

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

4.00pm 18 OCTOBER 2010

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Simson (Chairman); Barnett, Carden, Morgan (Opposition Spokesperson), Phillips and Watkins

Sussex Police: Chief Superintendent Bartlett, Sergeant Castleton

Communities of Interest: Councillor Mo Marsh, Bevendean LAT; Sylvia Howell, Bevendean LAT; Bill Gandey, Devendean LAT; Ted Harman, Stanmer and Coldean LAT (SCLAT); Chris El Shabba, Whitehawk LAT; Christina Summers, London Road LAT

Officers: Linda Beanlands, Head of Community Safety; Liz Woodley, Senior Solicitor and Penny Jennings, Democratic Services Officer

PART ONE

14. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

14a. Declaration of Substitutes

14.1 There were none.

14b. Declarations of Interest

14.2 There were none.

14c. Exclusion of Press and Public

14.3 In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("The Act"), the Community Safety Forum considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item of business on the grounds that it was likely in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as Defined in Section 100(1) of the Act).

14.4 **RESOLVED** – That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item on the agenda.

15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 15.1 It was noted that although John Stevens had given his apologies he wished it to be noted that he had been present at the previous meeting. In relation to Paragraph 11.4 of the minutes he wished it to be noted that he had expressed concern at the time it had taken for the emergency services to break into a flat which had been fitted with one of the new security doors. He had been assured that the new doors had been tested and that these could now be accessed within minutes if needed by the emergency services and Mears. Mr Stevens had raised other matters in relation to Item 19 on that day's agenda and it was noted that a separate written response would be provided in relation to those issues.
- 15.2 **RESOLVED** - That the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes as a correct record subject to the amendments set out above.

16. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

ASB Minimum Service Standards

- 16.1 The Chairman explained that a week or so ago the ASB Minimum service standards for victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour. Under this, organisations involved in dealing with anti-social behaviour committed to a set of standards which residents could rely on and victims and witnesses received named person to support them. Many of those present at this meeting had been able to be at the launch, the Chairman hoped that they had enjoyed it and were reassured about the high quality service that people would receive when they reported anti-social behaviour.

Family Intervention Project

- 16.2 The Family Intervention Project, which combines support and help for families in trouble alongside being clear when offending behaviour is not acceptable was currently achieving an 85% reduction in anti-social behaviour amongst those families, this was great news.

Training for Housing Staff

- 16.4 The Chairman explained that a training event had taken place in September for Housing Staff. The purpose of the training had been to help them understand all the different ways in which those who reported domestic violence would be supported and protected. Over 70 staff attended and the event had been a great success. It had illustrated the value of a good partnership approach to skill sharing amongst staff and helping vulnerable victims.

Collaborative Working : St James' Street Local Action Team

- 16.4 The Chairman explained that during August reports had been received that a particular car park off St. James Street was being used as a venue for drug dealing and a site for criminal damage, including to cars. Working with the Local Action Team, the neighbourhood police and communities against drugs team the Environment Improvement Team and Sussex Probation had painted the whole car park a brilliant white and an old attendants kiosk now looking remarkably like a police box in a 'Dr.

Who' style. Regular clean up days were continuing, flower planters were going in and there was little doubt that a real reduction in the unacceptable behaviour that was going on in that car park would be seen.

Response to Noise Problems

- 16.5 The Head of Community Safety and the Environment Improvement Team had been doing a lot of work to try and respond to the noise problems experienced in a number of places in the city caused by those walking along narrow residential streets as they went home late at night. This issue had been raised by members of the St. James Street LAT, by those within the North Laines LAT and others. The next LAT Chairs meeting on was to be held on 12th November and everyone was invited as there would be an important workshop session at that meeting with every intention of getting some new initiatives in place to deal with the problem.

Hate Crime Vigil

- 16.6 The Chairman stated that she would also like to invite those present to the Hate Crime Vigil which this year is being hosted by LGBT Switchboard. It would take place on Saturday 23rd October at 7.00pm at the Old Steine Fountain. The candle lit vigil allow those present to stand shoulder to shoulder with other supporters on what was to be the first International Day against Hate Crime.

White Nights 2010

- 16.7 The offices of the Partnership Community Safety Team at 162 North Street were to be used by the organisers of the White Nights event which would take place on Saturday 30th October. The balcony of the building would be used from 7.00pm every hour on the hour by representatives of different faith communities who would be singing their calls to prayer joined by some wonderful singers and performers who would truly represent the diversity of the city. It would be a wonderful event and all were urged to attend.
- 16.8 **RESOLVED** – That the content of the Chairman's Communications be noted.

17. COMMUNITY SAFETY ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

- 17.1 There were none.

18. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 18.1 There were none.

19. CRIME TRENDS AND PERFORMANCE IN BRIGHTON & HOVE : POSITION AT END AUGUST 2010

- 19.1 The Forum considered a report of the Head of Community Safety setting out crime trends in Brighton and Hove up to the end of August 2010.

- 19.2 Sergeant Castleton re-iterated his Total Police Recorded Crime comments made at the previous meeting that in consequence of new Home Office directives some of the targets previously imposed had been removed. However it was considered very important that trends continued to be reported in a meaningful way which provided a useful basis for comparison. At present the Police were continuing to work with their existing targets.

Total Recorded Crime

- 19.3 After the first five months of 2010/11 (to end of August) there was a reduction in overall crime of 4.8% compared to the same months of 2009/10 and this exceeds our 3% reduction target. This is a continuation of the long term downward trend experienced in the past ten years.

Violent Crime

- 19.4 The number of violent offences involving injury (including both serious and other injury) had reduced in the first five months of 2010/11 by 9% compared with the same months in 2009/10. On going work was continuing with partners in relation to an overarching alcohol strategy.

Sexual Offences

- 19.5 Sergeant Castleton stated that the figures for sexual offences continued to be a cause for concern. Recorded figures had peaked in July and it was considered that this figure was largely historical and reflected the fact that victims were encouraged to come report such crimes.

Motor Vehicle and Cycle Theft

- 19.6 The number of vehicle thefts had decreased by 9%. This decrease applied both to thefts of and thefts from motor vehicles. There had been a number of city wide initiatives including initiatives during the summer months to address the problem of stolen mopeds.
- 19.7 The recorded number of cycle thefts had increased by 5.5% during the first five months of 2010, with the number of thefts during June/July being particularly high with over 120 thefts each month. A number of initiatives had taken place at key locations across the city, involving registration of cycles on immobilise.com, giving out crime prevention advice, post coding cycles and leaving crime prevention tips on cycles left unattended in cycle theft hot spots.

Domestic Violence

- 19.8 The number of reported domestic violence incidents continued to increase and overall figures were 3% higher for 2010/11 than for the previous year. Whilst seeking to decrease the incidence of domestic violence, on going work was taking place to increase reporting. The Police were responding promptly and other processes around the handling of such cases, as a consequence more offences were being detected and charged than had previously been the case. The

percentage of finalized court cases with successful outcomes remained at over 70%.

Hate Incidents and Crimes

- 19.9 The number of racist and religiously motivated incidents recorded continued to decline, although the number recorded through the multi-agency Racist Incident Report , recently superseded by a generic form, remained constant. The number of recorded LGBT motivated hate crimes and incidents had continued to fall. It was anticipated however that the generic Hate Incident Report Form which was being widely promoted across agencies working in the city would encourage further reporting.
- 19.10 Gail Gray, RISE welcomed the increased reporting of crimes of domestic violence as traditionally such crimes had been under reported.
- 19.11 Councillor Morgan welcomed the on-going good news in terms of the reductions in overall crime figures but in view of projected and on going service pressures and removal of a number of targets he considered that it was important for figures to continue to be recorded in such fashion that it would enable like to be compared with like down future years. The Chairman, Councillor Simson was in agreement that it was important for some bench marks to remain in place to enable comparisons to be made in future years.
- 19.12 Mr Tonks, Older People's Council referred to the need to ensure that adequate measures were in place to safeguard vulnerable adults. He referred in particular to targeted initiatives which were already in place e.g., operation Cranberry in relation to increased domestic violence in the run up to Christmas and during World Cup football matches.
- 19.13 Councillor Marsh queried whether there were more frequent initiatives in relation to other major football tournaments bearing in mind that the World cup only occurred every four years. Chief Superintendent Bartlett explained that similar initiatives also took place during other major events, such as the European Cup .
- 19.14 Councillor Phillips enquired regarding whether there were any specific targeted initiatives aimed at the student population across the city, especially in relation to sexual violence for example. Sergeant Castleton stated that a Central Strategy Group was responsible for assessing such issues including those in relation to domestic violence and in implementing targeted campaigns as appropriate. The Head of Community Safety explained that in response to the findings of the Scrutiny Panel dealing with sexual violence, there had been a Police led approach to putting strategies in place citywide to improve support for victims, deal with perpetrators and examine the relationship between alcohol and peaks in offences at certain time(s) in the year. This work was being carried forward in addition to work systems already in place.
- 19.15 Councillor Phillips referred to the model which was already in place in Edinburgh and it was noted that the Police would be happy to receive details regarding that scheme.

19.16 **RESOLVED** - That the content of the report be noted.

20. MANAGEMENT OF DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE CITY

- 20.1 Sergeant Bartlett referred to the principles used in policing demonstrations in the city with particular reference to the recent “Smash Edo” demonstration which had taken place on 10 October 2010. Whilst recognising that the right to demonstrate was a necessary part of democracy it could also be disruptive to lives of those living and working in the city who were seeking to go about their day to day business and could give rise to incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- 20.2 A balance needed to be struck between the rights of demonstrators and the local populace. The Police were under a duty to protect all sections of the public including those taking part in any demonstration. EDO was carrying on a lawful business and was entitled to do so ,notwithstanding that some people had strong views in relation to that business, and there was an onus on the Police to seek to prevent crime and disorder.
- 20.3 Councillor Marsh spoke both in her capacity as a member of the Local LAT and as a Ward Councillor commending the Police for the level of co-ordination which had taken place on the day to ensure that local residents were aware of precisely what was going on and were in consequence able to go about their normal daily lives with a minimum of disruption.
- 20.4 Mr Harman, SCLAT, referred to the fact that Police had been brought into the area from across Sussex and expressed concern that areas of the city could be left un-policed when large numbers of officers were deployed to deal with any large demonstration. He also expressed concern that the burden of such costs would fall on local council tax payers. Chief Superintendent Bartlett explained that no area of the city was left un-policed in consequence of any demonstration as all leave was withdrawn in advance of such events. Costs were kept down to the lowest level possible, although the precise cost of policing the recent demonstration was not yet known.
- 20.5 Mr. Tonks, Older People’s Council referred to the counter demonstration which had taken place over a bank holiday weekend earlier in the year had been attended by individuals with acknowledged racist views. These individuals had been escorted from the station along a pre-determined route which had kept them separated from the opposing demonstration. Mr Tonks wanted to know whether it was possible from banning such demonstrators from entering the city.
- 20.6 Chief Superintendent Bartlett explained that the circumstances under which demonstrations could be prevented were heavily proscribed, for instance repeated racist chanting and that the demonstration in Brighton had not reached such levels.
- 20.7 Mr. Gandey Moulsecoombe and Bevendean LAT stated that a number of students had been uncertain regarding areas of the locality affected by the recent EDO demonstrations, but as a result of the proactive approach by the Police information had been shared effectively, this highlighted how situations could be contained when the Police and local residents worked together.

20.8 Councillor Marsh stated that it was rumoured that a further demonstration was due to take place in the near future. Chief Superintendent Bartlett stated that a de-brief regarding the latest demonstration had yet to take place to ensure that any “lessons learnt” could be applied to future events. Generally however, the Police were very satisfied with the manner in which the event had been policed.

20.9 **RESOLVED** - That the contents of the report be noted.

21. SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE: RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

21.1 The Forum considered a report of the Head of Community Safety in relation to the scrutiny panel which had been set up by the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee following a referral from full council to support victims of sexual violence. The report setting out the Panel’s findings and recommendations was appended.

21.2 The Head of Community Safety explained that purpose of the report was to inform the Forum of the progress that had been made in meeting the recommendations and that further updates would be brought to future meetings of the Forum.

21.3 The agreed terms of reference were set out and it was explained that the report had identified four recommendations in relation to putting in place joint strategic arrangements across the Partnership which were integrated with those for domestic violence. Those recommendations would be put into place from 1 November when the lead Commissioner for Community Safety would come into post. The Commissioner would further develop the joint commissioning processes already in place for sexual violence, informed by the outcome of the Intelligent Commissioning Pilot on domestic violence.

21.4 The Panel had also made a number of recommendations in relation to the development and funding of support and other services and in relation to building the capacity of local independent support services and establishing networks and partnership support structures between statutory and third sector service providers in order to better develop strategic approaches and services which met local need. The Head of Community Safety explained how these recommendations would be carried forward. She went on to delineate remaining recommendations how in turn they would be carried forward.

21.5 Councillor Watkins had Chaired the scrutiny panel stated that work of the Panel and the accompanying reports were comprehensive and that domestic violence had been a thread which had run through the whole process. The evidence gathered had confirmed that the situation was as had long been suspected. This represented a major on-going and very important piece of work, it was important that Members took ownership of this too and the fact that the report was destined for the November meeting of Cabinet and ultimately for full Council was seen as integral to that. It was important that progress was reported back to the Forum regularly.

- 21.6 Gail Gray, RISE, stated that a programme that they had developed and delivered in schools for five years no longer had funding and it was therefore very important to develop what was already in place in rolling support forward across the city.
- 21.7 The Head of Community Safety confirmed that regular updates would be provided to the Forum.
- 21.8 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the progress described in detail in the body of the report is noted. As recommended the report will in due course be taken to Cabinet and the Local Strategic Partnership.
- (2) The Forum also notes that a further report will be brought to its meeting next year, which brings together the work to deal with sexual and domestic violence within the wider policy framework of dealing with “ Violence Against Women and Girls.”, this is continuing to be developed nationally. The authority has been invited to submit the outcome of its Commissioning Pilot on domestic violence as an example of good practice within that national framework.

22. INTELLIGENT COMMISSIONING PILOTS:PROGRESS

- 22.1 The Head of Community Safety gave an oral presentation in relation to Intelligent Commissioning. She explained that in order to streamline and protect key services in the current economic climate local authorities needed to assess how they would carry services forward. Within Brighton & Hove an intelligent commissioning approach was being taken forward in concert with partnership organisations in order to better meet the services needed within the available resources. Three areas fell within community safety and would form the subject of pilots:
- Drug abuse (the number of drug related deaths annually in the city was very high);
 - Domestic violence;
 - Alcohol
- 22.2 These areas were addressed by a number of a different agencies across the city and it was intended (and recognised as being necessary) that the current overarching structures and partnership approach needed to be built upon further over coming years. In the case of alcohol in particular, issues of good management were key, there was a need to control the sale of alcohol, without detracting from the city’s vibrancy. In order to ensure that effective structures were in place a re-mapping exercise of the city’s services had commenced in order to enable detailed analysis to take place. The PCT was also actively involved in this exercise and once it had been completed “gaps” in existing provision could be identified
- 22.3 Ted Harman, SCLAT, referred to the fact that notwithstanding the number of alcohol related incidents which occurred across the city, alcohol licences continued to be granted. The Chairman, Councillor Simson responded by stating that cross-party the Council had lobbied central government directly, setting out its concerns regarding the presumption towards the granting of alcohol licences as set out in the Licensing Act 2003 which effectively limited the powers of local authorities. However, Panels of the Licensing Committee were rigorous and consistent in their decision making had set up

a Cumulative Impact Area (CIA) in the city centre and sought to encourage best practice in the responsible management of the sale of alcohol. It was hoped that lobbying to seek to prevent the sale of cheap alcohol at below cost price would be successful.

- 22.4 Councillor Morgan enquired whether the Chief Executive had identified any other local authorities who had adopted an intelligent commissioning approach and whether any assessment could be made as to how/ whether it would be appropriate to adopt their approach in Brighton & Hove. The Head of Community Safety stated that models used in Westminster and Suffolk had been looked at but that the three areas of work identified would be subjected to scrutiny and any recommendations would not be adopted without the support of scrutiny members. A holistic city wide inter disciplinary approach was necessary, as clearly alcohol/ drug use could have implications in terms of various types of abuse including domestic violence and child protection issues.
- 22.5 Gail Gray, RISE, stated that it was very important for service users to be able to outline the outcomes that they wanted for themselves
- 22.5 Councillor Morgan stated that whilst not opposed to the approach outlined he considered it was very important that Members were involved at the service design stage, he was not aware that members had been involved in the process to date.
- 22.6 The Head of Community Safety confirmed that members would be involved in designing services, however that point had not yet been reached.
- 22.7 **RESOLVED** - That the content of the report be noted.

23. POLICING IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

- 23.1 Chief Superintendent Bartlett gave an oral presentation and referred to the key points set out in the Government consultation document "Policing in the Twenty First Century" which would form the basis of new legislation.
- 23.2 Chief Superintendent Bartlett explained that it was proposed that by 2012 Police Authorities would be replaced by a single elected individual in each area. In the case of Brighton & Hove it was envisaged this would result in one individual having responsibilities Sussex wide. Potentially, that individual would have wider community safety and criminal justice remit and would be responsible for representing the views of local people and was likely to be elected on that mandate. Some practical barriers remained to be addressed by the legislation and a response was awaited from government regarding how these issues could be overcome.
- 23.3 There would be a greater emphasis on getting more officers into an operational role and top down targets were to be abolished. Locally however it was recognised as being very important to record crime figures in such a way to ensure that it was possible to establish year on year whether crime figures were improving or not. The principles behind the policing pledge were important in that they sought to provide a greater degree of local accountability and to improve outcomes whilst streamlining and reducing bureaucracy.

- 23.4 A National Crime Agency would be set up which would bring together a lot of areas such as control of contraband and immigration control which already existed, this had broadly been welcomed as it brought together a number of strands of police work.
- 23.5 Councillor Morgan expressed concern that one individual could be responsible for an area covering up to three counties. This could encompass very different demographic areas and he was surprised that the government was pursuing this course. The Chairman Councillor Simson explained that the responsible minister had attended the recent policing conference and had set out the government's rationale for the course proposed.
- 23.6 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted.
24. **EAST SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 JULY 2010**
- 24.1 **RESOLVED** - That the contents of the minutes be noted.
25. **EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2010**
- 25.1 **RESOLVED** - That the contents of the minutes be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.10pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of