

**Assembly Hall  
Lambeth Town Hall  
Brixton SW2 1RW**

**PRESENT: CPCG BOARD:** Anna Tapsell, Chairperson (Ind. Memb.), Shane Collins (Ind. Memb.) Gill Kenealy (Ind. Memb.), Abdul Sultan Virani (Lambeth Pensioners Forum); Jim Toohill (Victim Support), Wesley Walters-Stephenson (Your Story) **COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY:** Nick Abengowe (Herne Hill Forum), Greta Brooks (Churches Together in Brixton), Rod Brown, Irena Kowalewski (Lambeth Leaseholders Forum), Jean Carpenter (Lambeth Crime Prevention Trust), Wally Channon (Clapham Town N'hood Watch), Neil Flanigan (WIESA), David Hart, Ros Munday (Clapham Community Partnership), The Most Rev. Dr. Bancroft McCarthy, Phyllis Jackson (HMP Brixton, Independent Monitoring Board), Brian Mantell (Assoc. of Jewish Ex-Servicemen), Hazel Saunders (Victim Support Lambeth), George Tuson (Streatham Common (Southside Neighbourhood Watch Assoc.), John Wainwright (Clapham Sector Working Party), Hazel Watson (Milkwood Road Residents Assoc.) **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:** Peter Harris, Lena James, Richard Moore, Fernando Senior **LAMBETH COUNCIL:** Robert Overall (LBL Dir. Environment, Culture, Community Safety), Cllr. Kingsley Abrams, Cllr. Mark Bennett, Cllr. Lorna Campbell, Cllr. Angie Meader, Cllr. Clare Whelan **METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** Supt. Jonathan Tottman, Supt. Alistair Sutherland, Insp. Peter O'Donnell, Sgt. Ronnie Whelan **BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE** Insp. Graham Croucher **SECRETARIAT:** Ben McKendrick

**VISITORS SIGNED IN:** Cllr. Jeremy Klyne; Helen Longhurst (Victim Support); Imelda Burke, Darren Hall, Natasha Mensah (Clapham Park Homes); John Howard; J. Odularu; Lara Mifsud-Bonici (Lambeth Park Rangers Service); David Pritchard Jones; Dolly Adams; Manju Roy; C. Anderson (St John's CDP); Cllr. Helen O'Malley; S. Thomas; Kate Newham, L. Redmond (Community Safety); D. Munyaneza; M. Munyaneza; Brian Parker; Catriona Robertson, Hannah Barker (Clapham & Stockwell Faith Forum); Anthea Gordon-Davidson; T. Thomas; C. Pett (Lambeth Red Cross); Tanya Mills (409 Project); J. Jackson (West Norwood SOS); W. Rowe (Straight Aims – Phoenix); Beryl Saunders; Joel McInnes (Elim Church); Joash; Hope Barrett; Patrick Wedge; Stefano Cossalter, Ian Hearnden (King's College London); Keith Shaw; Abdul Ahmed (Somali Youth and Education Development); Barbara Nuarto; Pam Daniel (St Mark's Church)

**SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS:** Sheila Phillips (Bishops); Nora Anne Sheehy (Clapham Town)

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Pav Akhtar, Paul Andell, Supt. Ellie Bird, Canon Ivelaw Bowman, Brgh. Cmdr. Martin Bridger, David Corderoy, Peter Fisher (Clapham Common SN), John Frankland (Herne Hill SN), Elizabeth Gibson, Brenda Goddard, Nic Joachim (Lambeth Red Cross), Jayne King (Bishops SN), Sally Rance, Paul Reynolds, John Roberts, Cheryl Sealey David Tomlinson, Peggy Tyler, Jane Warwick, Supt. Paul Wilson

## 1 Minutes of the Meeting 6 February 2007

1 Minutes of the Meeting 6 February 2007 were accepted without amendment

## 2 Matters Arising

2 Jim Toohill pointed out an apparent anomaly, which had been resolved with the police, in respect of the reported 52 robberies per day a few years ago. He said that a reasonable comparison was for 'Street Crime' which had averaged 30 per day at the peak in October 2001 and was now running at an average of 10 per day, in itself a prodigious

reduction but less than that indicated in the minute. [Minute 14, 06/03/07].

3 In response to Rod Brown, Sgt. Ronnie Whelan said that he would look into how much the Management Information Unit could breakdown the arrest data from the No Deal initiative in Brixton [Minute 19, 06/02/07].

4 In relation to deprivation in London, Supt. Tottman said that the London boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets were ranked the first and second most deprived in the country while Lambeth was ranked thirteenth [Minute 24, 06/02/07].

5 In response to Anthea Gordon Davidson, Supt. Tottman said that Lambeth police had a desire to reduce the supply of guns in Lambeth, working with the Specialist Crimes Directorate, Operation Trident and other units at New Scotland Yard. However, Supt. Tottman said he did not think there had been a focus on reducing the supply of guns in terms of the law enforcement community, and intelligence and security services. But he said that Lambeth was a significant lobby in the way it would like to see a change in the strategic direction and working with the Serious Organised Crime Agency [Minute 33, 06/02/07].

6 ***Anna Tapsell proposed that the Group should seek a presentation from the Serious Organised Crime Agency, with local MPs present, in order that it could learn about what was being done to reduce the supply of firearms.***

7 In relation to ethnicity, age and gender of people held under S.136 during February, Inspector Peter O'Donnell said that there had been six males, five of whom were black and one white, and two females, one whom was white [Minute 45, 06/02/05].

8 Further to Mr Brown's question, Ms Tapsell said that with regard to people detained by police under S.135 and S.136 of the Mental Health Act, how many people were subsequently diagnosed as being mentally ill was difficult to answer, since being mentally ill enough to be 'sectioned' was different from being mentally ill while someone could be extremely mentally ill but not 'sectionable'. She said it was an issue that the Mental Health sub-Group could look into and come back to the Group in three months time [Minute 50, 06/02/03].

9 Richard Moore said that he was concerned about mentally ill people detained in police stations and

how very frightening and disturbing it could be for them to be transferred to another place of safety in a police van, particularly if it was to somewhere outside of the borough. Mr Moore said it was a real issue and one that needed looking into.

10 In response, Insp. O'Donnell said that none of the mentally ill persons mentioned in the February S.136 statistics had been detained at a police station but were taken to either the Lambeth or Maudsley Hospitals. However, Insp. O'Donnell said that Mr Moore was quite right to say that police stations were not an appropriate place for people with mental health issues, and while they had to be on constant watch there was also a sense of criminalising a person whose only crime was suffering mental illness. Once in a police station, however, Insp. O'Donnell said that a doctor, health professionals and social services were contacted and the person would be transferred within four hours. Insp. O'Donnell said that if people couldn't be taken to the Lambeth or the Maudsley there was an agreement with Lewisham. Occasionally, he said, some people were taken further afield.

11 Supt. Tottman said that police cell space in the borough was a constant challenge and he said he thought it was appropriate to say that no police officer wanted to see mentally ill people held in police custody. Supt. Tottman said that when he was in Amsterdam recently a Dutch police officer had looked at him with a horrified expression after being asked about police custody provision for mental ill people. The officer told him that people in Holland with mental health issues were taken to hospital. Supt. Tottman said that, as a partnership, there was an issue about how this incredibly high risk business was managed.

12 Ms Tapsell reminded the Group that in the Mental Health Act 1983 a police station was deemed a place of safety. However, she said it was a terrible thing about which all the many professional organisations and voluntary groups had campaigned against over many years, although it did not look like being changed.

13 In response to Mr Howard, Supt. Tottman said as part of the Safer Lambeth Partnership the police would have discussed the closure of the Emergency Clinic at the Maudsley through Ch. Insp. Suzanne Wallace giving evidence, with representatives of the NHS Trust and others. In respect to the article in the South London Press, concerning this matter Supt. Tottman said that he had met the editor of the newspaper twelve hours

earlier and she had told him that the article had started a lively debate that had got to the heart of the community. Supt. Tottman said that the debate was still very much alive. Insp. O'Donnell added that he hadn't seen the newspaper article but like all police officers he said he thought that a police cell was not the best place for a person suffering from mental illness.

14 Ms Tapsell said that as far she knew every health body in terms of providers, including Guys and St Thomas', Kings and Lambeth and Southwark local authorities had written to South London and Maudsley (SLaM) asking them not to close the Emergency Clinic. Ms Tapsell said that it was depressing that despite the pressure put on the Primary Care Trusts and SLaM, for which the South London Press had to congratulate, campaigners were not being successful.

### 3 Lambeth Youth Issues

15 Those present were divided into Groups with each table given two cards containing suggestions for topics that affected young people's lives. The topics, suggested by the CPCG's Youth sub-Group beforehand, were: Safety, Drugs, Crime, Weapons, Music, Things to do, Jobs, Transport, Schools, Housing, Abuse, Money, Policing, Prison, Pregnancy, TV, Information Technology, Training, Ambition, Relationships, Gangs, Appearance, Health, Respect, Older People. Following a discussion each Group reported back its findings.

16 Group 1 reported back on the issue of abuse of young people from their peer group, such as bullying at school and a feeling of hostility towards them from figures of authority such as parents, teachers, police officers and politicians. More specifically, it was suggested that Islamic youths were likely to be subject to harassment whilst the media was also highlighted for the way it often demonised young people. It was proposed that adults could do more in terms of reaching out to young people, and to remember that they were also young once, as well as investment in positive peer role models and less funding of ineffective projects.

17 Group 2 reported that they discussed school issues such as the problem of exclusion and insufficient support and the effort needed to prevent it happening. The transition of going from primary school to a huge secondary school, particularly for young males, was considered

problematic for some young people. Other matters highlighted were the lack of youth provision, parenting skills - with the need for intervention in some cases, greater focus on life skills and less on exams, diversionary activities, lack of self-esteem, loss of identity, stronger relationship with peers than family, deprivation and young people being criminalised for taking drugs and thereby excluded from mainstream society. It was proposed that the usual short-term funded youth projects should be replaced by long-term projects with a bottom up approach in allowing youth greater involvement in terms of service provision and finding solutions. The Group also suggested an annual youth conference, more smaller secondary schools in the borough, mentoring apprenticeships, the decriminalisation of drugs and keeping sight of the fact that all young people were different

- 18 Group 3 had also raised the issue of poor resources for youth provision and after school care, the lack activities and direction and guidance provided for young people. Discussion about fear of crime was also raised as well as bad press about young people and peer pressure. Solutions proposed were that adults and young people should talk and listen to each other more, the provision of adult and peer role models, education and training, the inclusion of young people, the challenging of youth stereotypes, the establishing of youth wardens, more finance for activities to allow young people to realise their potential, greater cultural and racial awareness within the police, and rewards for young people who did well
- 19 Group 4 had discussed communication between older and younger people, the need for more consultation with young people and honest debate so that their needs could be properly determined. The Group had also raised was the idea training for parents with regard to the education system, so that they could give better support to their children, and the need for work to start at home in terms of respect and discipline and the passing down of family values. With regard to improving matters for young people, this Group proposed that the police needed to better understand the community they worked for, more funding for struggling grassroots projects, support of elders in the community and greater compromise between older people and the young.
- 20 Group 5 had talked about gun crime and the need for parents to monitor their children, particularly as younger children were being used to carry drugs and weapons for older youths. The issue of the sale of imitation firearms was also raised. To

improve the situation, the Group said that there needed to be more investment in education, which could help with the identity crises which were rife, more job opportunities and training, and encourage more people to become self-employed. Other matters raised by the Group, which were deemed important and in need of improvement, were stop and search, youth provision and parental support.

- 21 Group 6 had discussed negative experiences of young people, such as those excluded from school, young people who had become directionless, demonised by the press and at risk of being involved in teenage pregnancy. The solutions the Group proposed to tackle disenfranchised youths included long-term sustainable youth provision, meaningful parental control and involvement, and strategic management in respect of 'Every Child Matters'. This needed to involve more than just hearing what young people had to say but actually making a difference.
- 22 Group 7 said that to make things better for young people in Lambeth there needed to more consultation between young people and the various agencies, more facilities that were actually wanted by young people, learning the positives of family values, challenging the sense of belonging offered by gang membership and the need to carry of a weapon for protection, and longer term funding since none of issues could be resolved by a quick fix.
- 23 Group 8 had looked at the issue of family conflict and over-crowding leading to young people leaving home. However, it was suggested that young people encountered difficulties finding somewhere to live due to prohibitive cost of private accommodation while possibly being unfamiliar with application procedures for council housing. It had also been suggested that life in a hostel was not a positive experience for young people. Therefore, this Group proposed that housing for young people needed to be addressed with the Home and Away project re-established. In terms of education, training and employment, the Group proposed that young people should be allowed to develop and learn at their own pace with an emphasis on life skills in latter school years with ongoing help with job applications.
- 24 Group 9 discussed money and health and said that life in Lambeth could be stressful and difficult with a great deal of negativity as a result of crime. The Group proposed that money was needed to create opportunities for young people that were non-

- discriminatory. In this respect it was suggested that private companies could do more by investing in the boroughs young people. Furthermore, they said more could be done to help parents who found it difficult to spend as much time with their children as they wished, due to work commitments. Greater understanding and love were also cited as a key to improving young people's lives
- 25 Group 10 also discussed housing and life on estates, where the risk of becoming involved with a gang, and not necessarily willingly, was highlighted. There was also criticism about the lack of school places in Lambeth and the long journey some Lambeth young people had to make to get to and from school. Furthermore, in terms of education, it was suggested that the needs of the BME communities could be better met. With regard improving the lives of young people, it was stated that young people in Lambeth were exposed to one of the worst council services in the country.
- 26 Group 11 reported back that many young people did not seem to have enough trust in the police, which was perhaps one of the reasons why some of them carried weapons. On the question of decriminalising drugs the young people in the Group were found not to be generally in favour of taking that course of action. The issues of negative media portrayals of young people on the one hand, together with the instant-gratification, celebrity role models offered by the media on the other, was highlighted. School exclusions were also discussed and in relation to the latter point this Group felt that exclusion of young people from school, without clear support plans for them and their families, should be avoided. This Group also found that young people wanted proper training and apprenticeships for real jobs.
- 27 A member of Lambeth Youth Council commented on the promoting of the meeting, which had few youths present. While she said it was good to discuss youth issues it was still seemed like the adults were making decisions on young people's behalf. In order to attract more young people to meetings, she suggested more notice had to be given and flyers, publicising the meeting, had to be more attractive to young people and distributed at youth clubs. She also suggested that a more interesting venue would attract more young people as well as having some entertainment.
- 28 A member of the public said that she was uncertain about what people meant by positive role models for young people. She said that she didn't wear designer clothes and was a working mother who lived a happy, quiet life in Brixton bringing up her daughter who was currently studying away from home at a University. Others present agreed that parents could be great role models but not all parents or families were the same.
- 29 In terms of people in particular professions it was suggested that the media did not do enough to positive BME role models or show the BME communities in professions such as the media itself, armed forces, politics, health, police,
- 30 Ros Munday said that she was disappointed that there were not many young people present and although there was representation from Lambeth Youth Council she said that these were young people were already engaged in the process. She said was necessary to engage young people living on estates and hanging around street corners with nothing to do. At the moment, she said that it was the voluntary sector which was pushing things forward and raising money for activities, with nothing received from the Council. She also commented that the elected members of the Council who were present earlier on had left the meeting when people were saying what they thought.
- 31 Rod Brown said that the reason young people got into trouble was because they craved excitement and therefore they needed to be given exciting things to occupy and interest them.
- 32 John Howard said that during his Group's discussion Supt. Tottman had made a perceptive comment that 26 years ago Lord Scarman would probably have had the current evening's debate in mind; the all-embracing, over-reaching debate about the condition of the Youth Service and all the things that led to the troubles in Brixton. He said that those people who had been attending the Group meetings over the past 20 years or more would know of the fight to keep youth issues at the top of the Group's agenda. During this time he said that Lambeth chief executives, senior councillors and officers had not listened, however much the Group had argued the point, and that there would still be no change if they continued to not listen.
- 33 Mr Howard said there needed to be proper and meaningful consultation with young people about what they wanted. Mr Howard said that in the mid-1990s the Council had decimated the Youth Service, after having proposed three centres of excellence which never happened, and young people were left on the streets with nothing to do.

In order for young people to be able to say that something had come out of the meeting in twelve months time, Mr Howard said that there had to be a sea change of thought within the Council in terms of moving youth issues up the agenda. Mr Howard closed by saying that young people needed to be recognised and acknowledged for what they had to offer because they were the future.

34 Neil Flanigan said that he would not like to think that the meeting had been an academic exercise since solutions were needed. He therefore proposed that the Group report back within the next three to six months time to show that something was taking place and happening.

35 Summing up, Anna Tapsell said that a good start had been made, though there were some things that needed to be considered in order for the next youth issues meeting to be better. Ms Tapsell said that the CPCG had an embryonic Youth sub-Group and hoped that it would take the key points from the issues raised which had highlighted: the stopping of school exclusions without parents and young people having signed up to a proper action plan of care, agreed by a multi-professional group; housing for independent young people; stop and search, health and drugs. Ms Tapsell closed the agenda item by asking people to fill in the feedback forms and, for those people wanting to assist with the Youth sub-Group, to leave their contact details.

#### 4 Lambeth Police Report

36 Supt. Tottman gave a PowerPoint presentation on Lambeth Police performance for the year to date (see attached). The statistical police report was tabled.

37 Supt. Tottman said that the sanctioned detection rate in Lambeth had reached 21%, a significant improvement from the start of the year and better than other London boroughs and police services across the country. He said that for next year a target for detections of 24% had been set, which he was confident would be met.

38 Supt. Tottman said that he could give no further update on the murders of James Smarrt-Ford and Billy Cox but said that Peter Valentine, the senior investigating officer into the murder of Billy Cox, had asked him to pass on his thanks for the fantastic support he had received from the community. Supt. Alistair Sutherland said that he had also spoken to Peter Valentine who had told

him that the investigation was progressing positively.

39 Sheila Phillips, Bishops Safer Neighbourhood Panel, commented on the plethora of signs warning about street robbery in her area, which was not great problem as far as she was aware. She added that if there was problem in a particular spot nobody would know where exactly, as the signs were everywhere, which defeated the object and instilled fear in people.

40 In the first instance, Supt. Sutherland said that crime in Waterloo was significantly down compared to last year. With regard to the signs, he said that they had attracted a lot of attention and criticism but also some positive feedback from people for making them aware. In one case, he said, a crime was prevented as result of the crime prevention advice. He also said that in crime hotspots the impact of the signs had been really successful. While he appreciated people's criticism about the signs, Supt. Sutherland said their success as a tried and tested tactic worked across London. Nevertheless, Supt. Sutherland said that he would undertake to review the placing of the signs.

41 Ms Tapsell commented on police appeal boards on Brixton Road that were turned away from pedestrians and facing oncoming traffic, which could cause drivers to be distracted. Overall, Ms Tapsell said that the signs made living in Lambeth exceedingly depressing and she wondered what kind of message it gave to people visiting and passing through Lambeth.

42 Mr Toohill said that the signs that appeared to be everywhere and gave the impression there had been an explosion of crime in Lambeth. Mr Toohill asked how much the signs cost and whether the Safer Neighbourhood Panels had been consulted about them.

43 In relation to the yellow signs, Det. Supt, Corrigan said that during the winter months street crime decreased but, as police intelligence showed, in early March it began to increase. Therefore, he said that the police had to ensure that the community and visitors were aware of the issue, which the police had noted occurring over the past ten years. He added that as the crime figures began to decrease the signs would be removed.

44 Mr Moore said that he supported the use of the yellow signs and suggested that it would be useful for a designing out crime officer gave a

presentation to the Group about the tactics they used.

45 Gill Kenealy said that it would be better to have more police officers on the streets than the yellow signs, which she thought were horrendous and heightened people's sense of vulnerability. Furthermore, she said that if you lived in Lambeth you knew where the crime hotspots were.

46 Brian Parker said he had heard that the manager of pub in his neighbourhood had asked for an appeal board to be removed because it was discouraging custom.

47 In response to a member of public, Supt. Tottman said that data concerning the discharging of firearms and resulting injuries could be gathered although not all reported gun enabled crime involved the use of a gun, which could skew the figures and give a false picture. **However, Det. Supt. John Corrigan said that he would provide the figures for the next meeting.**

48 Supt. Tottman said that in large conurbations, such as London, gun enabled crime had reduced, and in Lambeth there had been a 12% reduction over the past year with a 'best in class' 31% detection rate. Det. Supt. Corrigan also said that gun crime, the investigation of which was a very unpleasant business, was down compared to the previous year, which had been one of an increase. However, Det. Supt. Corrigan said that there was a problem with the number of gun crimes fluctuating and that the police would rather see a trend of a 2-3% reduction year on year.

49 In relation to firearms, Ms Kenealy said that she had recently been a community observer accompanying police officers on Operation Neon. During the briefing she said that details of suspects of gun crime were shown, three of whom had previously been convicted of such an offence. Ms Kenealy said that if a five year prison sentence for possession of a firearm was going to be a meaningful deterrent then five years should be the case. Instead of being out on the streets terrifying their peer group, she said those convicted should be in prison finishing their sentences.

50 In response to Ms Kenealy, Supt. Tottman said that after all their time and effort pursuing people suspected of gun crimes it was frustrating for the police to see people back on the streets. However, he said that the five year sentence was an age related sanction and convicted persons under the age of twenty-one could be released from prison or

a young offenders institution in a matter of months. Supt. Tottman said for the matter to be changed there would have to be some collective lobbying as a community for the age limit for the five year sentence to be reduced.

51 In response to Arulini Velmurugu, Supt Tottman said anyone who tried to contact the MPS by telephone may have been frustrated at sometime about the length of time it took to get through. However, over the past five years he said that there had been a huge programme concerning the command and control and reconfiguration of police telecommunications. This, he said, had changed things for the better as ongoing 'mystery shopping' had shown. However, while the system wasn't perfect at the moment, Supt Tottman said that it was certainly getting better while each superintendent received performance figures and questions asking why they were not meeting targets for answering different types of calls. However, Anna Tapsell said that the Group needed to keep an eye on the issue, meeting by meeting.

52 Richard Moore said that a major commercial organisation was going to stop deliveries of food produce in an area of SE1 and he was concerned about housebound residents being unable to get their food. Mr Moore asked if the police had a contingency plan should it happen in Lambeth.

## 5 Any other business

53 Brian Parker asked "If the Safer Neighbourhood (SN) Ward Panels, which have been meeting, Lambeth-wide, since April, 2007, are supposed to be both democratic and directly accountable, why are details of their Meetings, and presumably elected representatives, not made available to the people they claim to represent?"

54 **Ms Tapsell said that she would place the matter on the agenda for the next Group meeting and invite members of SN panels and teams to attend as well John Roberts, the MPA link member.**

## DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.30 p.m. TUESDAY, 3 April 2007

St Luke's Church, Knight's Hill  
West Norwood SE27 0HS