

Community-Police Consultative Group for Lambeth

Minutes of the Meeting 5 September 2006

Lambeth Accord 336 Brixton Road SW9

PRESENT: CPCG BOARD Greta Brooks (Churches Together in Brixton), Jim Toohill (Victim Support), Anna Tapsell (Ind. Membs), Wesley Stephenson (Your Story), Abdul Sultan Virani (Lambeth Pensioners' Forum) **COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP** Jean Carpenter (LCPT); Wally Channon, Peggy Tyler (Clapham Town N'hood Watch); Robert Holden (Friends of Brockwell Park); John Gordon (Brixton Market Traders Federation); Robert Holden (Friends of Brockwell Park); Hedley Johnson (West Indian Standing Conference); The Most Rev. Dr Bancroft McCarthy (HMP Brixton Independent Monitoring Board); Paul Reynolds (Herne Hill Society); Hazel Saunders (Lambeth Victim Support); David Tomlinson (Stockwell Park Res. Assoc.); George Tuson (Streatham Southern Sector Working Group); Cathy Valentine (Brixton Northern Sector Working Group); Arulini Velmurugu (Lambeth Towers/Road T&R Assoc.); Martin Walsh (Lambeth Pensioners' Forum) **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS** Shane Collins, Peter Harris; Gill Kenealy, Richard Moore, Fernando Senior **STATUTORY MEMBERSHIP**; John Roberts MPA, Lloyd Leon (Lambeth ICVs) **LAMBETH COUNCIL** Cllr. Mark Bennett, Cllr. Rachel Heywood, Cllr. Abrams Kingsley, Cllr. Clare Whelan, Megan Jones (Community Safety, DAAT) **METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** Supt. Jonathan Tottman (Streatham); Supt. Paul Wilson (Community Partnership), Sgt. Ronnie Whelan **SECRETARIAT** Ben McKendrick

Apologies: Paul Andell, Kevin Barton, Canon Ivelaw Bowman, Ch. Supt. Martin Bridger, David Corduroy, Gary Dando, Neil Flanigan, Stuart Horwood, Cllr. Irene Kim, Lena James, Supt. Stewart Low, Brian Mantell, Cllr. Stephen Morgan, Yvonne Okiyo, Sally Rance, Bushy Kelly, Jane Warwick, Jacob Whittingham

* Minutes in ***bold italic*** indicate action points

Minutes of the Meeting 4 July 2006

1. Minutes of the Meeting 4 July 2006 were accepted with the following amendment.

Insert at the head of Min. 67: *Anna Tapsell said that an action plan would be developed and a sub-group would be established to look at the issue of elder abuse...*

Add Lloyd Leon to apologies.

Matters Arising

2. Following discussion with Lambeth Pensioners' Forum (LPF), Anna Tapsell said that it was the Group's intention to establish a sub-group, in conjunction with the Council and the various health trusts in Lambeth, to look specifically at elder abuse in order to get some idea of the scale of the problem., what was being done about it and how it was being monitored. She added that it was envisaged that regular feedback would be given [Min 67 04/07/06].

3. Martin Walsh said that at the last meeting he had been given an assurance that police would meet with members of the LPF on an *ad hoc* basis every so often to discuss elderly and disabled issues, and that such meeting had yet to take place. In response to Jim Toohill, Mr Walsh said that he had met with Supt. Low [Minute 66, 04/07/06]

4. Mr Walsh thanked the Group for giving the LPF notice of the MPA User Involvement with Older People in the Community meeting on 21 August. Mr Walsh said that it was a very constructive meeting in which discussion often turned to the subject of elder abuse. He added that he hoped that the MPA would follow up with recommendations to its board and that he would receive a copy of the minutes from that meeting.

5. Abdul Sultan Virani's endorsed Mr Walsh's sentiments and added that Age Concern (England) was taking great interest in the issue of elder abuse, especially in relation to persons aged over 85, and he hoped the Group would also maintain a sustained interest. ***Ms Tapsell reiterated that the Group would do so and that it would circulate the MPA minutes once they had been received.***

6. Addressing Mr Walsh and Mr Virani, Supt. Jonathan Tottman said that on the issue of elder abuse LPF members were perhaps ahead of the police, who perhaps did not make it as high a priority as the elderly would like. However, he said it was perhaps higher up on the police and local authority's agenda since the July meeting. He added that as far as he was concerned young elderly people could perhaps be more represented at Group meetings. In response, ***Mr Walsh said that he would like to see statistics for elder abuse in police reports, as there were for domestic violence and other hate crimes.***

7. Arulini Velmurugu said that although she didn't begrudge the elderly having a sub-group, she felt disappointed and insulted that over the years she had asked for something to be established to address issues of the disabled only for it to be ignored. Apart from the issue of disabled access, she said nothing had been done about disabled people's other concerns.

8. Jim Toohill said that in relation to setting up sub-groups the Group's Board had decided that the Group did not want to get into the position of setting up something separate when there were many other organisations in the borough doing a similar thing. In terms of disability, Mr Toohill said that the Group wanted to find an organisation in

Lambeth with which to work. He added that that there were some excellent disability organisations in the borough that the Group could add its expertise to, rather than work on its own.

9. Ms Velmurugu said that such organisations did not work and that she couldn't understand why they received tax payers' money. She added that she came to the Group to discuss crime issues and didn't see why they should be pushed onto another organisation.

10. Ms Tapsell said that Mr Walsh and Mr Virani came to the Group prepared to set up the sub-group in conjunction with other organisations, and Ms Velmurugu could do the same. She added that the Group would be prepared to have Disabilities sub-group but it required the effort of Group members as well as the Board.

11. Richard Moore said that he welcomed the Elderly Persons sub-group as a move forward but he would like to see some explanation in the future about the belief that it was the carers of the elderly themselves who were committing elder abuse. He added that there almost seemed to be an establishment cover-up and people really needed to know who were watching the carers.

12. Ms Tapsell said that Clive Simmonds was the Council officer specifically designated and responsible for looking into elder abuse within Lambeth Council, while Mala Kusara was looking into how everybody worked together to ensure the monitoring of elder abuse occurred. ***She added that the sub-group would be bringing back the processes that were meant to be used and would audit them.***

13. George Tuson said that from reading the minutes he regretted that he had not been able to attend the meeting. ***Mr Tuson suggested that minutes, with its crime prevention advice, should be distributed to neighbourhood watches, which were mostly made up of people from the older generation, and also to the Safer Neighbourhood Panels.***

14. ***Ms Tapsell said that there had not been an opportunity to check the tapes of 6 June for any missing salient points at Gill Kenealy's request but it would be undertaken*** [Minute 73, 04/07/06].

15. Mr Toohill said that as Brixton Town Centre was to be treated as a Safer Neighbourhood (SN) it would have its own SN panel and that anyone interested in being on the panel should attend a

meeting at Lambeth Town Hall at 5.00 p.m. on Monday, 11 September [Minute 80, 04/07/06].

16. Mr Toohill said that Supt. Stewart Low [who was unable to be present] had communicated his confidence in Brixton being part of *Street Level Up*, a project about connecting local activity on the policing of drugs with activity directed at middle markets. Supt Low had indicated that the project was not about extra resources but concerned the coordination between what was happening on the street and those drug dealers operating at higher level in terms of drug markets. Brixton Town Centre Sector Inspector Malcolm Noon added that police were hopeful that it would have an impact on drug dealing in Brixton [Minute 93, 04/07/06].

17. In relation to drug dealers in Brixton, Paul Reynolds said that there was a forest of recognisable faces in Brixton and that as soon as some were removed others came to take their place.

18. In response to Lloyd Leon, Ms Kenealy said that the oral history project aimed at bringing young and old people together would be a community project, run by the Council as part of the Positive Activities for Young People programme. Ms Tapsell added that at the older persons meeting many people had expressed an interest in sitting down and having an exchange with younger people. [Minute 55, 04/07/06].

19. Greta Brooks said that the July minutes had brought back a feeling for the whole of the last meeting and had a 'lot of meat' to it, and in that respect were important.

20. In response to Mr Leon, Supt. Tottman said that Section 60, one of the most draconian powers in the police armoury, was a stop and search power that was rarely used in Lambeth, having been employed, as far as he could recall, on three occasions in the past 18 months. Supt. Tottman added that the police did not want to be seen to be misusing any powers [Minute 84, 04/07/06].

21. In response to Mr Leon, Ms Tapsell said that the family of a murder suspect had since been satisfactorily re-housed and money refunded to those voluntary organisations that had financially assisted them. Ms Kenealy added that Supt. Alistair Sutherland had acted very quickly at the time to help the family resolve their accommodation issues. [Minute 87, 04/07/06].

22. In response to Mr Leon, Megan Jones (Drugs and Alcohol Action Team) said that treatment for

drug abusers was offered to everyone who was arrested for certain 'trigger crimes' but some drugs users were resistant to it and continued to make the lives of residents a misery. She added that one way of making such people accept treatment was through an anti-social behaviour order [Minute 93, 04/07/06].

Lambeth Police Report

23. Supt. Tottman gave a PowerPoint presentation of crime statistic for Lambeth in the previous month (see police report attached).

24. Insp. Malcolm Noone gave an update on No Deal the anti-drug dealing initiative in Brixton Town Centre (see police report).

25. Insp. Noone reported on an incident of disorder that followed an attempted stop and search on 30 August by plain-clothes officers, leading to a crowd gathering and subsequent damage to a police car. Insp. Noone said that the matter was *sub judice*.

26. Insp. Noone reported that the custody facilities at Brixton police station would be closed from the 12 September till 2 October for refurbishments.

27. In response to a member of the public, Insp. Noone said that he did not have the information at hand regarding the numbers charged following arrests during the No Deal initiative. However, he said that there was a likelihood that most arrests were for the possession of drugs or public nuisance, which normally meant the person being bailed to return to the police station in 4 to 6 weeks.

28. Insp. Noone further explained that the police measured their performance through 'sanctioned detection', which meant an individual either being given a penalty notice or charged with an offence. ***However, further down the criminal justice system line, he said that the government measured the Crown Prosecution Service on Offenders Brought to Justice (OBJ) figure, which could be supplied.***

28. Supt. Paul Wilson said that following the Group's May meeting, it was explained and agreed that the police already provided a significant amount of data which was resource intensive to collate. However, he said perhaps on a specific occasion police could bring data to be scrutinised to the Stop and Search Monitoring Group (S&SMG), rather than on a monthly basis to the Group.

29. Mr Toohill said that as a one off exercise the S&SMG had discovered that, over a period, 10% of stop and searches had ended in persons being arrested with half of that number being charged. However, he said it was not easy to abstract from the court systems (which were not accessible in line with police recording) an exact figure for those convicted, although it was an issue and a valid point to ask.

30. Ms Kenealy said that anyone in Brixton on Bank Holiday Monday afternoon, 28 August, may have seen six armed police officers with machine guns and a number of other officers and PCSOs, as well as two 'sniffer dogs', outside the underground station. Ms Kenealy said that when she asked an officer what was going on she was told that there was intelligence that gangs with firearms would be traveling from Brixton to the Notting Hill Carnival. She said that she also heard another officer telling a member of the public that it was an anti-knives campaign. Whatever the reason, Ms Kenealy said it was very concerning to see officers with machine guns and side arms on the streets.

31. At one point, Ms Kenealy said about 10 to 12 Somali youths approached the underground station and, in light of the police presence, she said she doubted that they would have been carrying weapons as they walked past the police. However, she said that they were stopped and searched and that, disturbingly, the armed officers stood behind the youths with the dogs and supervised the searches.

32. Ms Kenealy said that she went home to fetch her camera and took some pictures. She said that the youths appeared to be very intimidated, as was she, since while she was taking some photographs she was warned by two officers not to do so. The youths, she said, were not found to be in possession of any weapons and none were arrested. She added that they appeared to be very demoralized and that one of the youths put it to a police officer that the only reason for the stop could have been racism. Ms Kenealy asked if the intelligence received concerned Somali gangs.

33. Ms Kenealy said that a crowd of people there at the time expressed concern about the armed police presence and the stops but, with officers holding guns with their finger on the trigger as they crossed Brixton Road, they were perhaps not as vocal as they may have been. Ms Kenealy asked whether the public were being prepared for similar operations becoming a regular feature on the streets.

34. When she enquired further about the operation, Ms Kenealy said that she was told it was being run by London Transport and to her knowledge Lambeth police had no idea about the operation. Following a recent revision of Standard Operating Procedures, which ought to be followed correctly, Ms Kenealy said that police forces had to carry out a community impact assessment for such operations. She said that she wanted to know if one had been undertaken and whether London Transport had liaised with Lambeth police, especially if it was supposed to be an intelligence led operation where local intelligence would be very important.

35. In a recent incident in Clapham, Ms Kenealy said that following a stop of a car containing an individual known to be involved in gun crime, armed police with fingers on triggers walked towards a crowd that had gathered to see what was happening. This, she said, caused fury amongst the people there with children becoming upset and resulting in two men being arrested and subsequently released. Ms Kenealy said that she had raised the matter because if police were going to carry out armed stop and searches there needed to be a clear protocol about how the police behaved i.e. having enough regular police officers on hand to reassure any crowd that may gather and not having sub-machine guns pointed at people, which was completely unacceptable and highly risky.

36. Ms Tapsell said that when she asked Supt. Stewart Low about the Brixton operation he told her that he knew nothing about the armed officers being deployed in Brixton.

37. Supt. Tottman said that in relation to Standard Operating Procedures police had a great deal of training, not least at Superintendent level, and certainly following the tragic death of Jean Charles de Menezes. Supt. Tottman said that he was not aware that it had been an operation run by British Transport Police (BTP) colleagues.

38. However, Supt. Tottman said that in the run up to the Notting Hill Carnival, one of the lessons that police had learned was that there had tragically been a number of homicides, and therefore a full time intelligence team was employed for four months up to the end of August. Supt. Tottman said that it was highly likely that intelligence had come from a 'two-legged' source informing that people were planning to travel between Lambeth and the Carnival carrying guns.

39. Supt. Tottman referred to the Osman Vs UK case [at the European Court of Human Rights in

1998], which he said was a watershed case that had highlighted an immediate risk to life of a young Somali boy called Osman, and which had led to some tragic lessons for the police. As a result of that case, Supt. Tottman said that when police became aware of information concerning an immediate threat to life certain operational activity took place to reduce that risk. Supt. Tottman said that it was likely that the Duty Inspector at Lambeth would have dealt with that situation on the instant.

40. Supt. Tottman said it wasn't the case that Lambeth police did not know about the operation, and he apologised if people felt they had been misled. Supt. Tottman said that there was always a Superintendent available in Lambeth out of hours, such as a bank holiday, to authorise the use of firearms or conducting intrusive activity.

41. Ms Kenealy said the community needed to know why the operation was authorised, whether such operations were going to be a regular occurrence, and whether a community impact assessment was carried out. If so, she said that she would like to have access to it.

42. Supt. Tottman said community impact assessments were always conducted as a matter of course whenever firearms operations were carried out and were integral to a Superintendent's thought process. He added that he would be pleased to involve the Group in part of any community impact assessment since an assessment was only as good as the information imparted from the community.

43. Ms Tapsell said that everyone understood the notion of the threat to life and the processes that followed. However, she said that on the bank holiday Monday, armed police were stationed outside Brixton underground station all day with a large group of police conducting stop and search under the auspices of armed officers. Ms Tapsell said that when she heard about that she called Supt. Low who assured her that he didn't know anything about it and he would try and find out about it. She also said that she later met with Sgt. Ronnie Whelan the following Monday there was still no explanation as to who had authorised the operation, what it was about and why it was being conducted. Without an explanation she said that none of it made any sense.

44. Sgt. Whelan said that the operation was a BTP operation directed at preventing knife crimes, however, he said that intelligence had been received that Brixton was going to be used as a route by gangs going to the Carnival. He said that

other transport hubs had also been identified and that a risk assessment was carried out on all of them. Unfortunately, he said that intelligence had also come through later on of firearms passing through Brixton and an Armed Response Vehicle was deployed.

45. Sgt. Whelan said that as far as he understood the armed officers had spoken with the on-call Superintendent that day to make him aware of the operation. Sgt. Whelan said that 2,005 people had passed through the metal detector arches and two people had been arrested for carrying offensive weapons, although not firearms, and two weapons were found down in the station. ***Sgt. Whelan said that he would be able to provide figures of stop and searches and weapons recovered.***

46. A member of the public said that with regard to stop and search he would like to know about the training officers had, since in his experience it had ranged from polite to downright rude. He said that there had to be greater sensitivity, especially in Lambeth, and better communication from the police with the black community, otherwise there would be a backlash. He also criticised the signal that the police were sending out to the youth by openly walking around with guns.

47. Phil Isaacs asked why the police thought that anyone carrying a gun would think to walk past armed officers to get on the tube. Logically, he said, it didn't make sense and that it must have clearly been an exercise in intimidation designed to show certain people who was in charge. He further questioned the point of the exercise by pointing out that only two people had been caught with knives throughout the whole day.

48. A young woman present said that the showing of guns by police in the community would only make young people see that the police could be violent and make them think they could be violent too. She added that the police had to find another way of getting weapons off people.

49. With 95% of people being stopped and searched being found to have done nothing wrong, and judging by what people had heard at the meeting, Shane Collins said it was a self-defeating exercise. He said that policing was meant to be with the consent of the community, yet the police were making 95% of the people with whom they came into contact feel cheated off by the experience. He added that most of those stopped were young people, the majority of whom, statistically, smoked weed. Yet, 56% of all crime committed throughout the country was by people

with a heroin and or crack cocaine habit. Mr Collins said if a large percentage of the population was alienated through stops and searches that bore no results, the police would receive much less feedback on heroin and crack.

50. Mr Leon commented on the point made by police about the armed response to Brixton underground station being intelligence led and said that the killing of Jean Charles de Menezes at Stockwell was also the result of an intelligence led operation. Mr Leon asked what the police intended to do to alleviate the community's fear that it wasn't safe for people to walk the streets without feeling threatened by armed police.

51. Archbishop Dr Bancroft McCarthy said that, from his experience as an LU manager in a previous career, he would surmise that the intelligence led operation would have started weeks before the bank holiday Monday but by the time the intelligence reached the police it could have been quite late. While it was right to seek answers from the MPS, Archbishop McCarthy said that it must be remembered that it would take time to ascertain the information that had been received by BTP.

52. Supt. Tottman said that the real value in having engaged dialogue with the community was that real information was fed back, and he agreed that the police needed to be more proactive in obtaining the community's views before undertaking very sensitive operations. Supt. Tottman said that it could be useful to invite senior colleagues from the MPS's firearms Unit (CO19) to a Group meeting, to hear how the community felt about the Association of Chief Police Officers' guidelines on the way CO19 conducted themselves. Supt. Tottman added that he could feel 'the heat' from the community and he was not defending what looked like a 'quasi-militaristic, testosterone' led policing.

53. Supt. Wilson said that he had been given an assurance that BTP colleagues would be attending the Group meeting, which would have been helpful, and that they should attend meetings on a regular basis. He said that he also shared Supt. Tottman's frustration that communication with Lambeth police from central departments was possibly not what it could be. Supt. Wilson suggested, as he said he had done previously, that it could also be useful to invite Commander Rod Jarman, the MPS lead on stop and search, to a meeting. He added that Commander Jarman was conducting an internal review on stop and search

and it would be useful for him to understand the strength of feeling in the community.

54. Cathy Valentine said that she used to come to Group meetings month after month only to hear the police 'slagged off'. Ms Valentine said that some people were the first to ask where the police were when something nasty happened, as if they knew it was going to. She said that she had witnessed armed police operations from her home and that they did not bother her because she knew that they were not after her but the villains. She added that the police should be congratulated for the hard job they have to do and not put down at every meeting.

55. Sheik Mohammed-A-Davies said that there were a lot of problems in the community and that everyone should be helping the police to resolve them; problems ranging from gun crime, youths with knives, drug trafficking, robbery, burglary and prostitution. Sheik Mohammad said that he was one of a team working with youths on Myatts Field and many had come to the mosque where police were able to make contact with them also. He reiterated that everyone should be helping the police proactively to resolve the situation.

56. Supt. Tottman said that the way the police conducted its firearms operations did perhaps not always work. Armed criminals, he said, would not need to be that sophisticated to realise that they should move on elsewhere when they saw armed police outside the underground station, but the tactic was still part of Standard Operational Procedure. Supt. Tottman said he did not know what intelligence police had in this instance but he had authorised firearm operations in the past that had been successful and had not caused ripples in the community.

57. However, Supt. Tottman said that he did not like the use of an aggressive policing style and the way in which it could alienate much needed community support. He added that the police could be further forward in terms of its relationship with the community and that the Borough Commander, Martin Bridger, had been leading the campaign to do something more sophisticated in using partnership working with outreach workers and other agencies to focus on reducing young people's engagement in gun crime activity.

58. Supt. Tottman said that the police needed the community's help and that the community needed the police to arrest those people committing crimes against them. But what the community did not want was the police being disrespectful in their

conduct when arresting people. Supt. Tottman said that he had spoken to many young people and their parents who told him that it was the disrespect shown to them that was worse than being arrested. He added that how the police used their powers was one of his biggest challenges to make sure every officer in Lambeth used respect and had regard for the individual.

59. John Roberts, MPA, said that over the next two years that every MPS officer would undergo 'customer service' training in respect of stop and search.

60. To summarise, Mr Toohill said that in his view there were three points to formally pursue following the discussion. First of all, in relation to community impact, Mr Toohill said that whatever kind of process was used it hadn't measured the impact in this instance, as the passion of the meeting had demonstrated. Secondly, he said, it appeared that there was deficient coordination between BTP and the MPS with the Group still not sure if the MPS knew about the operation or, if it did, at what stage.

61. Thirdly, Mr Toohill said that while it was understood that police needed to deploy armed officers, there was a question about how it was done in terms of safety. On this occasion, he said, there were armed officers in a crowded underground station which raised the question of what would have happened if they had to use their guns. He compared the situation with the considerable care taken, for example, to isolate armed officers from the public during erstwhile HERMES operations. In relation to stop and search, Mr Toohill said it was perhaps time again to devote another session to it.

62. Whilst bearing in mind the time need to gather evidence and investigate matters properly, in relation to the update on progress in murder investigations, Richard Moore said that at some point the Group had to call to account the Crown Prosecution Service for delays in the criminal justice system.

63. Supt. Tottman said that the police at the Chief Officer level were very much engaged with their strategic partners, the London Criminal Justice Board, on several issues, and the speed of which justice was concluded was very much at the forefront i.e. the frustration that victims felt as a result of justice delayed.

64. In response to Ms Tapsell, ***Sgt. Whelan said that Ch. Insp. Nigel Cook was the lead officer in Lambeth on Metcall, the new means by which***

the police receive and grade telephone calls to them. He said that Ch. Insp. Cook would be willing to attend a meeting a give an account what the changes meant and how the new system worked.

65. Wesley Stephenson said that a problem arose concerning the way in which calls to the police were categorised, that could lead to them being wrongly placed in a waiting system. Ms Velmurugu also spoke of her experience of being held waiting on the phone on two occasions after calling the police, once for 20 minutes and at another time for 45 minutes.

66. In response to Mr Toohill's concerns about the police response time target of 12 minutes to calls being reduced to 75% from 80%, John Roberts said that it was a result of Home Office guidance; however he said that he would look further into the matter. In terms of it receiving MPA approval, Mr Roberts said that it was a national standard to which the MPA had to agree.

67. To clarify matters, Supt. Tottman said that there would be two numbers with which to contact the police, a national non-emergency number, 101, and 999, although the former number would not be used by the MPS for the foreseeable future and Lambeth police could still be contacted on local numbers. Mr Roberts added that the use of the 101 number in London required local authority safer partnerships to sign up to it. He added that this was not to imply that Safer Lambeth had not.

68. Supt. Tottman reported a 23% reduction in street robbery and that nationally it was a strategic issue for the government, with the prime minister having taken it upon himself to chair, at cabinet level, discussion with Home Office officials and Chief Constables on the issue of street robbery in urban areas over the past two years. Supt. Tottman said that Lambeth's success was due to police working in partnership, problem solving, designing out crime and safer neighbourhood teams.

69. In relation to burglary and vehicle crime, Supt. Tottman said that the trend across the UK was one of decline, with burglary, as an offence, benefiting from legislation for landlords to comply with certain measures, with sanctions for not doing so. For example, he said that landlords now had to put in British Standard Kitemark locks, which could be enforced.

70. Richard Moore questioned how the police could make landlords to comply with legislation in

terms of resourcing when fully trained designing out crime officers were like 'gold dust' and there was no training budget to train new ones. In response to Mr Moore, Supt. Tottman said that police hadn't invested as much as it could have done in crime prevention and designing out crime officers, and that the partnership was playing catch-up with the legislation. In other words, the partnership had not, he said, been as smart as it could have been in terms of dual partnership enforcement. Mr Moore suggested a report back from the Safer Lambeth Partnership with regard to progress in six months.

71. In response to Gloria Planter, Lambeth Pensioners Forum, Supt. Tottman said that there was nothing more emotive than the elderly being victimised and that the police were very concerned about the number of elderly, mostly women, falling prey to artifice or distraction burglary at their homes. Supt. Tottman said that police worked with each other across London to tackle this crime since the criminals involved tended to travel to different areas. However, in terms of the distraction at a cash point machine that Ms Planter had mentioned, Supt. Tottman said that sort of crime would be classified in another way.

72. With 30-40% of homicides in the UK involving people known to each other, Supt. Tottman said that there had been a programme of joint training with the local authority, Primary Care Trust and Outreach workers during the previous year, as well as significant, public media campaigns to try to increase the reporting of domestic violence. As such, he said he believed that an increase in reporting showed that the public were now more inclined to report incidents to the police.

73. Ms Tapsell said that she would have liked to have agreed with Supt. Tottman but unfortunately one of the problems of a more proactive approach by police had been an expectation by woman, and some men, that there were now going to be prosecutions without victims having to press charges, which was part of the publicity campaign. In fact, she said that the CPS had prosecuted practically nobody, either because the evidence gathering of the police wasn't good enough to pursue a victimless prosecution or that the CPS was not joined up properly to the issue. Ms Tapsell said that there was a fear that eventually there would be a drop in reporting because women, once they have reported, were in very great danger from the perpetrators. If the police were unable to deal with the issue and charges were not brought, she said the word would get around and women would stop reporting.

74. Supt. Tottman said that he understood the concern and that the attrition rate at the point where the police arrived at charging someone was too high, perhaps because of the perception that the CPS didn't have the sympathy or empathy that the police may have. However, Supt. Tottman said that the police could do better in the way that it managed victims and that certainly keeping in touch with victims was critical as the victim could eventually give up.

75. Ms Tapsell referred to a current case in which a domestic violence perpetrator had just been released from prison causing the victim to feel so frightened that she dared not leave her home or talk with anyone, even the police who knew that they could not approach her directly. Ms Tapsell said that there was then the issue of joining that up with the housing department and dealing with her application to have her re-housed well out of the borough, as well as social services to deal with the issue of her children. However, while everything needed to be joined up, Ms Tapsell said that the police in this particular instance were doing a good job but the case was being let down by the other services not being joined up to the whole issue. Ms Tapsell said it was an issue that needed to be returned to with everybody represented at a meeting.

76. Supt. Tottman said that other agencies could do more to identify women at risk before they end up attending accident and emergency after having 'fallen down the stairs' for the third time in as many weeks. Supt. Tottman said that their role was perhaps to give those victims up to another agency to try and reduce the risk of it happening again.

77. Supt. Tottman reported on a campaign to reduce domestic violence ran parallel to the run up to the World Cup, as there was data to suggest that the incidence of domestic violence did increase during the period of the tournament. **As such, he said that the Home Office funded the police through the Tackling Violent Crime programme. Ms Tapsell said that she would like to see the results of the campaign.**

78. Supt. Tottman said that there had been a 23% increase in homophobic crime, particularly in relation to attacks on men in the Streatham Common area. Police, he said, were working with other agencies such as the Terrence Higgins Trust in patrolling areas known as public sex environments. Supt. Tottman said that there was also a hotspot for homophobic crime in Spring Gardens, Vauxhall, where there was a very vibrant Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender night-time

economy. Joint patrols were also carried there with close liaison with the licensees of the clubs. Supt. Tottman said that he believed that the increase in reporting of hate crime was an informal indicator of public confidence.

79. Supt. Wilson said that for the first time the partnership was working on an anti-hate crime strategy which would join up other agencies to ensure a collective approach to the issues.

80. Supt. Tottman reported a slight increase in number of reported race and faith hate crime offences. However, he said that a criminal intelligence analyst had not identified any particular patterns to explain the rise. Supt. Tottman said that local safer neighbourhood teams worked closely with local mosques and synagogues in the community to identify any particular Islamophobic or anti-Semitic activity but there had not been any in the last few months.

81. Supt. Tottman said that one of the things he and his fellow superintendents did, to try to instill trust and confidence, was to address Friday prayers at mosques on a regular basis and invite communities to ask questions. He added that he would like to see an increase in the reporting of race and faith hate crime.

82. In response to Mr Stephenson, Supt. Tottman said that not all offences were codified as racially motivated and the police were still not quite where they should be regarding that matter. However, there were specific units and individuals within Lambeth police whose job it was solely to investigate hate crime and anti-social behaviour and ensure that they were flagged up to make sure that they were investigated in that regard. At the same time, the CPS also picked up on matters in respect of racial motivation.

83. For clarification, Supt. Tottman said that race and faith hate crime were classified together although they could be separated, as they were flagged up differently in the crime reporting system. **Ms Tapsell said in light of new anti-religious legislation it would be useful to see separate figures particularly in relation to where charges had been brought.**

84. In response to Jim Toohill's observation that there was a downward trend in drug possession offences over a period of years, Supt. Tottman said that there was no specific strategy to reduce action against drug users *per se* but that at present police were perhaps focusing more on the acquisitive crime, a priority for the community. He

added that, according to statistics, Lambeth police detected 20% of offences recorded, which if drug offences were taken out would be a lot less. Supt Tottman agreed with Megan Jones (Drug and Alcohol Team Coordinator) that the figures for drugs could be more illustrative in terms of who was being arrested selling, buying and possessing different types of drugs. In this respect, Ms Jones said that the borough was in need of a drugs strategy.

85. In response to Mr Stephenson, Supt. Tottman said that violent crime statistics included harassment offences that may not involve any physical violence at all. In this respect, Sgt Whelan said that the way the offences were broken down that if added up together the sum would be greater than the number of crimes committed, which could be flagged up for more than one reason. For example, offences of murder, GBH, ABH and common assault could also be classified as a hate crime.

86. Supt Tottman concluded his report by saying that across the whole range of recorded crime up to the end of the last financial year showed that there had been 3,800 fewer victims compared to the previous year. To date, he said that there had been around 1,700 fewer victims compared to last year.

CPCG Update

87. Mr Toohill gave an update on the CPCG and its relationship with the Safer Lambeth Partnership, as well as the Group's financial position and the programme for future meetings (see September Briefing attached).

89. Mr Leon said that he thought the MPA wanted to take over, run and dictate everything, and that he couldn't see it working in Lambeth.

90. In response to Paul Reynold's comments on the unsatisfactory state of affairs in relation to the Group's funding, Mr Toohill said that, although the very protracted discussions with the MPA and the CDRP had to some extent distracted the Group from getting on with its work, the immediate financial position (of which the MPA were aware) had not threatened the Group's existence. He added, however, that the issue needed to be resolved soon.

91. In response to Rod Brown, Mr Toohill said that prior to the MPA, the Group had been funded by the Home Office, then later by the Metropolitan Police Committee. However, the Group had only

ever had a sole funder. At the present, he said that the Group would be looking to the Safer Lambeth Partnership for some funding and, by registering as a charity, outside sources.

Any Other Business

92. Phil Isaacs, a resident of Rushcroft Road said that he understood from the residents' solicitor that Lambeth Council were planning evictions at Rushcroft Road and, in fearing public disorder, were thereby requesting a large police presence. In light of events during and following evictions at St Agnes Place, Mr Isaacs asked the Group to help Rushcroft Road residents to open up a dialogue with the Council to promote a sensible discussion and consultation to help those who were vulnerable and in need, and to avoid an unnecessary heavy handed police operation.

93. *Mr Toohill said that in respect of the policing issues in relation to any putative eviction (of which the Group was unaware) the Group would be happy to help the residents to open up dialogue with the Council and the police,* in respect of public order issues which fell within its remit. In the meantime, Mr Toohill pointed Mr Isaacs to a Brixton Town Centre Working Group meeting in Room 125 at Lambeth Town Hall on 11 September.

94. With regard to the evictions at St Agnes Place, Supt. Tottman said that there had been a significant number of lessons learned by the partnership, a key one being a lack of foresight by everyone about how to deal with vulnerable people, adults and children.

95. Mr Moore said that the evictions at St Agnes Place had been at the direction of the High Sheriff and the police, who were present only to keep public order, had been given strong and positive feedback about how they had acted at the time.

96. Ms Tapsell said if evictions were to take place at Rushcroft Road, the Group would expect to be kept informed of the process leading up to it.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**6. 00 p.m. TUESDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2006
ASSEMBLY HALL, LAMBETH TOWN HALL**

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