

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

4.00pm 6 OCTOBER 2014

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor J Kitcat (Chair); Simson (Opposition Spokesperson), Daniel (Opposition Spokesperson), Barnett, Carden, Mac Cafferty, Robins and Wakefield

Sussex Police: Chief Superintendent: Nev Kemp and Inspector Gareth Davies

Statutory Services: Mark Matthews (ESFRS)

Communities of Interest: Bill Gandy (Bevendean LAT); Sylvie Howell (Bevendean LAT); Ray Metcalfe (Moulsecoomb LAT); Nichols De Conde (Moulsecoomb LAT); John McPhillips (Turner LAT); Mark Green (Brighton & Hove Mediation Service) and Charlie Gibbs (Victim Support).

Officers: Linda Beanlands (Head of Community Safety); Peter Castleton (Community Safety Manager); Simon Court (Senior Lawyer); and Ross Keatley (Acting Democratic Services Manager).

PART ONE

15 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

15a Declaration of Substitutes

15.1 There were none.

15b Declarations of Interest

15.2 Councillor Carden declared an interest as he was a Member of the Fire Authority.

15c Exclusion of the Press and Public

15.3 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 an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I of the Act).

15.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public are not excluded from the meeting.

16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

16.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Community Safety Forum meeting held on 9 June 2014 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

17 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

17.1 The Chair gave the following communications:

“A particular welcome to the new Chair (Mahir Choudhary) and Vice Chair (Hanan Mansi) of the Racial Harassment Forum, to Dr. Yagoub who has so successfully chaired the Forum for some years – and to all those who have joined us for the first time to talk to our agenda item and discussion about how we keeping our communities safe.

Linked to that particular issue, we have given you some information about an event which is taking place this coming Sunday, hosted by Jo Berry, the Director of Building Bridges for Peace and supported by the Old Market organisation. While the event is to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Brighton Bombing, its wider aim is to help us all understand how we can prevent violence and find alternative ways of dealing with conflict. It is an important event and if you would like to attend – please let Linda know and she will help make the necessary arrangements.

Many of you will have already received your invitation to this event which is taking place on 23rd October. Copies of that invitation are also laid round – and there is still time to book onto the event. Community Resilience is about people helping us to keep you, your families and communities safe during bad weather and we would very much like to work in partnership with you and local action teams to prepare for those eventualities. Please do come if you can spare the time.

Pavilion Gardens is of course part of our most important heritage in the city and a major tourist attraction which is visited by millions of people each year. As a result, it is a challenge to deal with the effects of so many people using the gardens – and from time to time, its public space is the site of anti-social behaviour and crime. We now have a project group of officers who are leading on implementing a number of actions which we have no doubt will make the gardens feel and be safer. For example, our community safety Projects Team has a ‘starting the day’ initiative, which is encouraging some of the street drinkers to work alongside officers to litter pick and clean up the gardens. In return – breakfast is provided and the opportunity to engage with outreach workers and access services.

Helped by our Project Team, the George Street Traders Association is working with BrightonThinkBig’ (arts organisation) and community members to transform brick walls of a dingy alleyway that runs between George Street and St. Andrews Church Yard. The mural will depict historic Hove. The alleyway used to be blocked with bins and attract street drinkers and generally be not a nice place. Apart from being a great community event, the aim is to increase feelings of safety in this well used alleyway and to provide a piece of art for everyone to enjoy.

Our Projects Team has been asked to host a meeting in Brighton of the national 'Design Out Crime Association' in November. Delegates are expected to come from a number of police forces and community safety teams and from the Jill Dando institute. This may present an opportunity to contribute to coming up with some ideas about how we can deal with some of the issues that are experienced in the grounds of the Royal Pavilion. We will make sure that we get details of the event out to everyone."

18 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

18.1 There were no petitions, written questions or deputations.

19 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

19.1 There were no petitions, written questions, letters or notices of motion from Members.

20 'YOU SAID, WE DID'

20.1 The information provided under Chairs Communications was noted.

21 REPORT FROM THE POLICE & CRIME PANEL

21.1 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the minutes be noted.

22 REPORT FROM EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

22.1 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the minutes be noted.

23 CRIME TRENDS AND PERFORMANCE IN BRIGHTON & HOVE: POSITION UP TO AUGUST 2014

23.1 The Forum considered a report of the Head of Community Safety describing recent activities and progress relating to priority areas in Brighton & Hove Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011-14. Graphs showing monthly crime data from April 2010 to April 2014 were provided which set recent data in the context of both longer term trends and seasonal crime cycles.

23.2 In response to questions raised by Councillor Simson the Head of Community Safety explained that the under recording of sexual crimes and domestic abuse was not used as a fall-back position to justify increases in trends; however, Officers were certain the level of reporting was still not a true reflection of the extent of the incidents within the city. The Chief Superintendent, Nev Kemp, added that there was nothing to suggest there was a greater level of sexual crimes or domestic abuse.

23.3 In response to further questions the Head of Community Safety explained that benchmarking could only take place where other authorities undertook the same level of recording and considered the same crime types. It was confirmed that in relation to domestic violence there was no national comparative data.

- 23.4 In response to questions raised by Councillor Daniel about violence against women and girls, exploitation and modern slavery it was explained that the partnership was already set up, and the strategic arrangements were in place. Both the Chief Executive at the Council and the Chief Superintendent maintained the strategic overview of this. There were also Sussex-wide arrangements in place, and there was ongoing work to raise awareness within the workforce. There were Police operation and safeguarding arrangements in place and Children's Services led in this and reported through the Safeguarding Board. The Chair also added that a review would be coming to a future meeting of the Forum. The Chief Superintendent also added that the force had looked at the work of the Thames Valley Police; the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub had been set up to create much more joined up working.
- 23.5 Councillor Daniel also asked about the increase in hate crimes and the Chief Superintendent explained that there had been an increase in anti-semitic and Islamophobic incidents such as graffiti on mosques and synagogues. There had been no violent crimes, but the graffiti had been fully investigated and taken very seriously. Most of these incidents had taken place in Hove.
- 23.6 In response to a question from Mr Conde from the Moulsecoomb LAT it was confirmed that some of the youth offenders in the city had been referred to the YMCA programmes, and there were regular conversation about continuing this work.
- 23.7 In response to Councillor Wakefield the Head of Community Safety explained that senior representatives from schools sat on the Safeguarding Board, and training programmes had been delivered in relation to child exploitation. The focus was shifting to creating an overall action plan, and there was close work with Children's Services to raise awareness and encourage young people to come forward.
- 23.8 In response to concerns about the length of time calls were taking to be answered on the 111 line the Chief Superintendent agreed to look into the matter further.
- 28.9 In response to queries about the sections of the community that the reduction in crime was coming from it was explained that the reduction was in *areas* rather than sections of the community. It was added that most of the seasonal offences were concentrated around the city centre and linked to the night time economy.
- 28.10 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee note the report.

24 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

- 24.1 The Forum considered a report of the Head of Community Safety in relation to the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The report sought to outline the new powers in the act and the local arrangements to ensure effective implementation.
- 24.2 In response to Councillor Wakefield it was explained that closure powers did not include shops that sold alcohol to underage children, but there were existing powers within licensing laws that could be used in these instances.

- 24.3 In response to Councillor Simson it was explained that the community remedy was recorded through the Police intelligence system, and they would be able to check this information if there were further issues reported.
- 24.4 Councillor Daniel asked how the community remedy would be joined up between agencies and it was explained that where individuals claimed they had reported this three times it would be followed up and checked – if it then hit the level for trigger it would be tasked to an Officer to make recommendations. The purpose was not to create an automatic trigger, but to ensure there was a process to give a case review. In response to a further question it was clarified vexatious or malicious use of this was not envisaged and had not been an issue during the pilot.
- 24.5 Councillor Robins had specific queries in relation to dispersal powers and it was explained that there would need to be consultation before the powers were used, but there was no prerequisite to use them. It was currently expected that the authority to use the powers would be delegated to the rank of Superintendent who was always on duty or on call. It was clarified that the dispersal power came under the Police elements of the legislation and the public aspects fell within the remit of the local authority. There would be two monthly meetings with partners to discuss how the new powers could be used, and the aim was to create consistency within the city.
- 24.6 Councillor Mac Cafferty noted that he welcomed these new powers, but felt that it was important resident's expectation of what they could achieved be properly managed.
- 24.7 **RESOLVED** – that the Forum acknowledge the content of the report and the local arrangements.

25 COMMUNITY SAFETY & COHESION

Racial Harassment Forum

- 25.1 The Forum received a presentation from the Chair and Vice Chair of the Racial Harassment Form (RHF). The presentation covered the history of the Forum; the work it undertook; its aims and objectives; areas for improvement and how other bodies and statutory authorities could get involved.
- 25.2 The Chair asked if there were agencies that could be encouraged to engage with the Forum, and it was explained that the Forum received anecdotal evidence from front line workers such as taxi drivers; takeaway workers; school and NHS staff, but this did not necessarily reflect the reported incidents. The Chair agreed that the issues around colleagues in schools and the NHS could be followed up by the Council.
- 25.3 Mr Francis Tonks welcomed the work of the RHF and suggested that an event similar to Notting Hill Carnival could be launched to celebrate racial diversity within the city.
- 25.4 Councillor Barnett stated that the ethnic minority groups in Hangleton did excellent work, and in response to her queries it was explained that the RHF had many community organisations as members and hoped to hold a community event to deliver specific training. The Vice-Chair added that she was committed to causes in relation to domestic violence, and part of this training would be to raise awareness.

- 25.5 Councillor Daniel congratulated the work of RHF, and hoped to invite them to community events in her Ward. She also noted that the work all community champions in the city was 'outstanding'.
- 25.6 In response to query the Head of Community Safety explained that the RHT were volunteers, and the community champions were working closely with the LATs to allow them to be more representative of their neighbourhoods.
- 25.7 Councillor Simson stated that it was important that more work be undertaken to increase involvement from younger people; particularly from under-represented groups such as the Bangladeshi Community.

Brighton & Hove Refugee and Migrant Forum

- 25.8 The Forum received a presentation from the Brighton & Hove Refugee and Migrant Forum. The presentation outlined the background to the forum and some examples of the work undertaken.
- 25.9 **RESOLVED** – That the presentations be noted.

26 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 26.1 The Forum noted the future meeting dates:
- 2 March 2015.

The meeting concluded at 5.55pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of