

**St Luke Church
Knights Hill
West Norwood SE27 0HS**

PRESENT: CPCG BOARD: Anna Tapsell, Chairperson (Ind. Memb.), Paul Andell (Ind. Memb.), Ivelaw Bowman (Ind. Memb.), Paul Reynolds (Herne Hill Society), Abdul Sultan Virani (Lambeth Pensioners Forum); Wesley Walters-Stephenson (Your Story) **COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY:** Nick Abengowe (Herne Hill Forum); Rod Brown (Lambeth Leaseholders Forum); Wally Channon (Clapham Town N'hood Watch); David Hart, Ros Munday (Clapham Community Partnership); Stuart Horwood (Brixton Market Traders Association); Hazel Watson (Milkwood Road Residents Assoc.) **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:** Peter Harris, Lena James, Richard Moore **LAMBETH COUNCIL:** Cllr. Mark Bennett, Megan Jones (DAAT), Luke Roberts (Restorative Justice Co-ordinator) **METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** Supt. Stewart Low, Ch. Insp. Chris Lester, Insp. Graham Sutherland, Jez Edwards **SECRETARIAT:** Ben McKendrick

VISITORS SIGNED IN: Jai Jayasuman (Lambeth Mediation); Patrick Cracroft-Brennan; Richard G. Dutton; Philip Godfrey; Anthea Gordon Davidson; David Green, Cherry Williams (Gipsy Hill Community Police Partnership); John Howard; Jean Monaghan; Brian Parker; Cllr. Graham Pycock; Cathy Tayleure (Chair, Clapham Town Neighbourhood Watch); Leon Watson (South London Press); Martin Wright (Chair, Lambeth Mediation Service)

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS: Adrian Garden (Brixton Hill)

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Kingsley Abrams, Chris Adamson, Ch. Supt. Martin Bridger, Greta Brooks, David Corderoy, Neil Flanigan, John Frankland, Brian Mantell, Fernando Senior, Jim Toohill, Supt. Jonathan Tottman, Cathy Valentine, John Roberts, Arulini Velmurugu, Jane Warwick, Sgt. Ronnie Whelan, Supt. Paul Wilson

Minutes of the Meeting 6 February '07

1. Minutes of the Meeting 6 March 2007 were accepted with the following amendment:
2. Page 4, Minute 31, to read: 'Rod Brown said that the reason that young people sometimes got into trouble was because they craved excitement...

Matters Arising

3. Ms Tapsell said that the Group's desire for a presentation from the Serious Organised Crime Agency would remain on the Group's list of actions until it had taken place [Minute 6, 06/03/07].
4. With regard to firearm incidents in Lambeth during the previous month, Supt. Low said that there had been 29, of which 3 had been murders. He added that in total firearms had been discharged 11 times with 7 weapons recovered. Supt. Low said that he would look into having firearm statistics put into document form [Minute 47, 06/03/07].

5. In response to John Howard, Inspector Graham Sutherland said that the yellow signs warning of robbery were a temporary measure but stressed that they had helped to reduce crime significantly, particularly in the areas they had been put up [Minute 40, 06/03/07].
6. Supt. Stewart Low said that he had not been prepared for the meeting in respect of giving a response to Brian Parker's concerns about Safer Neighbourhood Panels (SNPs), which Mr Parker had raised under Any Other Business at the last Group meeting. However, Supt Low gave an undertaking to respond by way of a report about the establishing and working of SNPs for the next meeting [Minute 54, 06/03/07].
7. Brian Parker reiterated his view about the absence of a democratic process for membership of SNPs and the lack of accountability of their members to the people they represented.
8. A member of the public involved with the Gipsy Hill SNP requested that a report, once it had been produced, be submitted to the Gipsy Hill panel. She added that the Gipsy Hill SNP had not received any specific training. Ms Tapsell said that the Group would forward all papers it received that were relevant to SNPs in Lambeth regardless of whoever else was supposed to send them.
9. Ros Munday said that the Clapham Town SNP had requested a meeting with Cllr. Mark Bennett and Supt. Paul Wilson. However, while Cllr. Bennett had agreed to meet, the panel was still awaiting a response from Supt. Wilson. She therefore asked Supt. Low if he could relay a message to Supt. Wilson with regard to contacting Clapham Town SNP. Supt. Low agreed to do so.
10. With issues concerning SNPs coming further to the fore, Ms Tapsell said that it was the Group's intention, with the agreement with Lambeth SNPs, to hold a SNPs conference later in the year in order to bring everybody together. She added that it would be very important to invite John Roberts, the Lambeth Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) link member, since he was in a sense responsible for SNP resources.

11. In response to Rod Brown, who sought postcode data regarding those arrested as a result of the No Deal operation, Supt. Low said that he was reluctant to abstract an officer from street duties for a time consuming activity such as further breaking down data already disseminated, and which had been agreed upon. However, while not completely opposed to the idea, he said that he would need to be clear about the value the information would add.
12. Both Stuart Horwood and Paul Reynolds highlighted the issue of drug dealers still operating at bus shelters outside Boots and Woolworth's on Brixton Road. Ms Tapsell said that the Group needed to have a much larger and more thorough debate about drugs than it had done and that time needed to be taken to think about it properly.

Restorative Justice

13. Before commencing with the debate, Paul Andell said that while the views about restorative justice of those present may vary he hoped that by the end everyone would come together with a way forward. Mr Andell said the evening's thematic agenda item was about introducing to the local community a concept that had been around nationally and internationally for many years. Mr Andell said that in fact restorative justice historically had its roots in Maori and Native American traditions.
14. Luke Roberts, LBL Restorative Justice Coordinator, asked those present to think what they thought they would need after they had been harmed by another person. The responses given were: love and care, reassurance, an outlet for anger, immediate financial support, an apology and retribution.
15. Similarly, Mr Roberts asked what people thought they would need if they had harmed someone themselves. The responses given were: forgiveness and understanding, someone to talk to, an opportunity to say sorry and a sense of knowing that you had done something wrong.
16. Mr Roberts said that one of the factors of restorative justice was to examine the needs of the harmer as well as the harmed. He also said that one of the key concepts of restorative justice was to look at how relationships could be repaired once harm had occurred, which could happen between communities as well as individuals.
17. Mr Andell gave a PowerPoint presentation (see attached). He said that restorative justice brought together a victim of a crime, or the victim's representative, and an offender face to face.
18. Mr Andell said that there was not a great deal in terms of prescriptive law in relation to restorative justice but as a process it would allow the community to define what it wanted it to be locally.
19. Insp. Graham Sutherland said that a restorative justice approach was now being used in secondary schools in Lambeth to address issues such as bullying and victimisation. As such, he said that a team of police officers employed to work directly with schools had been trained by Mr Roberts' team over the past few weeks. Insp. Sutherland said that the feedback he had received so far was that the approach was very effective and that the officers were doing an extremely good job.
20. In terms of the Youth Offenders Service, Insp. Sutherland said that one of their key performance indicators was to ensure that victims of youth crime would be given the opportunity to have a restorative meeting with the offender. However, Insp. Sutherland said that the uptake on this approach was not great since it required the agreement of both the suspect and offender. Nevertheless, he added that information he received about such encounters was that they were successful and beneficial to the victim.
21. Mr Andell said that there was also often a restorative element to the process when a young person first appeared at court and was given a referral order. He said that a referral panel made up of three community representatives would decide what restorative element could be applied to the young person which often involved an apology or victim mediation.
22. Mr Andell said that the community had, if it wished, an opportunity to extend the role of restorative justice in Lambeth, to look at who

- would deliver it and decide where in the system restorative processes should be introduced. In this respect, Mr Andell said that all the evidence suggested that it did not matter which agency undertook the work as long as the training was correct.
23. Mr Andell said that there was also strong evidence that restorative justice could increase victim satisfaction and confidence in the criminal justice system, while it also led to a reduction in recidivism, i.e. that offenders who went through the restorative process were less likely to offend again.
 24. In terms of disadvantages of the restorative justice approach, Mr Andell said that any diversion from the criminal justice system could involve an element of 'net widening'. Mr Andell explained that net widening described a situation whereby a penalty handed out to an offender could represent a more serious response than would have otherwise occurred because of greater information to utilise about the offender. If that was the case, Mr Andell said that more people would be 'scooped up' into the system and lead to the labeling of people who, before, would have not normally been considered serious criminal elements.
 25. Other disadvantages highlighted by Mr Andell were: the competition between agencies, both statutory and voluntary, in terms of who got involved; conflictual priorities, where there may be a desire for a more summary, speedier kind of justice; and the time and money involved.
 26. Ultimately, Mr Andell said that if the restorative justice approach was less formal it would be more meaningful and lead to a greater chance of satisfaction and change.
 27. In response to the suggestion from David Green (Gipsy Hill Ward), Mr Andell said that he did not think restorative justice was tampering with the law designed to protect us but was rather aimed at making the law more meaningful and community orientated.
 28. Stuart Horwood said that despite the positive things said about it he could not see restorative justice being an alternative or replacement to prosecution. However, he said that it could be beneficial after sentencing or prior to release from prison in order that offenders could hear about the damage that their actions had caused to people's lives, or to deal with anti-social behaviour and school exclusions.
 29. Martin Wright (Chair, Lambeth Mediation Service) said that he personally had had experience of restorative justice which had a positive outcome and that there was a role for voluntary services within the approach.
 30. Cllr. Graham Pycock said that he thought restorative justice was the future, as it made people feel as if justice was happening. He said that he was similarly interested in the extent that Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, an informal solution which avoided the courts and through which restitution could take place, were used in Lambeth.
 31. Cllr. Pycock said that there was also an economic dimension to restorative justice and that it was disgusting and shameful, for example, that a young man did not contribute to society, whether the restitution was aimed towards an individual or society.
 32. Cllr. Pycock said that restorative justice had, of course, to be carried out within the context of the law, particularly for young people and with the involvement of local people.
 33. A member of the public said restorative justice was new to her but she believed that for people who committed crime there was a punishment in law. She said that most people who committed crime knew what they were doing and should not be allowed to choose their punishment.
 34. In response, Mr Andell said that in terms of punishment fitting the crime, restorative justice had been designed to do just that; to make the offender see the crime in a meaningful way, which quite often led to the offender repairing the damage he or she had done.
 35. Richard Moore said that he was not against restorative justice, in fact the opposite, although he thought there was a question of people's faith in it. He added that he thought it perhaps worked with better with those coming to the end of their criminal career than with young people.

36. Mrs Lynn Thomas said that problems concerning young people committing crime arose due to parents and teachers having not been allowed to discipline children who should be made to understand the consequences of their actions.
 37. Jai Jayasuman (Lambeth Mediation Service) said that he envisaged restorative justice sitting alongside the criminal justice system, instead of being an alternative, with offenders given an opportunity to meet victims. He said that this would serve both parties' purposes in that victims would get the reassurances they required while offenders would be given an opportunity for remorse. From this, he said, came rehabilitation, whereas the current punitive system let us down. In the end, he said that society would also benefit because offenders who had gone through restorative justice would be less likely to re-offend.
 38. In respect of community referral panels, Wesley Stephenson said he would like to know more about how they would be set up, who would sit on them and whether they would be Council led.
 39. Brian Parker said that he had seen first hand an instance in which a perpetrator of a crime was absolutely appalled at the amount of grief and havoc she had caused to people's lives, which had come as a shock to her.
 40. John Howard said he was sceptical about restorative justice, which, he understood, did not seem to have a high take-up, and he said that he thought that those who would show remorse through the process would probably have done so anyway.
 41. Instead, Mr Howard said the country needed to restore justice within its own framework, with justice and civil liberties having been eroded while the presumption of innocence until proven guilty had been replaced by a presumption of guilt.
 42. In concluding the discussion, Mr Andell proposed, and Canon Ivelaw Bowman seconded, that the Group form a multi-agency sub-group to discuss issues further and to report back with an action plan that would propose implementations. Following a vote, the result was: FOR 18, AGAINST 4.
 43. Canon Bowman said that a worthy note to the discussion on restorative justice was the historical perspective given to it. He said that history showed what happened when the ideas from Maori and Native American Indian culture came upon Western culture. He added that standing here today in 2007 and living in a European society we had a very long way to go on this matter.
- ### **Lambeth Police Report Matters Arising**
44. Prior to the Lambeth Police Report being given, Anna Tapsell congratulated Stewart Low on behalf of the Group on being promoted to Chief Superintendent.
 45. Ch. Supt. Low gave a PowerPoint presentation on Lambeth police performance for the year to date, and events since the last Group meeting (see attached). The statistical police report was tabled.
 46. In response to a member of the public, Ch. Supt. Low restated Brgh. Cmdr. Martin Bridger's findings given at a previous meeting that there was no sole agency that took responsibility for investigating the importation of firearms into the country, and that it was something that Mr Bridger had lobbied about hard and long.
 47. In response to Mr Moore's question about a definition of a gang, Ch. Supt. Low said that some groups would call themselves a gang while others wouldn't. At the same time, he said that the definition of a gang meant different things to different people. However, he said that what the police were doing around youth provision linked into gang issues.
 48. Wesley Stephenson said that if the police had listened to the community earlier about the existence of gangs in Lambeth, such as PDC (Poverty Driven Children) and the Muslim Boys, the problems of dealing with them today wouldn't be so great. He added that the police should have the names of all the gangs in the borough as well as those from outside and should share information more readily with other agencies and youth workers.
 49. Canon Bowman said that he had recently attended a conference about guns, gangs

and young people at which a professor had said that there were certain colleges that gang members attended, which if other young people went to they would be killed. He said that such colleges existed in Lambeth and Wandsworth and other boroughs. Canon Bowman said, as Wesley Stephenson had pointed out, that there was a serious problem and we needed to get real.

50. Ch. Supt. Low thanked Wesley Stephenson and Canon Bowman and said that he was fully accepting of what they said. He added that police did profile gangs and had lists of members and shared information with other boroughs. He said that police were also aware of Wandsworth and Southwark gangs, who they were and when they came into Lambeth.
51. In relation to gangs, Cllr. Bennett said that it wasn't just an issue for Lambeth and work was being undertaken to encourage other south London boroughs to conduct their own scrutinies into the problem. He said that this would be followed by a conference in Lambeth in the Autumn from which a report would be written up as evidence. This he said would then be used to lobby government for increased investment in south London for youth provision and for dealing with the gangs problem.
52. With regard to youth provision, Cllr. Bennett said that there would be an extra £1.7 million invested over the next three years with consultation undertaken with young people to find out what they wanted

Any Other Business

53. Brian Parker informed the meeting of Billy Cox's funeral would take place on 5 April, leaving from Fenwick Estate, North Clapham at 8.00 a.m. and going to West Norwood Cemetery.
54. In relation to Billy Cox, Canon Bowman said that he knew him well and, like Justin Bernier who was murdered on the same estate a few years ago, he did not deserve to die in the manner that he did.
55. Following the death of Billy Cox, Paul Reynolds said that he been looking at the

issue of school exclusion and asked if there was any management data on school exclusion policies and data linking the number of exclusions with the number of places on the diversionary programme. This he said was important since there was clearly an issue of resource if the number of exclusions was greater than the number of places.

56. Cllr. Bennett said that while education was not his immediate area of responsibility he was a school governor and he agreed that the level of exclusion in Lambeth was too high. However, he said that he believed that the number of excluded young people in the borough was lower than the number of young people out of school.
57. Cllr. Bennett said that he believed that the Children and Young People's Service did maintain statistics and that he would be happy at some point to report back on that.
58. Ms Tapsell said that the Group needed to devote a greater part of a meeting to the issue of exclusions since it was well known that young people went completely missing in the system, particularly as many Lambeth children went to schools in other boroughs.
59. Ms Tapsell said that to make sure something was done about the matter there needed to be degree of planning with other agencies on board. She said that it was not just a matter for education and Children and Young People's Service but other agencies such as health workers also needed to be present when the matter was discussed. Canon Ivelaw said that the matter of school exclusion needed to be addressed immediately.
60. Ms Tapsell directed a member of the public who raised the issue concerning a dangerous dog to Ch. Supt. Low

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.00 p.m. TUESDAY, 1 May 2007

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