for example in crossing the road in time before the lights changed, which may seem like a small thing but was the kind of worry that led to people not wanting to venture out of their homes. Other worries could stem from home repairs, gardening and other matters which, although may not be seen as crimes of personal safety, were all part of the background for making people feel isolated and not able to cope with other things in life.

9. Ms Gibson said that a big point for older people was that they valued family and friends above all else and that they missed the way that their communities used to be. The disintegration of communities, she said, had led to the loss of a sense of belonging and to some people becoming isolated and feeling lonely, which itself was a factor in terms of security. Other points of personal safety, raised by older people, were the quality of street lights, rubbish collection, seats at bus stops and in parks.

10. Ms Gibson said that a bone of contention in Lambeth was the lack of pensioners' centres where pensioners could drop in, talk to each other, have a cup of tea and get advice. Furthermore, she said that the privatisation of social services in Lambeth had led to a problem concerning carers in terms of the amount of time they could spend with pensioners; which was one and a half hours per fortnight, and usually with a different carer attending each time, which did not allow time to build a relationship with them. This did not, she said, show up on the balance sheets which may show that everything appeared to be covered, whilst beyond the figures the reality was much different.

11. Ann Crichlow, a former Lambeth Councillor and one of the founder members of the Group, congratulated Anna Tapsell on becoming the Group's Chairperson. Over the years, she said that Lambeth had become very different post the disturbances, when it was portrayed as the worst borough. However, working together with the police the community had built bridges between the young, the old and churches to overcome many obstacles. As time has gone on, Ms Crichlow said that those great ideas had slipped and other things had been put in their place, and it seemed at times that people had been left aside. She said that some people were not as vocal as they used to be but that some of the things that worried older people needed to be restated, such as respect for them and not taking them for granted. She added that older people had made a contribution yet could still contribute more.

12. With regard to the police and policing, Ms Crichlow said that older people wanted to be involved, not shoved to one side, and that there was a time when experience was worth something. Those experiences, she said, were still with them and they wanted to give their support and be part of things because they wanted their borough to be the best.

13. Speaking of crime, Ms Crichlow said she had been robbed in the street where she lived. On another occasion she said people had called on her home claiming to be from a company that was checking her mobility needs. However, she said that when she asked them to provide a telephone number they were unable to do so. With her suspicion aroused, she said that she tried to call the police, Age Concern, of which she was a member, and other organisations that would be able to help to alert the elderly. She also contacted a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and expected them to talk with her but that did not happen.

14. A few months later, Ms Crichlow said that the callers came again and although she was not duped she was concerned that other older people could be susceptible because of the way the callers approached her, saying that they worked for an insurance company and Lambeth Council. Ms Crichlow said that she called Lambeth Housing who told her that these people were not being employed by the Council. She added that elderly people needed to be warned and needed police involvement.

15. In relation to day centres, Ms Crichlow said that they had become few and far between, but were places where the police could go to learn about the things that worried the elders such as elder abuse. At the centre on Bedford Road, she said police would come and talk to them and that one Lambeth commander was very interested in what the elders had to say, and listened to them and got involved. She said things were getting done and input given into the training of local officers. However, she said that had now passed and needed to be revived. Once the elders could become involved she said that the police could then once again become part of the community, to be trusted and turned to in times of need, stress and trouble.

16. Supt. Stewart Low said that he was already picking up on the issues raised by the elders so far, such as the matter of respect, which he was 100% behind, and working with the elder community towards returning the 'community bobby' that they wanted. Supt. Low said that Safer Neighbourhood teams consisting of a Police Sergeant, two Police Constables and three PCSOs were being committed to each Lambeth ward. This, he said, would give the community the chance to tell the police what their local priorities were, to which the police should respond.

17. Supt. Low also said that a new system for answering calls to the police would be rolled out from 1 August 2006, which should improve the police response to the high volume of calls they received, particularly as more and more people owned mobile phones.

18. Insp. Graham Crouch of British Transport Police said that it was important for him to be present at the meeting but more so to listen to what the elders of the community had to say rather than speaking to them. However, he said was prepared to answer anyone's questions.

19. PC Rob Harrison, a crime prevention officer based at Clapham Police station said that much of his work involved advising people on how to prevent themselves from becoming victims of crime such as robbery, burglary, motor vehicle crime and bicycle theft. Similarly, he said that he was available to answer anyone's questions and give advice.

20. Also introducing themselves were Cllr. Mark Bennett, Lambeth's Council cabinet member for Community Safety, and Cllr. Donatus Anyanwu responsible for Health and Adult Services, both of whom said they were present to listen to the older community's issues of concern.

21. Martin Walsh said that as far as Lambeth Pensioners' Forum (LPF) was concerned, they had always spoken to the police regularly, and many other agencies, and at one stage five or six LPF members would hold meetings every three months at Lambeth Town Hall to talk about immediate problems. Because of changes of staff as far as the police were concerned, Mr Walsh said it had faded away and now needed to be replaced.

22. Mr Walsh said that the biggest problem facing the elderly at the moment was elder abuse but he questioned whether the pertinent organisations put their facts together or worked in concert. He said, therefore, considering the Group's role as a community organisation, that the Group should take responsibility for monitoring how elder abuse was tackled, since nobody seemed to know the statistics, unlike with other categories of crime. Mr Walsh recalled asking the police for figures on bogus callers sometime ago but in the papers he received from the Group he yet to see any.

23. Mr Walsh also said he felt that various agencies hid elder abuse as they did not want to advertise the fact that they had problems within their organisation. On behalf of the LPF, Mr Walsh called upon the Group to form a sub group to study elder or adult abuse and coordinate effective action across the agencies in providing services for the elderly. Mr Walsh said he would also like the disabled to be taken into account.

24. Mr Walsh asked people present to take with them a copy of the leaflet 'Stop adult abuse in Lambeth' which had been provided by Clive Simmonds, Coordinator of Lambeth Adults' Services, to see if they recognised some of the signs of elder abuse in someone they knew. To the agencies, Mr Walsh said that if they received information about elder abuse they should

investigate but whatever they did they should not identify the victims.

25. Clive Simmonds said that he was answerable to an Adult Protection Committee made up of Health Services, voluntary groups and LPF amongst others. Mr Simmonds said it was known in Lambeth, as well as nationwide, that there was a significant problem with adult abuse with allegations in care homes and the community more widely. Also in Lambeth, as well as nationally, he said that there was a poor record of recognising abuse while there was a recognition of a poor level of recording abuse.

26. As well as investigating abuse, Mr Simmonds said that he was also involved in partnership in developing a strategy for tackling abuse to be launched in November. This, he said, contained a new procedure that required local authorities and all those in a position of having a duty care for adults to protect them from abuse. Mr Simmonds said that working with police a system of correct reporting had also been developed, and whilst so far it was about getting the basics right, there had been a lot of progress over the past year.

27. Since the beginning of the year, Mr Simmonds said that a system had been set up whereby all reports of suspected abuse now went through Social Services and were recorded systematically. He said that in the near future statistics would be provided on the number of cases referred, types of victims and perpetrators, and types of cases being investigated and outcomes. Mr Simmonds said that he also provided regular training to different providers on recording.

28. from Guys and St Thomas' Trust said that she was a hospital matron who had been seconded into the post of Adult Protection Coordinator for the hospital at the beginning of the year, and had been working close with partner agencies from Lambeth and Southwark. She said that the hospital was trying to formulate its own policy in terms of how to bring about awareness to its 9,000 staff to see how they could start to look much more closely at issues of allegations of abuse.

29. Mala Karasu said that she wished to reassure everyone that adult abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults had high priority. As such, a new chief nurse acted as a board member responsible for safeguarding adults and a divisional nurse had been appointed to link in with partnership boards in Lambeth and Southwark to look more strategically in terms of the training of staff. Her own role, she said, was to look at operational issues about how

the policy in the hospital links in with all the other health policies and making sure that it was robust and that matters were being taken forward. Presently, as APC, she said that there were many challenges, as she had to link in with Lambeth, Southwark, Westminster, Lewisham and Kent.

30. With regard to the policy in place, Ms Karasu said that it was very much in tune with national guidelines since safeguarding vulnerable adults was also high on the Government's agenda, which aimed to tighten up regulations and make the care hospitals deliver more robust policies in terms of protecting and preventing abuse of vulnerable adults. Furthermore, hospitals were inspected on a regular basis by what was once known as the NST, looking at claims and risk management.

31. At present, Ms Karasu said that vulnerable adults and children were part of those standards against which the Trust would be assessed which would be based on how the Trust monitored and protected, and whether it was in possession of a policy that was workable. Therefore, one of the issues for the Trust was to have a framework that monitored what it did, which in the absence of a legal framework, mirrored the children's protection policy. Furthermore, it was to ensure that it did not stray in terms of service provision, awareness, training and data collection.

32. With regard to data, Ms Karasu said that this was sent on a quarterly basis to the Clinical Governance Group, which looked at clinical risk, as well as being reported to the Hospital Board for which the intention was for statistics in terms of vulnerable groups and abuse issues to appear in the Trust's annual report. Ms Karasu said that work was also being carried out with colleagues at King's College Hospital in order to produce a uniform approach. She said the most important thing was to make sure that everyone at Guy's and St Thomas' understood that they had a duty to protect; in other words to look, to listen, to alert, to respond and to support a person who they think may be a victim of abuse.

33. Abdul Sultan Virani, a Group board member, Vice-Chairperson of Lambeth Pensioners' Action Group (LPAG) and on Age Concern Board of Trustees said various speakers had appropriately and meticulously illustrated what elder abuse was. Older people, he said, had often sought assurances from the police about some of the issues raised in relation to statistics and figures for crimes suffered by them. However, he said that somehow they had not been provided but that he understood from Clive Simmonds that these would

now be available every month as they merited attention.

34. Mr Virani said that he agreed with Mr Walsh's proposal for a sub group, which should be a permanent fixture that would help to address and minimise the burden of crime on the elderly.

35. Ros Munday, a Group member, said that many elderly were very worried about reporting things, not least for fear of being targeted, and closed themselves away. She said it was all very well trying to get the community involved but unless people felt happy about coming forward then things would remain unreported. She said that she wondered if the police had any ideas that would improve the situation, for instance third party reporting.

36. Det. Sgt. Roland Barclay gave a crime report on the elderly i.e. involving people over the age of 65 years. Since 1 April 2006 DS Barclay said that there had been 380 reported crimes in which the victim was over the age of 65, of which 68 were burglaries, 15 robberies, 3 snatches, 21 pick-pocketing and 8 of theft.

37. Distraction burglary in which the victim was distracted by suspects by, for example, assuming an identity of a Water Board official, gasman or police officer, while others sometimes used a cover story such as needing to use a telephone because their car had broken down. The aim of both methods was, he said, to gain access to the house and distract the victim while another person entered the premises to steal property. DS Barclay said that such suspects tended to target the elderly but also other vulnerable people they believed it would be easy to confuse and distract.

38. Since January 2006, DS Barclay said there had been 35 such offences reported in Lambeth, but no repeat victims, whose average age was 74 years. Largely, distraction burglaries, or bogus callers, took place in the afternoon when many people might expect someone to knock on their door. DS Barclay said that it was accepted that there was underreporting of distraction burglary for reasons such as the victims sense of embarrassment at being tricked, confusion about whether something had been mislaid when it had actually been stolen, or an inability to connect a caller with items found to be missing sometimes much later.

39. DS Barclay said that the response time for distraction burglary ought to be less than twelve minutes from the time police received a call. The

victim would then be attended by a detective and a scene of crimes officer as soon as possible to reap the dividends of obtaining forensic analysis at an early stage of an offence.

40. PC Harrison said that there were several ways for people to protect themselves from 'bogus callers' such as by using a spyhole in the door to view who was calling and by using a secure door-chain when opening the door. Furthermore, he said that most legitimate callers would usually have some form of identification or could be distinguished by a uniform which need to be checked. If a person was unsure, he said that legitimate callers would not mind calling back at another time or write a letter to let the occupier know when a call would be made so that people could call their place of work and perhaps arrange a code word. PC Harrison said that if anyone had any doubt, keep them out.

41. PC Harrison said that forced entry was another means of entering a property, which in warm weather was mainly through windows, and so it was important before leaving a house to make sure all windows and doors were locked, and the curtains drawn. PC Harrison said that people should have good, solid, strong front doors and good quality locks, and that he would speak to anyone wanting further advice on front and back doors after the meeting. He said that good locksmiths could also give advice. Furthermore, Mr Harrison said that people over 65 years with less than £25,000 savings could have door security fitted free through Help the Aged.

42. PC Harrison said that most burglars were opportunist and that they would look through windows first and if they saw valuables lying around they would be enticed to enter. Therefore, he advised keeping valuables locked away in a drawer or, preferably, a safe.

43. PC Harrison said that the police relied very much on neighbourhood watches, of which in Lambeth there was a very good network with very good coordinators. Mr Harrison asked people to consider joining a neighbourhood watch and said that the police would be very happy to help anyone who wanted to start one up, since the police relied on the public's knowledge, information and experience which made neighbourhood watches very effective.

44. For those who lived premises with a shared entrance, PC Harrison said that it was very important that they functioned properly and any faults should be reported to police, Safer

Neighbourhood teams, local authority or housing association.

45. In relation to personal safety, PC Harrison said robbery could be quite traumatic, and although the elderly represented a small percentage of victims, for those collecting their pensions it was best to go with a friend or a group. He also advised using a bag that could be passed over the head and said that people should not count their money in the street. He added that anyone who felt they were being followed should trust their instincts and try to go into in a busy shop or café, and if they still felt intimidated he suggested that no one should feel bad if they asked to speak with a manager for help to call the police.

46. PC Harrison also advised that if people were approached by aggressive beggars demanding money it was better to give a few coins kept aside rather than enter into an argument. Finally, Mr Harrison said that if possible people should try to look confident wherever they were going, difficult as it could be, as robbers were less likely to approach someone who looked like they knew where they were going.

47. Ms Tapsell commented that in a way it made people angry to have to go around feeling frightened and that one of the things about Lambeth was the perception people outside the borough had about it.

48. Richard Moore, a Group member, urged everyone present to visit the Safer Lambeth tent at the Country Show in Brockwell Park on 15 and 16 July, where police crime prevention officers and Safer Neighbourhood officers would be present, as well as representatives of the Fire Brigade and Primary Care Trust. Other points raised by Mr Moore were: that not all the elderly had access to the internet or were aware of what a website was when told where to obtain information; that there needed to be greater clarity and definition about what age constituted an elderly person; that people should always bear in mind Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, which stated that all local authority policy and financial decision making had to take into consideration all the implications in respect of crime and disorder.

49. A member of the public, a Nigerian gentlemen resident in the Lambeth, said that the Government had taken over the question of discipline away from the family. He asked if the Group could hold a meeting with young people and older people together in order that young people could hear about the distress that they caused older people.

50. David Hart, a Group member, asked what efforts were being made to facilitate access to police stations for the disabled. Mr Hart also expressed his concerns about local authority provision for young people and promises made to them, particularly during the summer months, which were not fulfilled. Mr Hart said that there needed to be honest ownership of the issues and if there was a problem people should be told.

51. John Wainwright, a Group member, said he had heard that Lambeth Council were making improvements on the Wandsworth Road and introducing 'intelligent crossings' that could pick up when older or disabled people were crossing the road. In relation to elder abuse, Mr Wainwright said that it was more common than people realised but was being swept under the table because local authority insurers were keen not to bring it to general attention and actively put pressure on councils not to do so, in order to reduce their liability in legal cases.

52. Mr Wainwright commented that while people who found to have abused children were dealt with severely and put on a sex register, those who abused the elderly found it easy to move from one job to another.

53. Clare Moore commented on general noise nuisance ranging from car radios, motorbikes revving and schoolchildren on the upper decks of buses. In respect of the latter, Ms Moore said there needed to be some kind of control by the schools or even the withdrawal of bus passes for bad behaviour. Ms Moore said that police cars also made horrendous noises when trapped in the high street and suggested that the police should make more use of motorbikes when going to the scene of a crime. Ms Moore also commented on the need for better witness protection, because people felt unsafe and were frightened to report matters. In respect of putting drug addicts in prison at great cost, she said that a case needed to be made for greater drug and alcohol abuses services.

54. Gill Kenealy, a Group member, said that there was a large gap between the young and old in the community but respect was a two way thing and that young people very often felt that they were not treated with respect by older people in the community, and were seen as naughty, rebellious and needed to be put in their place. Ms Kenealy said that all people, regardless of age, had a responsibility to treat each other with respect.

55. In relation to discipline, Ms Kenealy said that having worked in many schools in Lambeth she thought that children who received harsh discipline at home bottled up a lot of anger and frustration and could be come angry and violent. With regard to education, Ms Kenealy said that she and her colleagues were considering running an oral history project to bridge the gap between the young and the elderly and that she would be interested in talking to the older residents of Lambeth about that.

56. Barbara, LPAG Treasurer, proposed that those who burgled people's home should be made to go and work for their victims for a time in order that they should understand the repercussions of their actions.

57. Mrs Lynn Thomas said that if young people had somewhere to play there would be less crime. She also said that the children born in the sixties did not have so many problems because parents had their rights. Now, having taken away parents' rights, she said that the Government could not manage the children and as result put them in prison only for them to turn out worse. Mrs Thomas said that parents should have the right to bring up children how they ought to be. She added that due to a bad experience her son had had with the police, that if anything happened to her she would be afraid to call them.

58. John Roberts, Metropolitan Police Authority, said that many police officers were now using bicycles, which were environmentally friendly, good exercise for officers and made them more approachable. Mr Roberts said that anecdotally it had been acknowledged that there had been an increase in crime on buses and some research was being undertaken.

59. In relation to restorative justice, Mr Roberts said that it did take place in Lambeth and that there was a lot of work going on tackling people's concerns. However, Mr Roberts said that there was probably a need to get information out to people. Mr Roberts also said that he agreed with the idea of inviting young and old people to come together to a Group meeting to discuss their issues

60. Margaret..... said that everybody counted and that people needed to get together more, talk and get to know each other better and understand each other's problems.

61. Cova Williams, West Norwood Pensioners' Club, said that space for people to meet in had to be paid for and she asked if anyone could help to

find a place in West Norwood. Ms Williams said that she did mix with youngsters and the previous year had gone on an outing to Broadstairs with a group consisting of pensioners and many young people between 11-15 years. She also said she agreed that people should be allowed more control over their families as there would not be as much trouble as there was at the moment.

62. Gloria Bailey, a member of the Darby and Joan Club, said she had set up a group for elderly women which did various things together, such as going on outings, and that it did make a difference and was useful in helping to get to know other people. Ms Bailey said that she also it found useful was to try to bridge the gap between the old and the young, and that she had taken a choir of elderly people to sing to children at Norwood school, which was enjoyed by everyone.

63. Ms Bailey said that several times on the street she had seen police officers stop young boys and witnessed their uncooperative behaviour with the officers. On one occasion she said that she told one youth to cooperate with the police and managed to convince him to do so. She said that once the police had released him he waved to her goodbye.

64. In relation to distraction burglary, Jim Toohill asked whether a scheme promoted a couple years ago, whereby elderly people deemed vulnerable could place a card in their window saying "if you from the Waterboard etc. and you want access to my house please go and see my neighbour," was still operating. Mr Toohill also asked if information how about distraction burglars operating in an area was disseminated to the community and whether any of the elderly organisations had set up 'telephone trees', for example, to pass messages on to keep a look out.

65. Jeff Avis said that the reason that older people did not feature highly as statistic for crimes such as street robbery was because many older people were afraid to go out, particularly at night, and therefore did not count in statistics.

66. Supt. Low thanked Martin Walsh for his offer to meet with him which he said he would take it up. He also said that Mr Toohill had made some good points in relation to distraction burglary and the information that police could be passing out to the community.

67. Anna Tapsell said that an action plan would be developed as a result of the meeting and a sub group would be established to look at the issue of

elder abuse. Ms Tapsell asked anyone who wished to participate in the first meeting of the sub group to contact Ben McKendrick at the Group office.

68. Ms Tapsell said there were Lambeth councilors present and that a number of issues had been raised about the environment in which we lived; the usually things such as street lighting, rubbish collection and neglected properties which became quite irritating as they constantly need to be brought up. Ms Tapsell also said that older people were concerned about the facilities for young people and what was available and what been closed.

69. Ms Tapsell said that the issue of family structure had also been raised and the question about who was responsible for discipline and whether the government was interfering too much. Ms Tapsell also said that the issue of restorative justice could be an exciting development about which work needed to be done and reported back.

70. Ms Tapsell thanked everyone for attending the meeting and said it would be the first of a number of meetings throughout the year. She also invited everyone to attend the Group's monthly meetings and for anyone interested to leave their details.

Useful websites:

www.london.gov.uk/mayor/older_people/

<http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/HealthSocialCare/ServicesAdults/ProtectionVulnerableAdults.htm>

Minutes of the Meeting 2 May 2006

71. Minutes of the Meeting 2 May 2006 were accepted without amendment.

Matters Arising

72. There were no matters arising

Minutes of the Meeting 6 June 2006

73. Gill Kenealy asked if the tapes for the meeting could be checked as she believed some important points had been omitted.

74. Mr Toohill asked anyone who had amendments to the minutes of 6 June to contact the Group office.

Matters Arising

75. Neil Flanigan asked how the comments made by young people about police officers, recorded in the minutes, were passed down to those officers on the street.

Information from Group Board/Members

76. Mr Toohill informed the meeting that the Group's AGM would be held in October, for which the Group's Annual Report would be prepared.

77. Mr Toohill said that Anna Tapsell, Paul Andell, Gloria Gomez (Latin Front), Toaha Quereshi (Stockwell Mosque) and himself had met to discuss the community response to the expected CPS decision following the Independent Police Complaints Commission investigation into the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes.

78. Mr Toohill said that the Group had received a quarter of its yearly funding subject to the Group's agreement with Safer Lambeth Partnership (SLP). A presentation had been made to the SLP board which had agreed in principle to the Group's proposals subject to agreement with the MPA.

79. Mr Toohill said that a Youth sub group had been set up and one of the areas it would be exploring was stop and search.

80. Mr Toohill said that a decision had been made to treat Brixton Town Centre as Safer Neighbourhood.

Lambeth Police Report

81. Supt. Low gave a PowerPoint presentation of crime statistics for Lambeth in the previous month (see attached).

82. Supt. Alistair Sutherland said that two people had been charged with murder and three people remained on police bail in relation to the murder of Alex Mulumba on 8 June. Supt. Sutherland said that other persons involved in the incident and incidents prior to the Alex's murder had yet to be identified. He added that enquiries continued and further arrests were anticipated. After the fatal stabbing, Supt. Sutherland said that three Gold meetings had taken place which were set up to look at and address issues of the family of the victim and the community, and to support the police investigation.

83. Supt. Sutherland said that the Gold Group was made up of senior police officers and various partnership members including Gill Kenealy, schools and Youth Service. At the last Gold Group meeting, Supt. Sutherland said it was concluded to hold two community meetings on the Ethelred and Kennington estates where the gangs involved were believed to have come from. These, he said, took place on 22 and 23 June and were well attended. The main issue to come out of the meeting, he said, was the lack of youth provision and lack of coordination around it.

84. Since the incident, Supt. Sutherland said the Safer Neighbourhood teams from Oval and Princes wards had spent the majority of their time patrolling the estates dealing with community reassurance and addressing the gang issues. He added that he had authorised a Section 60 on 3 July following reliable information regarding the possibility of reprisals. Since then 11 persons had been stopped and searched with two persons arrested for unconnected robbery offences.

85. Supt. Sutherland explained that a Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act could be ordered by a Superintendent when there was reason to believe there could be serious violence in a locality or persons were carrying weapons or dangerous instruments in a locality. The authorisation, which was reviewed on a 24 hour basis, allowed officers to go to a particular geographical location and use stop and search without reasonable grounds. Supt. Sutherland said that he had given a copy a leaflet to Gill Kenealy that explained to youths why they were being stopped with an explanation of the Section 60 power.

86. Rev. Angus Aagaard asked about the police post raid policy and support for the families of the accused who had been left uprooted, humiliated and with a sense of loss following raids on their homes. Angus said that one family was moved to a local hotel, which they had to leave every morning and wait until the evening to re-book for the night. He said that the family had also tried to get access into their home to recover possessions but on four occasions, having arranged to be at the police station and waiting for hours, had still not had the keys given to them.

87. In response to Rev. Aagaard's points about the care for families of an accused following a raid on their home, Supt. Sutherland said that police took possession of the family's home for the purpose of searches and it was the Murder Investigation Team (MIT) that had been responsible for moving

and rehousing the family. Supt. Sutherland said that it was only when Ms Kenealy spoke to him a couple of days after they been moved did he find out that they had to vacate their hotel room until the evening. However, he said that he taken note of it and fed the information back to the MIT.

88. In terms of the home address and community tensions at the time, Supt. Sutherland said that he put in place a policing plan to look after the place and deal with the threat of attack. Supt. Sutherland said that he had not been aware that the family had been to the police station four times.

89. In response to Neil Flanigan, Ms Tapsell said that the Group's Board too felt that the matter of family liaison officers for the families of suspected perpetrators needed to be addressed, and would be looking for processes and procedures that fitted into place with the Council because of the housing issues.

90. John Roberts said there were lessons to learn from the tragic incident but perhaps using volunteers much like appropriate adults would be more appropriate for family liaison rather than taking police officers off the streets. Ms Tapsell, however, said a family of an accused would need information that only the police would have although some ongoing support may not necessarily be from the police. Nevertheless, she said that there needed to be process agreed between the police and the Council. She added that she was loathe to think the voluntary sector could do anymore with custody visitors and appropriate adults doing as much as they could already.

91. Gill Kenealy said that the police had ordered the family out of the property and took responsibility for sorting out the accommodation. As soon as the local authority took responsibility, she said that Supt. Sutherland quite rightly stated that it was their responsibility and that is what happened. However, in the instance they were forcibly moved it the responsibility of the police to look after them.

92. Ms Tapsell said what had been discussed was work in process and there had to an actual procedure produced, howsoever it was balanced between the different authorities.

93. Supt. Low said that one of his greatest concerns was the chronic drug abuse and anti-social behaviour around Saltoun Crescent from late at night until the early hours of the morning. While the issue was being targeted, Supt. Low said

that one individual who had over 30 convictions for drug offences had been taken to court by police to obtain an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO). However, the court told police it was not a matter for courts to decide but for local authorities to enforce. Supt. Low said Lambeth Council was currently working hard towards creating an Anti-Social Behaviour team.

94. Supt. Low said that he had also been looking at the CPS's reluctance to seek post-conviction ASBOs and DCI Steve Ainscough was setting up meetings with them involving the Group to look at the use of ASBOs. In Camden, he said that 220 ASBOs had been taken out against people in the area, while in Lambeth the number was 34.

95. Supt. Low said another problem was that on a daily basis people were swallowing their drugs upon being approached by police. Supt. Low said that the police have had some harsh lessons and tragic circumstances involving drug swallowing in the past. However, he said that there was now a clear protocol and suspects were taken straight to hospital, although it could tie up officers for hours. And once returned to custody and placed in a cell it was necessary for an officer to sit outside an open door cell in order for the detainee to be observed. He added that it was his greatest fear that someone should be brought into custody having swallowed drugs without anyone picking up the signs.

96. Stuart Horwood congratulated Supt. Low for the sterling work he had done around Brixton market but hoped that he did not forget that the problem was still there.

97. Mr Toohill said that a paragraph in a report from the MPS Commissioner, Sir Ian Blair, to the MPA on the MPS's position on drugs in May this year had mentioned a project called Street Level Up. He said that the Project was about joining up local action against street dealers while looking at the middlemen in the drug dealing market. Already three areas were said to have been resourced to pilot the project while another six areas were being sought. Given the amount of work put in to No Deal by the police, local authority and community, Supt. Low had been asked by the No Deal Project Group to pursue the matter of Brixton becoming such an area. However, the response had been that there were no resources available.

98. It was agreed that Mr Toohill should write to the Commissioner on behalf of other organisations in Brixton to express the community's great disappointment that there were no resources

available for tackling drugs being brought into the area.

99. In response to Shane Collins, Supt. Low said that there was data available containing a breakdown of arrests for possession of drugs and dealing drugs, which he said would hopefully answer his query. Mr Toohill maintained that the issue in Brixton was not a case of people possessing cannabis but the aggressive dealing in the street that many people objected to. Mr Toohill said that he would ensure that Mr Collins received the data made available by the police.

100. Gill Kenealy asked if the Group could have a full discussion about armed stops by police of people believed to be carrying firearms or large amounts of drugs. Ms Kenealy said that apparently in a recent stop of a vehicle armed officers walked towards a crowd that had gathered which caused a great deal of upset, intimidation and trauma.

101. Supt. Low said that the armed stop would have been the result of Operation Neon being conducted in Lambeth, which required the authorisation of a Superintendent on the basis of credible intelligence and making a risk assessment. Supt. Low said that the scenario described by Ms Kenealy would appear to indicate there had been a breakdown in the containment and the firearms officers had not withdrawn as quickly as possible although there may have been good reason for taking longer. However, he said that it was perhaps a good thing to look into.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6. 00 p.m. TUESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2006

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