

**COMMUNITY-POLICE
CONSULTATIVE GROUP
for LAMBETH**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

5 JULY 2005

**LAMBETH ACCORD
336 BRIXTON ROAD SW9**

PRESENT: GROUP OFFICERS Lee Jasper
Chairperson; Paul Andell **Vice-
Chairperson;** Jim Toohill **Hon. Comptroller;**
Rev. Canon Ivelaw Bowman **AFFILIATED
MEMBERS** Nick Abengowe **Herne Hill
Forum;** Doye Akinlade, David Warner
Brixton Society; Wally Channon, Peggy
Tyler **Clapham Town N'hood Watch;** Gary
Dando **Cress Brock N'hood Watch;** Paul
Reynolds **Herne Hill Society;** Arulini
Velmurugu **Lambeth Towers and Lambeth
Road T&R Assoc.;** Abdul Sultan Virani
**Lambeth Pensioners Forum INDIVIDUAL
MEMBERS** Lena James; Richard Moore;
Fernando Senior; Anna Tapsell; Jane
Warwick **PERMANENT MEMBERS** Neil
Flanigan **Victim Support Lambeth;** Lloyd
Leon **Lambeth ICV;** Sue Jacobs **CPS;**
Marianna Tortell **Lambeth Crime
Prevention Trust;** Most Reverend Dr
Bancroft McCarthy **Independent Monitoring
Board;** John Roberts **MPA SECTOR
WORKING GROUPS** Michael Somers
Kennington; John Wainwright **Clapham
CO-OPTED MEMBERS** Shane Collins
LAMBETH COUNCIL Cllr. Bernard Gentry;
Cllr. Robert S. McConnell; Cllr. Peter
O'Connell; Cllr. Angie Meader; Nicole
Terrieux (Community Safety Team);
METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE Ch.
Supt. Martin Bridger; Supt. Stewart Low
(Kennington), Ch. Insp. Suzanne Wallace
(Community Partnership); Det. Insp. Dean
Haydon; PC Jack Wilson **SECRETARIAT**
Ben McKendrick

Apologies: Pauline Bower; Peter Clapton;
David Corderoy, Sheila Draper; David Hart;
Marie Hennelly; John Horrocks; Tessa Jowell
MP; Bushy Kelly; Dr Brian Mantell; Josephine
Metcalfe; Ros Munday; John Podmore
(Brixton Prison); Mehmda Mian Pritchard
(IPCC); Cllr. Darren Sanders; Ann Savage;
Insp. Tim Scott; Fernando Senior; Supt. Andy
Tarrant; David Tomlinson; David Viner;
George Tuson; Wesley Stephenson, John
Wainwright; Ch. Insp. Suzanne Wallace

Members of public/press were also present

Introduction

1. Lee Jasper reported the sad passing away of Dr Victor Brooks, a founder member of the Group, who he said had been firmly committed to bringing progressive relationships between the community and the police.

2. John Howard said that he was tremendously sad to hear the news about Victor and spoke of

him as man who mixed passion and intelligence with inquisitiveness. He added that Victor and Greta Brooks represented the heartbeat and pulse of the Group

3. Lloyd Leon recalled how Victor was one of the most determined people he had known whose aim was to improve relations between the community and the police, as he had demonstrated, for example, through his scrutiny of the police use of CS spray. Mr Leon said that it was a sad loss for those working for community togetherness.

4. Praising Victor's contribution to the work of the Group, Abdul Sultan Virani said that Victor's passionate concern for the community was an inspiration whose footsteps should be followed. Mr Virani expressed his heartfelt condolences to Greta Brooks, family and friends.

5. Gary Dando spoke for many when he said that Victor, a very kind gentleman, would be very sorely missed.

6. Lee Jasper said that Victor was a rare individual whose passion and commitment to a social reform agenda was evident in all his contributions to the Group. Mr Jasper informed the Group that the funeral of Victor Brooks had taken place in Scotland on 1 July and that on behalf of the Group condolences had been extended to Greta Brooks and family.

7. Mr Jasper said that members would be informed reported about a memorial service for Victor in Lambeth at a later date.

8. The Group held a one minute silence in memory of the late Dr Victor Brooks.

9. Group members agreed to approve the application submitted by Brixton Market Traders Federation to affiliate to the Group.

**Information from Group
Officers and Members**

10. Lee Jasper referred those present to the July briefing paper which had been tabled.

**Minutes of the Meeting 7 June
2005**

11. The Minutes of the Meeting 7 June 2005 were accepted without amendment.

**Matters Arising from the
Minutes 7 June 2005**

12. The Group had written to Martin Bridger, the Borough Commander, to congratulate him on his award from the Sikh community in Ealing [Minute 10, 07/06/05].

13. *Supt. David Zinzan was not present to report back on levels of crime in Tulse Hill that had been raised by Gary Dando.* [Minute 14, 07/06/05]

14. *Mr Jasper had still to discuss with Anna Tapsell the drafting of a letter to the CPS concerning the option of using victimless prosecutions for domestic violence offences in Lambeth. Mr Bridger said that detection rates for domestic violence was currently 56% although it could higher.* [Minute 17, 07/06/05]

15. Mr Howard retracted his offer to encourage people to report drug dealing in Vauxhall estates to the police if they did not have enough intelligence to go on. [Minute 28, 07/06/05]

16. *Lee Jasper asked for a report back following his recommendation that the police monitor any homophobic attacks around Clapham Common back.* [Minute 49, 07/06/05]

17. Mr Jasper thanked Lloyd Leon for his assistance in a meeting with the landlord of the

Angel public house, police and Council representatives. [Minute 61, 07/06/05]

18. In response Arulini Velmurugu's concerns about the lack of action in dealing with disability hate crime, ***Mr Jasper proposed that Ms Velmurugu and Gary Dando seek to work with John Roberts and others to form a working group to examine and focus activity around such crimes.*** [Minute 72, 07/06/05]

19. Mr Toohill said that he had written to the Council on behalf of the Group in support of Brixton Cycles whose rent the Council wanted to increase. [Minute 78, 07/06/05]

20. ***Mr Jasper said that the Group would continue to monitor the rollout of safer neighbourhoods (SNs), which every Lambeth ward would eventually acquire, but were still seeking information regarding SN panel membership.*** [Minute 44, 03/05/05]

21. ***Cllr. Bernard Gentry said that if the Council had not paid its contribution to the Smart Water initiative it would be a matter of concern and he would raise the issue with the Council.*** [Minute 61, 05/04/05]

Lambeth Police Report

22. Borough Commander Martin Bridger gave a PowerPoint presentation on the performance of Lambeth police over the past month, with comparable statistics to previous months/year.

23. Cllr. Peter O'Connell commended Mr Bridger's commitment to the rollout of SNs. However, he suggested that although the number of officers in Lambeth had risen by 100 to almost 1000 in five years, with additional personnel through SNs and partnership posts, the

community may need reassurance following the cut of 40 officers based at Cavendish Road, whose time limited funding had recently expired.

24. Mr Bridger said the 40 officers had never been part of the Lambeth's Resource Allocation Formula but had been assigned from the centre to support the borough's efforts in reducing street crime, an increase of which most of London was experiencing. However, Lambeth police were adjusting to the changing circumstances and were addressing the situation. Meanwhile, there was an indication that there would be more officers coming to Lambeth in the new future.

25. Paul Andell proposed that it would be useful to have an evaluation of the work of the 40 officers during the period and the actions they took to address street crime.

26. Lloyd Leon expressed the view that the number of parking tickets issued in Lambeth were far more extreme than the number of street crimes in the borough.

27. In relation to those involved in firearm offences, Mr Bridger said that the increasing youthfulness of those being arrested was a cause for worry. He therefore advocated a critical examination of the matter with a view to devising a holistic approach towards averting young people from becoming involved with gun criminality in sustainable way. Mr Bridger added that he was increasing his gun crime squad by seven officers.

28. Rev. Ivelaw Bowman brought to the Group's attention the recent publication of book called *Guns and Gangs*, which made reference to the Group and firearm activities in Lambeth.

29. ***Richard Moore asked if the police could provide a breakdown of firearm offences, including the discharge of guns or belief of guns used in crime.***

30. Anna Tapsell said that she could not understand why the detection rate for domestic violence was so low and asked for information concerning the number of perpetrators charged.

31. A member of the public raised the matter of a police stop which allegedly involved a strip search, in public, of a male who, it was also claimed, had been stopped by police 52 times since August 2004. He stated that he was also aware of other incidents in which young people had been similarly strip searched. In closing, he said that the individual concerned had been unlawfully searched, indecently exposed, sexually abused and assaulted, grossly humiliated and had his human rights violated. He further said that stop and search had deteriorated into a catalogue of racial discrimination, bad practice and human rights abuses.

32. In view of the seriousness of the allegation, Lee Jasper proposed that the Stop and Search Working Group look into the matter with a view to reporting back after the conclusion of an Independent Police Complaints Committee (IPCC) managed investigation. Furthermore, Mr Jasper asked that Mr Bridger call a Gold Group to look into the incident in order to get a full, frank and detailed response to what were extremely serious accusations.

33. In view of the IPCC's involvement, Mr Bridger said it would not be correct to comment on it. However, he did say that if officers were responsible for any kind of abhorrent behaviour they would receive what they fully deserved. ***Mr Bridger added***

that he would welcome the setting up of a Gold Group to discuss the matter.

34. Mr Bridger informed the Group that all his officers had been individually tasked with dealing with outstanding warrants for arrests in order.

35. In response to John Howard, Mr Bridger said that SO19 (firearms) officers were regularly employed in Lambeth although he did not have figures at hand. He further responded by saying that there had been no recent deaths in police custody to report.

36. Jim Toohill explained to John Howard that graphs for clear-up rates had been provided by the Group, having been gleaned from the MPS website in response to a point made by Kelly ben Maimon at the last meeting, in that they would be useful. It was therefore not remiss of the police for not providing accompanying detection rates for gun crime.

37. Mr Bridger referred Gary Dando to Insp. Dean Haydon for information regarding Neighbourhood Watch crime statistics. He also advised that Insp. Haydon would speak to Mr Dando about progress with the Victoria Abu Mensah murder investigation.

38. Mr Bridger expressed his disappointment on the occasion that Mr Dando was unable to gain access to Brixton Police Station and that he would ensure that building work refuse would not block the new disabled person's ramp further.

39. Doye Akinlade commented that the original complaint from the public regarding Brixton Police Station front office remained the same despite the refurbishment i.e. people still had to wait a long time to be seen.

40. In response to Mr Akinlade, Mr Bridger said that due to the sheer number of people attending Brixton Police Station on a daily basis it was unlikely that there would be any significant reduction in waiting time to be seen. And although he was unable to say how many staff were on duty at the front desk at any one time, Mr Bridger said that he believed it was more than one person.

41. Mr Jasper suggested that one the main issues was that if people were asked to wait a long time they may be disinclined to report a crime.

42. In relation to seating in the front office, Mr Bridger said that he was under the impression that there was seating available, but if not it was a matter that needed to be looked into.

Constitutional Issues

43. Lee Jasper advised that the agenda item "Constitutional Issues" was a priority for Group members only, although members of the public were welcome to be present during the proceedings.

44. Before proceeding with a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed constitutional changes, Jim Toohill apologised for the absence of Roger Bronkhurst, the Group's legal adviser, who unfortunately was in hospital.

45. First of all, Mr Toohill highlighted the changed context in which the Group currently worked, in terms of Government policy, CPCG's relationship with the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the emergence of the Lambeth Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).

46. In autumn of 2004, the Government had produced a White Paper entitled "Building Safer Communities", the spirit of which maintained that the community should hold those

responsible for policing and community safety to account. However, Mr Toohill said that while this proposition appeared to already reflect the Group's role, the document also did not appear to be enthusiastic about traditional CPCGs.

47. To highlight this point, Mr Toohill referred to the results of a survey of police authorities, whose satisfaction with various models of consultation rated CPCGs the least useful of seven alternatives, despite being the method most used. The second least satisfactory method was public meetings, which the Group regularly, but not exclusively, facilitated. Mr Toohill said that the Group therefore had to reflect on these views without abandoning its key roles.

48. Mr Toohill said that the MPA and MPS similarly used a diversity of vehicles for engaging Londoners in consultation on policing; locally, via CPCGs, CDRPs, Sector Working Groups, Safer Neighbourhoods and Independent Advisory Groups, and London-wide through such means as the Safer London Panel, 3rd Party and Public Attitude Surveys and hard to hear groups such as GLAD.

49. Consequently, whereas twenty years ago, when CPCGs were trailblazers, Mr Toohill said that presently there were a plethora of boards and committees engaged in tackling crime and community safety issues and with each other. Therefore, the Group needed to examine its own strengths and how it could best develop its contribution in this changed context

50. Mr Toohill said that the MPA's expectation of CPCGs was particularly in relation to becoming more involved with CDRPs, which, in terms of the broader issues related to crime, were concerned with youth

opportunities, education, housing and environmental matters amongst others. However, community and voluntary sector representation and membership of CDRPs was weak while there was a lack of accountability and general public awareness of the existence.

51. Speaking of the proposed new arrangement for the Group and its structure, Mr Toohill said that an elected board of trustees would consist of five individual members, i.e. anyone living, working or studying in Lambeth, four representatives from voluntary and community affiliates, and three from statutory agencies which included the police, local authority and probation. The members of the board, who would be directors of a limited company, would represent the breadth of the community and elect a chairperson and treasurer, and appoint a company secretary.

52. Mr Toohill said that the next steps for the Group would be for members to have the opportunity to examine the Memorandum and Articles, and the Rules and Regulations, of the proposed new company prior to the Group AGM on 26 July. At the AGM it would be proposed that once the minutes of the previous AGM in 2004 had been accepted alongside the Annual Report and Accounts, the Group would instruct the Group Officers to register as a limited company and postpone the remainder of business till October 2005.

53. At the October AGM, Mr Toohill said the current Group Officers would stand down as directors of a new company allowing for the election of board, which itself would be instructed to register as a charity.

54. Cllr. Bernard Gentry expressed his concerns that the new model proposed for the Group was not dissimilar to the

CDRP, which he said was an unrepresentative body that met in secret with minutes only made available through the use of the Freedom of Information Act. In terms of the Group, he said he wondered how it was going to attract the average person to join or attend meetings and how they would be made fully aware of what was going on.

55. Mr Jasper said that as a member of the CDRP he was all for the opening of the process by which minutes were made publicly available. However, the Group's new structure would offer soft accountability for the strategic targets that were publicly available from the various agencies around their performance and achievements.

56. Richard Moore proposed that members of the public should be able to contribute at the AGM on the proposed new model. The proposal was not seconded. Mr Moore also pointed out that any Memorandum and Articles should specifically exclude political alignment. Mr Toohill said that such would be made explicit, either in the Memorandum and Articles or the Rules and Regulations and that it was a condition of charity registration.

57. In response to Cllr. Angie Meader's concerns that the Group's business would be done behind closed doors and there would be no more public meetings, Jim Toohill clarified that this would not be the case and that regular public meetings would continue to be held and board meetings would be a matter of public record. He added that if the Group was dissatisfied with the board it could simply be voted out.

58. Neil Flanagan said the whilst he was supportive of the proposal, he wanted to be sure that the Group would be able to address the causes of crime, especially youth crime. Mr

Toohill responded that the changes were to enable CPCG to be 'fit for purpose' in order more effectively address whichever priorities it chose.

59. Anna Tapsell said that she was concerned that, in a context where elected councilors were generally being distanced from accountability in local government, the proposal was that officials of statutory agencies should sit on the proposed Board. Mr Toohill responded that Group Officers would reflect on her concerns.

60. Mr Howard raised his concerns about the membership elections at the 2004 AGM. Mr Toohill said that he was familiar with Mr Howard's concerns but was unable to respond fully in the heated exchange, which was terminated by the Chair.

61. Mr Jasper said that considering the remarkable contribution of Group members and individuals past and present, the Group should mark the end of the CPCG era in a fitting way. Group members agreed that the Group Officers should arrange an appropriate event for the AGM in October

Any Other Business

62. Richard Moore informed members that there would be a crime prevention stall at the Lambeth Country Show over the weekend of 16-17 July. Mr Moore expressed his gratitude for the work of Lambeth crime prevention officers. Jim Toohill notified members that the Group had agreed to share a stall with Victim Support at the Show and invited volunteers to man it.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**6.00 p.m. Tuesday
5 September 2005
Lambeth Accord
336 Brixton Road SW9**

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