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WALTHAM FOREST POLICE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE GROUP

25th September 2006

Lloyd Park Theatre, Walthamstow, E17 5EH

Representing

Name

Chair – WFPCCG

Steve Williams

Vice-Chair – WFPCCG

Cllr. Graham Sinclair JP

Honorary Treasurer - WFPCCG

M. A. Malik

Members

Older Persons Forum

Gwen Williams

Latchkey Club

Jenny Richardson

South Chingford Community Council

Mr Edward Gold

WF Custody Visitors

Pam Millington

Waltham LBWF

Cllr B. Wheatley

Borough Commander - Metropolitan Police Service

Chief Supt. Mark Benbow

Forest Homes

Brian Wilks

Forest Homes

Brian Wilks

Metropolitan Police Service

Chief Inspector Ian Larnder

Waltham LBWF – Cabinet Member Community Safety

Cllr. A. Akram

Friends of Lloyd Park

John Lawal

Waltham LBWF

Cllr. M. Jovcic

Waltham LBWF

Cllr. R. Sweden

Also Present:

PC 56 Ali Katlin, PC50 Nicola Grieve, Peter Spiro, PC Jay Govinsen, Sylvia Poulsen and Adrian Stannard.

Residents Present:

There were approximately 20 residents at the meeting.

28. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jennette Arnold, Barry Smith, Maiphy Richards, Anita Carter, Alastair Duncan, Councillor E. Phillips, Councillor F. Yunis, Robin Tuddenham, A.K. Mian, Eileen Walters, A. Khundkar, N. A. Butt, S. V. Moorthy, B. Whyte, Dr. A.Z.

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Hussein, Harpal Singh Sehmbi, Akthar Butt, Sabha Akthar, Phillip Dundon, M.Y. Qureshi, Barbara Allsop, Anita Carter and Jane Welfare-Peck and Gulam Thakor.

29. MINUTES

The Group approved the minutes of the meetings held on 12th July 2006.

30. POLICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

In accordance with agreed procedures the Group received 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: What category does bag snatching fall into?

Answer: Theft person.

Question: Given the number of uniformed police personnel deployed onto the Borough's Streets I'm surprised that such crimes are still happening?

Answer: It is opportunist theft.

Question: Is the refurbishment at Chingford Custody Suite finished?

Answer: The facility should re-open on 6th October until then detainees are being held at Barkingside. However, there is a proven need to open the proposed facility at Hainault Road (Minute 23 12th July 2006 refers).

Question: The owner of a shop in Palmers ton Road had his premises broken into at 08:30 one morning yet it took the police 135 minutes to respond?

Response If the police are advised that a suspect is still on the premises they will respond within 12 minutes otherwise they will attend the scene within the time scale that you describe.

Question: A resident in High street Ward was burgled and he had two police car arrive in response to his call why?

Answer: We have finite responses and we have prioritised those on the residential properties.

Comment: The Crime Reduction Partnership is responding to an increase in the incidence of the theft of satellite navigation kit; mobile phones and disabled badges.

Comment: I understand that there are now secure holders for disabled badges.

Comment: It would help if more cars had trackers fitted.

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Question: Would it not help if the badges had the Badge Holders car registration on them?

Answer: The badge relates to the person not the vehicle. However, each badge has a unique number and this number should keep safe and the Badge Holder should refer to it if the badge is stolen.

Question: Has consideration either been given to limiting the identity number to the car?

Answer: Given the difficulty when changing your car to would be prohibitive and costly.

Comment: All Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Street Wardens have details of all stolen blue badges.

Question: Could badges not be specific to use within the borough in which they are issued? Alternatively badges could be tagged electronically

Answer: Those ideas can be investigated.

Comment: The incidence of gun and knife crime has fallen.

Response: There has been a successful operation against gun and knife crime.

Comment: The majority of knives used are kitchen knives and crimes are often committed by using such legal knives. Therefore, there is much work still to be done to address this crime.

Comment: Guns and knives are dangerous but a speeding car can be just as lethal.

Question: If we have knives where should we take them for disposal?

Answer: Outside of specific operations it is not always easy to dispose of such items.

Question: Homophobic crime has been reduced.

Answer: The reported incidence of this crime has been affected by introduction of over 20 Third Party Reporting Sites.

Question: When will the first Stop and Search Group take place?

Answer: 19th October

Question: What is the current detection rate?

Answer: Sanctioned detections are down by 18.9%.

Question: What is a sanctioned detection?

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Answer: A sanctioned detection is recorded where at least one person responsible for a crime that has been reported to the police is either charged with the offence, cautioned, reprimanded, finally warned, given a penalty notice, or has the offence taken into consideration by a court while being sentenced for another offence. The sanctioned detection rate is seen as a cornerstone of increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system.

Comment: Her Majesty Inspectorate of Constabulary have reported that they are pleased with the progress being made by the Borough against the agreed Performance Indicators

Question: What is the public perception of the service they receive at the front counter in local police stations?

Answer: 82% see the front counter as welcoming; 95% felt that they were treated with respect; and 85% said they got the help that they needed. Plus through the use of an effective triage system we will continue to improve the service they receive.

Question: Are there any other reasons for the overall reduction in the incidence of crime?

Answer: There have been several arrests of known persistent offenders responsible for a high percentage of crime locally.

Question: What are your main areas of weakness?

Answer: The need for better seating in the reception areas of local police stations and improved access to private areas where the public can report crimes.

Comment: It would be helpful if the Market Office kept the information that they have on display up to date as publicising events or campaigns that have been and gone puts over the wrong image.

Question: The police services in Wales make use of CCTV footage to identify and track down perpetrators could that happen here too?

Answer: This will require a response from the Crime Reduction Partnership and will be investigated.

Question: We would like to see more robust enforcement of existing legislation against perpetrators.

Answer: The Partnership is currently reviewing its enforcement measures.

The item was closed at this point.

31. COUNTER TERRORISM – COMMUNITY TOGETHER

The Group will receive an update on Counter Terrorism issues (Inc. Feedback since the events of 10th August 2006) as it relates to the Borough of Waltham Forest.

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Counter-Terrorism. Members noted that the threat of terrorism continues to be an unfortunate reality in the 21st century. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has long supported national efforts to counter terrorism and has built up much experience and expertise. Based on the use of the National Intelligence Model (NIM), the National Strategic Assessment shows that the nature of the terrorist threat is changing, with radical groups from abroad being prepared to mount suicide attacks and inflict massive casualties. We will support the national counter-terrorism aims through:

- ° Prevention
- ° Pursuit
- ° Protection
- ° Preparedness

The MPS is committed to preserving the diversity of the local community and protecting the rights and freedoms of all citizens. The MPS will continue to take the necessary steps to safeguard the community, both through local activity and intelligence gathering and through support of other security services. They will continue to work with other local agencies to develop plans to counter the threat of terrorism.

The following questions and comments reflect the discussion on this issue.

Question: Is there still a threat?

Answer: It is still a real and serious one. However, the MPS have foiled 3 Terror Plans for London.

Comment: We would wish to commend the MPS on their response to this situation. However, would it be feasible in future to speak with the leaders of the faith communities in the first instance?

Question: Given the nature of international terrorism it is not possible to do that if a serious situation is to be averted. However, trusted community leaders will of course be consulted.

Comment: The Partnership should be commended for its prompt and positive response.

Comment: The Borough Commander and the Portfolio Lead Member should be thanked for the prompt way in which they responded to a situation and handled the post arrest situation so well. Their actions greatly eased the situation and the positive response of all partners under pinned what they were doing in a most effective way. The Leader of the Council; Borough Commander Portfolio Lead Member and Deputy Borough Commander got it right because they had an effective network in place.

Question: What happens next?

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Answer: The Partnership are looking at a long term strategy as this is an issue for our society to address of isolated persons whose only common denominator is the world wide web

Comment: The vast majority of residents are behind the Partnership who in term as looking to reach out to younger residents (Male and female) and asked them how they wish to be engaged. There is a need to create an effective mechanism to engage our residents we are doing a good job but we could do better.

Comment: As agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair at all meetings of this community engagement group and Safety Net Counter Terrorism will feature as a Standing Item on the Agenda.

The item was closed at this point.

32. SAFETY NET

In accordance with agreed procedures the Group received a presentation from the Police Representatives highlighting performance matters in general terms as they relate to the borough of Waltham Forest. The Group noted that the Safety Net Partnership operates as the key strategic forum to deliver crime, disorder and drugs reduction for local people who live, work and play in Waltham Forest. This is its mission, and its reason for existence. It has engaged key partners in the statutory, private and voluntary sectors to achieve this outcome; but it is recognised that, even if all organisations work effectively together, this task cannot and should not be delivered alone.

Extensive consultation with local people, through the surveys conducted by MORI and the Association of London Government, indicate that crime and the fear of crime is the single thing which has the most negative impact upon people's quality of life in Waltham Forest, and is the thing people most want to see improve.

The partners within Safety Net have responded to this by increasing investment year on year in crime reduction and community safety. The Partnership now has additional police numbers, more street wardens, and greater investment in youth crime diversion for children as young as eight years old.

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

Comment: The WF PCCG is to be reconstituted as a Community Safety Board (CSB) and assume those functions currently vested in the Board of local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership - Safety Net. This new body will therefore hold Safety Net to account on behalf of the community.

Comment: It is good that the Partnership is using various mechanisms to interact with residents and address their concerns

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Comment: Safety Net is about driving down the fear of crime and making people fear better and safer. Anti-social Behaviour will be addressed through intelligence received from the community and Partners will respond to reduce the incidence of such an insidious crime that can blight the lives of so many.

Comment: Residents wish to see greater numbers of uniformed officers on the streets to provide reassurance.

Response: The Partnership has finite resources to address residents concerns and these are used in such a way to show the perpetrators that they mean business.

Comment: More needs to be done to engage younger residents.

The item was closed at this point.

33. SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Group received an update on recent Partnership activity and the following questions reflect the discussion on this issue.

Comment: The MPS needs to show that it is doing more to address the concerns of residents.

Response: It is difficult for the partnership to engage youth in an effective and sustained manner. However, the safer neighbourhood teams are working with communities to build bridges.

Comment: It would be good if the partnership could identify the tensions locally, this would give people the confidence to report crimes and develop a virtuous cycle

Comment: The Friends of Lloyds Park have excellent relations with the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and are working to address local concerns.

Question: Will the Safer Neighbourhood Teams have their own web sites

Answer: No plans as yet but there are links from the main MPS with each teams contact information.

The item was closed at this point.

34. CHRIS LEMON

The Group was saddened to note that Chris Lemon would be retiring shortly. Members joined the Chair in affirming their genuine sadness at the departure of an officer who had shown his willingness to support the idea of establishing a genuine and lasting partnership with the local communities.

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35. FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the following revised schedule of dates for Group meetings up until 28th March 2007

- 23rd November, 2006
- 18th January, 2007; and
- 28th March, 2007

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