

Assembly Hall, Lambeth Town Hall

PRESENT: CPCG BOARD: Anna Tapsell (Chairperson), Paul Andell, Gill Kenealy, Shane Collins, Jim Toohill (Ind. Membs), Doye Akinlade (Brixton Society), Ros Munday (Clapham Community Partnership), Wesley Stephenson (Your Story)
COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP: Brian Mantell (South London Synagogue), Wally Channon, Cathy Tayleure, Peggy Tyler (Clapham Town Neighbourhood Watch), Jim Fairweather (WIESA), David Hart, (Clapham Community Partnership), Stuart Horwood (Brixton Market Traders Federation), Lloyd Leon (Lambeth ICVs), Anna Long (Churches Together in Clapham), Most Rev. Dr Bancroft McCarthy, Phyllis Jackson (HMP Prison Brixton Independent Monitoring Group), Nick Mason (Lambeth Summer Projects), Hazel Saunders, Helen Longhurst (Victim Support Lambeth), Michael Somers (Kennington Sector Working Group), Abdul Sultan Virani (Lambeth Older Persons' Forum), David Tomlinson (Stockwell Park Neighbourhood Watch), Cathy Valentine (Angell Town TMO), Hazel Watson (Milkwood Road Residents Assoc.),
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS: Hope Barrett, Rod Brown, Habiba Compaore, Richard Dutton, Peter Harris, Lena James, David Prichard-Jones, Clare Moore, Cheryl Sealey, Fernando Senior, Jane Warwick
STATUTORY MEMBERSHIP: John Roberts MPA
LAMBETH COUNCIL Simon Harding, Adina Bozga, Chris D'Souza (Community Safety), Cllr. Rachel Heywood
METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE: Det. Supt. John Corrigan, Supt. Paul Wilson, Insp. Neil Paton, Sgt. Ronnie Whelan

GUESTS: VISITORS SIGNING IN: Dolly Adams, Helen Buckley (Lewisham CPCG), Sharon Facey, June Pilgrim-Ndure (Lambeth Women's Aid), John Frankland (Herne Hill SNP), Mandy Hines (Beacon Church), Cllr. Diana Morris, Manju Roy

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Kingsley Abrams, Ivelaw Bowman, Rowena Estwick, Ben McKendrick, Paul Reynolds, Ch. Supt. Sharon Rowe

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

- 1 The meeting was chaired by Paul Andell (Vice-Chair, CPCG)

Information from Board/Group Members

- 2 A briefing paper was tabled and is attached.

Minutes of the Meeting 5 February 2008

- 3 The minutes were accepted without amendment.

Matters Arising

- 4 Shane Collins reported that it had not been possible to establish a date for a mayoral hustings, around community safety, which was acceptable to all the candidates. [Minute 6, 05/02/08]

- 5 Jim Toohill reported that the meeting organised to discuss Safer Lambeth Partnership's Strategic Assessment had been cancelled by the Partnership. [Minute 79, 05/02/08]

Domestic Violence

- 6 The first part of the meeting was given over to a series of presentations relating to Domestic Violence (copies of which are attached).
- 7 Inspector Neil Paton set out the statistical background to Domestic Violence in Lambeth together with new policing initiatives in combating it.
- 8 Specifically, he gave detailed breakdowns of the of Domestic Violence, incidents of which had shown a 9 per cent decrease in the year to January 2008 whilst those classified as DV Crimes (currently roughly half) had shown a 19 per cent fall over the same period.
- 9 Victims were overwhelmingly female (84%) and in opposite gender relationships (same sex incidents accounted for just 3 per cent of the total). Repeat victimization was high – around a fifth of the total.
- 10 On the same rolling year basis, Arrest Rates (for those incidents classified as crimes) had risen from 51 to 64 per cent whilst sanction detection rates had risen from 34 to 42 per cent.
- 11 Inspector Paton felt that these improvements reflected better accounting, a more 'robust' approach to arrest, better supervision of officers and improved partnership working with other agencies. He finished his presentation with a range of measures which he felt would improve performance, including the charge to caution ratio.
- 12 Anna Tapsell (Chairperson, CPCG) gave a presentation of a research project into the use of information gathered at Domestic Violence incidents, by the police, on form 124D and its effectiveness in bringing perpetrators to justice. The project had been undertaken, for CPCG, using *pro bono* consultancy from PA Consulting, with research assistants funded by the Safer Lambeth Partnership.

- 13 Key learning from the study was:
- 13.1 Victimless prosecutions (one of the ambitions of the introduction of the Form 124D) remain rare.
- 13.2 Over the period 2002 to 2007, the classification rate of DV incidents as crimes has declined and whilst the Sanction Detection rate has risen, the proportion of those detections represented by Cautions has gone up. Absolute numbers of charges have gone down.
- 13.3 This may reflect unaligned targets for the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. The former have targets to drive up Sanction Detections, the latter to reduce unsuccessful prosecutions. End-to-end targets are needed.
- 13.4 Whilst the introduction of the 124D has had positive outcomes, both real and potential, there have been limitations, especially when viewed in regard to the potential for bringing victimless prosecutions.
- 13.5 There is considerable scope for improving information sharing between agencies.
- 14 A number of voluntary agencies gave presentations of the various forms of support they give to victims of domestic violence. They were led by an overview of the Lambeth Domestic Violence Forum, a coordinating group, by its Chair, Hazel Saunders (Borough Manager, Victim Support Lambeth). The DV Forum has a membership drawn from both the voluntary and statutory agencies. The services presented included:
- 14.1 The Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor who is based at the Gaia Centre and funded by Lambeth MPS. The Advisor works with victims of Domestic Violence to encourage them to report and to support them through the criminal justice system. Of 143 referrals from the post's inception in September 2006, 109 had been supported through the system including 4 cases of repeat victims.
- 14.2 The Lambeth Sanctuary Scheme (presented by Helen Longhurst of Victim Support Lambeth). This scheme provides practical security based support to enable victims of DV to feel safe in their homes (both Sanctuary rooms within homes and secure locks etc., to external doors and windows) as well as an ongoing support service to help victims make informed choices and changes in their lives.
- 14.3 Lambeth Women's Aid (presented by Project Manager June Pilgrim-Ndure and Sharon Tracy) which provides three services
- 14.3.1 A refuge which provides accommodation, advice and support for women (and their children) who have been subject to abuse and where they may stay for up to six months. During this time their immediate safety and support is addressed whilst they are helped in making key decisions around such issues as housing, finance, legal matters or employment.
- 14.3.2 An outreach service which supports women who are not in a refuge.
- 14.3.3 A Children's' Outreach project which helps children who have had to live in abusive households deal with the emotional and psychological distress and damage (which may be manifest through, for example, bed-wetting, depression, violent behavior, precocious sexual behaviour and so on).
- 14.4 The REACH project at St Thomas's Accident and Emergency Department (presented by Laura Stretch, REACH Manager). This project supports patients presenting to A&E with indications of Domestic Violence. Given the location of St Thomas's, the project deals with victims from Lambeth and beyond. Women suffering from domestic violence are also supported in St Thomas's Obstetrics Department – there is a propensity for DV incidents to be associated with pregnancy.
- 14.5 The interventions made by the REACH project, which can be in response to very serious injuries, are in short term – in the nature of an A&E Department – and generally consist of offering advice and signposting to other agencies.
- 14.6 The Gaia Project (presented by Jo Enright, LBL Domestic Violence Coordinator).
- 14.6.1 Analysis from the British Crime Survey demonstrates that victims of DV suffer, on average, 35 attacks and contact 11 agencies before they get help. On this basis, the Gaia Project is set up to be a one-stop shop.

- 14.6.2 It has twelve partner agencies – three public (Lambeth Council, Lambeth MPS and Lambeth Primary Care Trust), three private (solicitors) and six voluntary. Between them they offer a range of services, including legal advice, support through court proceedings, housing and so on.
- 14.6.3 Ms Enright's presentation demonstrated the build up in referrals since the project's inception in May 2006 – now running at 40 to 50 per month - together with a breakdown of their demographic (age, relationship with perpetrator, location and referral source) and two case studies to illustrate the work of the centre.
- 14.6.4 The Project was visited by the National Audit Office in September 2007 and subsequently cited (in the NAA report 'Reducing the Risk of Violent Crime') as an example of good practice in multi-agency working.
- 15 At this point the Chair, noting the time, suggested that if there were no pressing matters for presentation in the police report, the meeting would accept the tabled report and distribute the presentation with the minutes of the meeting. Supt John Corrigan (standing in for the Borough Commander) indicated that there were none, and the meeting agreed to the suggestion.
- 16 Rod Brown and others asked about young people and children, both in terms of the impact of witnessing Domestic Violence but also as victims themselves.
- 17 Members of the Panel explained that victims who were aged between 16 and 18 were not logged in the police systems as victims of domestic violence. The definition of DV used by the police and the CPS specifically referred to 'adults', meaning those over 18. Whilst children under 16 would be dealt with under the Child Protection procedures, those between 16 and 18 (who might even be married), were in a vacuum as far as support services were concerned. Refuge places were not able to accommodate them by licence and Social Services seemed reluctant to intervene.
- 18 As far as the younger children were concerned the Panel members emphasised the long-term effects of domestic violence upon children and that was why the police automatically referred all children within the household to Social Services whether they had been present at the scene of the reported incident or not.
- 19 More work needed to be done around the protocols as well as the inadequate information systems (Merlin) that existed between agencies and Social Services, who were often reluctant to take on cases that concerned victims whose original place of residence was not Lambeth.
- 20 Abdul Sultan Virani asked about so called 'honour killings' and how this was being dealt with by the police. Inspector Paton said that there was a special national unit set up to respond to such cases and that all police were now made aware of the issue and trained to respond to any information or incident reported to them. Members of the Panel explained their involvement in this area of growing concern.
- 21 Gill Kenealy reported that there was new money coming into the Youth Service, one for work with young men and the other for younger women. The idea was to train the trainers. Several members of the Panel and the audience referred to a lack of 'joined up working' by the agencies and the need to better coordinate the work on behalf of victims, especially as most of the existing services were provided by the third sector.
- 22 There were questions on the role of men, both as victims and perpetrators. Inspector Paton repeated the statistics on incidents and murders resulting from domestic violence which showed the great predominance of female victims and reminded the meeting that an average of two women a week was killed by domestic violence perpetrators. June Pilgrim and Jo Enright explained that referrals from male victims to their outreach projects and Gaia were always referred on to other support agencies.
- 23 On the question of mental health which was raised from the floor, the Panel agreed that a significant number of women and children with diagnosed mental health problems were victims of domestic violence and this was not always understood by the health service nor were the resources adequate to meet their needs. Additionally, research had shown that a significant proportion of young offenders had experienced domestic violence at home and the impact of this on their subsequent behaviour was not routinely taken into account.

- 24 Lloyd Leon expressed his admiration for the workers who had shared their experience with the meeting and his view that this was one of the most important meetings the CPCG had ever held.
- 25 Archbishop McCarthy said that we all needed to be more aware of what was happening to our neighbours and we needed to take individual responsibility for ensuring that it was no longer tolerated through our own inaction.
- 26 Jim Toohill commented on the fall in the Charge Rate, reported by the research project, and asked if the rate of convictions, relative to the number of incidents deemed crimes, had been sustained. He also asked if there was any intervention, as with drug or alcohol related crime, to which the police could direct offenders when issuing a Caution.
- 27 Inspector Paton said that whilst he did not have statistics to hand he did not feel that there had been a decline in conviction rate. He said that the indications were that there was low uptake of interventions aimed at changing offenders' behaviour but did wonder if there may be opportunities where Domestic Violence was associated with drug or alcohol abuse.
- 28 Anna Tapsell said that she longed for the day when men in this country what was being emulate what done by men in other countries, like Canada, where men were recognising that domestic violence was an issue primarily for them and were making open pledges to raise awareness amongst sons and male colleagues that domestic violence was no longer to be sidelined or ignored.
- 29 Cllr Diana Morris thanked the CPCG for this meeting and said that she was sorry not to be able to attend more often as the dates usually clashed with Planning Committee. However, she said that she would take back to her colleagues what had been said and she hoped some of the concerns about coordination, funding and failure to respond to the need of victims could be rectified.
- 30 The Chair thanked the Panel for their excellent presentations.
- 31.1 Why had the special meeting called by Trident been so poorly advertised locally when other boroughs had done so much better?
- 32 What were the police reasons for using the Dispersal Zone regulations to eject campaigners who were only feeding the hungry in Brixton Oval/Tate Gardens on the previous two Sundays?**
- 33 Superintendent Paul Wilson said that the local force had received very little notice of the Trident meeting but despite this there had been a rather better turnout than that for the Police Asset Management meeting that, despite considerable publicity, had attracted only 25 people.
- 34 In relation to the events at Brixton Oval/Tate Gardens he would ask colleagues from Brixton to give an account at the next meeting.**
- 35 Jim Toohill said that the (published) Safer Lambeth Partnership Executive's Minutes of November 2007 pointed to the need for a Partnership policy on 'Mosquito' devices. He asked whether such a policy had yet been approved by the Partnership and, if so, how it addressed the issue of effects of the device on young children and toddlers.**
- 36 John Roberts agreed to report back to a future meeting.**
- 37 A written question from David Tomlinson (Stockwell Park Residents' Association), relating to translation and interpretation costs, incurred by the local police, was noted.**

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6. 30 p.m. TUESDAY, 1 April 2008
Christ Church, Gipsy Hill/Highland Road SE19

[Note later start time]

Lambeth Community-Police Consultative Group
Unit 58 Euro link Business Centre, 49 Effra Road
London SW2 1BZ,
T: 020 7733 0878 E: admin@lambethcpcg.org.uk
F: 020 7274 7623 W: www.lambethcpcg.org.uk

Any Other Business

- 31 Gill Kenealy asked two questions of the Lambeth Police: