

WALTHAM FOREST POLICE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE GROUP

25TH January 2006

GEORGE MITCHELL SCHOOL
FARMER ROAD LONDON E10 5DN

Representing

Chair – WFPCCG

Vice-Chair – WFPCCG

Honorary Treasurer - WFPCCG

Members

Cann Hall Area Residents Association (CHARA)

Older Persons Forum

South Chingford Community Council

Cllr B. Wheatley

Cllr S.A. Poulsen

Borough Commander - Metropolitan Police Service

Deputy Borough Commander

Cllr. M. Davis

Jennette Arnold (MPA Link Member)

Brian Wilks

Margaret Wilks

D. Francis

P. Millington

Cllr. M. Jovcic

Cllr. R. Sweden

Robin Tuddenham

Sasha White

W.F Custody Visitors Panel (Chair)

S. V. Moorthy

A. Khundkar

Asian Community Action

W.F. Victim Support

South Chingford Community Council

Gurdwara Sikh Sangat London East

W.F. Older Persons Forum

Independent

Independent

Name

Steve Williams

Graham Sinclair

M. A. Malik

Philip Dundon

Gwen Williams

Edward. Gold

Waltham LBWF

Waltham LBWF

Chief Supt. Mark Benbow

Supt. Christopher Lemon

Waltham LBWF

MPA

Forest Homes

Forest Homes

Independent

WF ICVP

Waltham LBWF

Waltham LBWF

Head of Community Safety

Independent

Pam Millington

W.F. Tamil Sangam.

Bengali International

Khaliq Mian

Brian Whyte

E. Gold

Harpal Singh Sehmbi

Gwen Williams

Jane Welfare-Peck

D. Francis

Also Present:

Alastair Currie; Tanya Gomez, Miranda Grell, M.Y Qureshi and Mario Demetriou.

Residents Present:

There were approximately 46 residents at the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Chief Inspector Ian Larnder, Professor Louise Larnder, Emma Gracey, John Lawal, Mrs Blee, Miss Rashid, Councillor Barry Smith, Chief Inspector Andrew Hunt; Chris Jackson, Maiphy Richards, Anita Carter, Alastair Duncan, Gulam Thakor and Councillor Lesley Finlayson.

We noted the appointment of the following substitute member as follows:

Councillor M. Davis substitute for Councillor L. Finlayson

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Ordinary meetings held on 28th September 2005 and 24th November were agreed.

4. NOMINATION

The Group approved the nomination of Sandra DaCosta*

***NB:** A copy of this application is available for inspection by Members of the Group at the Town Hall, Forest Road E17 4JF

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Group received feedback from Jane Brueseke on the recent Community Engagement Seminar that she attended on behalf of the Group. The main points of the discussion may be summarised as follows:

It was noted that the conference looked at how:

1. you achieve respect;
2. You develop the trust of young people;
3. One tailors services to local issues;
4. You bend Council services to meet residents needs;

Members noted that a copy of the full report would be circulated to Members. The Chair requested that once Members had, had time to read the report they could feedback back their comments either through the Group or their local community council with regard to how well they felt that the Council and it's partner agencies are doing to address these issues.

The item was closed at this point.

6. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

The Group received a presentation from the Councils Anti-Social Behaviour Co-Ordinator on the work being undertaken in Waltham Forest regarding ASB. The main points arising from the presentation are summarised as follows:

- Question:** What is the Yellow Card referred to in the presentation?
- Answer:** The final warning for a licensed premises and off-licences. It forms part of the process of referring them to a licensing panel.
- Comment:** Residents in my constituency did not receive proper notice about the beat sweeps and some residents had left items out in their gardens for collection but they had not been picked up.
- Response:** Ward Councillors are advised in advance about beat sweeps but the events are not widely publicised as the Council also wishes to undertake enforcement activity.
- Comment:** There are a number of letting agencies and estate agents boards in the Cann Hall area. It would be good to know what is being done to:
1. Pursue these agencies about their boards; and
 2. Address the careless delivery of junk mail sticking out of letterboxes advertising that a property is empty.
- Comment:** There has been concern at the level of dog excrement being deposited on local streets and the increasing numbers of muscular dogs on our streets.
- Response:** Environmental Services have now appointed five enforcement officers to deal with issues such as dog fouling. In addition, work has been undertaken with the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals (RSPCA) on developing a response to the inappropriate use of dogs by their owners.
- Question:** What can be done about Go-Peds being used on the pavements?
- Answer:** Please report any such incident so that resources can be used intelligently to address this situation.
- Comment:** Resident's feel that issues like this are not being addressed and this promotes the fear of crime amongst residents. Also the apparent lack of any robust police response encourages the perpetrators to continue.
- Response:** The Street Wardens together with the Safer Neighbourhood Teams can provide a dedicated resource to reduce the incidence of this kind of behaviour and provide consistent reassurance that will make the community feel safe.
- Comment:** What hours will the Safer Neighbourhood Teams work?
- Response:** The Teams will be roistered at those times where there is the greatest need E.g. between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. when people are coming home from school and work.
- Question:** How many Safer Neighbourhood Wards will there be from that date?
- Answer:** With the launch of these four Safer Neighbourhoods Wards, Waltham Forest will have 13 out of the intended 20 in place
- Question:** Young people need somewhere in their local neighbourhood to go where they can feel safe. To "Chill Out" and not somewhere to be involved in any structured activities.
- Answer:** The Partnership has funded "Chill Out" areas at the Paradox Centre.

- Question:** What is the point of contact for the Safer Neighbourhood Teams?
- Answer:** At first they will be based at the local police stations although in the longer term they will move out into community based facilities throughout the Borough.
- Comment:** The Borough needs more uniformed police officers not just the Police Community Support officers (PCSO).
- Response:** The PCSO's do a valuable job and they contribute to the overall reduction of crime and the fear of crime within Waltham Forest. They form a vital link between residents and the police service.
- Comment:** It would seem a good idea if residents with concerns about anti-social behaviour contacted the relevant ASB case worker.
- Response:** It is only from continued and persistent activity that these issues can be addressed. Therefore, residents need to draw to our attention such situation where people are acting in an anti-social manner. The police and its partner agencies will continue to develop strategies and mechanism to deal with such challenges but they can only succeed with the help of local people.
- Comment;** It would be helpful that if those present tonight could speak to the officers after the meeting about any particular concerns that they have.
- Question:** What is being done to reduce the sale of alcohol and cigarettes to children?
- Answer:** Our teams target the known perpetrators and anyone caught breaching the law will be subject to prosecution.
- Question:** Are all those shops in breach of the law prosecuted?
- Answer:** All cases are pursued where there is evidence strong enough to obtain a prosecution.
- Comment:** Local residents feel that PCSO's play a critical role in getting in depth intelligence that would not be accessible to their colleagues in the Safer neighbourhood teams.
- Comment:** There is concern at the incidence of pavement cycling in the Leyton area.
- Response:** This is an issue that the Safer Neighbourhood Teams will be ideally placed to address.
- Comment:** The Safer Neighbourhood Teams will be able to deal with this in a way not possible previously. It would therefore make sense to have a report in say six months time on the progress being made to reduce the incidence of pavement cycling.
- Question:** There are often children climbing onto the roof of the Beaumont Public House. However when this matter is reported to the MPS Call Centre residents get a very unhelpful response.
- Answer:** The Call Centre is there to identify the nature of the call and to get officers to respond accordingly.
- Comment:** The Safer Neighbourhood Team in Cann Hall has been shown to be very effective.

Comment: It would be useful to have the contact details of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

The item was closed at this point.

7. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Group agreed that as Professor Larnder was unable to attend due to ill health that this presentation on the implications of Freedom of Information Act as it relates to the Borough of Waltham Forest should be deferred to a future meeting.

8. POLICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

In accordance with agreed procedures the Group received and noted a presentation from the police representatives highlighting performance matters in general terms as they relate to the borough of Waltham Forest.

The main points of the discussion may be summarised as follows:

Question: How do the police deal with violent persons living with mental disability?

Answer: The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) uses Tasers (electronic stun gun). This is in line with the legal and moral obligations on police to restrain such violent or armed individuals using only that force which is reasonable, necessary and proportionate, whilst protecting members of the public and ensuring officer safety.

Question: With regard to test purchases the report makes reference to the utilisation of young people in any operation. What training and protection do they receive?

Answer: In the past these children were primarily members or friends of the investigating officers families, police cadets or young offenders undertaking this work as part of their reparation programme.

Question: Has Waltham Forest received funding to support the Beat Sweeps?

Answer: Funding has not been received to support such activity on a borough wide basis.

Question: What is being done to prevent any increase in the incidence of violent crime?

Answer: Across London crime is up by 2% for all crime types. However, the British Crime Survey indicates that there is an increase of 0.3% for serious crimes. Last week a review was conducted as to where to allocate the resources currently available to the Borough Command. Whilst from 1st April there will be more resources available to the Borough. In addition, the police no longer work on their own to reduce crime they are working in partnership.

Question: Whilst it is true to say that Cann Hall has a good Safer Neighbourhood Team there are still concerns regarding disorder issues as a result of out of hours purchases from off licences.

Answer: The response to this should form part of the existing test purchase programme.

Comment: Whilst I am impressed by the enthusiasm of the Safer Neighbourhood teams to address issues of concern for local residents. They need our support as they cannot do this alone but in partnership with residents, business and appropriate agencies.

Comment: It is not right that there is such a disparity across London with regard to the funding received by various groups?

Response:

Whilst the differences in terms of funding needs to be addressed. The funding for every group funding is based upon the programme of works it undertakes. Within Waltham Forest the Group's future will be to adopt a more strategic work programme. Groups also depend greatly on the time and good will of volunteers and the MPA is working on a model to compensate them for their time and effort.

Question: Why is it that there is such a disparity in the number of black people stopped by the police? They represent 17.3% of the population yet make up 30%-50% of all those actually stopped?

Answer: All such police activity is driven by intelligence received. However, a more detailed response will be provided at the next meeting regarding this matter.

It also needs to be recognised that within Waltham Forest the divergent communities overall live in harmony with one another.

Comment: There has been a lot of coverage in the local media regarding areas of the Borough such as the Beaumont which has had a negative impact on the way residents perceive the area in which they live.

Question: What funding has been made available to redevelop the physical layout of local stations?

Answer: The vision for the MPS is that over the next 5-10 years there will be a move towards patrol based centres like Uplands and centralised custody facilities. Whilst front counter services will be provided from purpose built facilities as in Walthamstow Market.

Question: The Waltham and Lea Bridge Community Council received a very positive presentation recently on the results from Operation StrongBox. However, it appears that StrongBox came to an end because the court could not handle the increase in cases being processed through them?

Answer: The programme was stopped because the resources were diverted elsewhere. The Courts have the capacity to handle such increases.

Question: It seems to residents that when a car is stopped suddenly four separate police vehicles arrive?

Answer: The response is based upon the health and safety risks to officers and usually requires two officers per every person being stopped.

Question: It would be good to see figures on the number of persons found to be carrying knives when stopped

Answer: The figures for those persons found to be carrying knives are included within the offensive weapons category. However, if you would like to speak with me afterwards we can look at how to address this

Question: Is it correct that the Borough Commander will be moving his office to Leytonstone? If so then it is a move to be commended.

- Answer:** Yes it is proposed that the Borough Commander will be moving his office to Leytonstone
- Question:** In this area one does not seem to hear much about drug related crime.
- Answer:** The Safer Neighbourhood Teams will look at how to prevent, detect such crimes and provide reassurance to residents.
The Safety Net Partnership is putting forward a request for funding to support activity to close crack houses.
- Question:** There is a need to tackle knife related crime.
- Answer:** Waltham Forest has been very proactive in addressing such crimes.
- Question:** There is a misconception that there is little or no crime in the north of the Borough. Resources need to be allocated to address crime north of the A406.
- Answer:** Every ward will get a Safer Neighbourhood Team and residents need to report crimes so that resources can be deployed based upon available intelligence.
- Question:** It is concerning to note that Walthamstow Police Station has been closed for refurbishment.
- Answer:** The station has not been closed but does not have during the refurbishment space for a public reception area.
- Question:** Will the Market Office then be acting as the front desk for Walthamstow?
- Answer:** Yes.
- Question:** We were advised that response times to 999 calls would be based on locally agreed criteria?
- Answer:** The charter time of 12 minutes still applies and in future 999 calls will be handled through a more efficient system. However, the MPS are open to as to how it should deliver its 999 service. However, that suggestion has to be based realistic expectations.
- Question:** What percentage of 999 calls is responded too within the charter time?
- Answer:** At present a 999 call is responded to within 12 minutes 76% of the time.
- Question:** Residents north of the A406 are not happy with the current level of response and some feel that they have been discouraged in reporting crimes.
- Answer:** It is unethical to discourage any citizen wishing to report a crime. The MPS locally are looking at ways to encourage reporting including the need to improve the physical access to stations.

The item was closed at this point.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the following revised schedule of dates for Group meetings up until 29th March 2006

- 15th March 2006 - Chingford Foundation School E4

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There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 10:00 p m.