

WALTHAM FOREST COMMUNITY SAFETY BOARD
INAUGURAL PUBLIC MEETING
19TH SEPTEMBER 2007
THE SCORE, OLIVER ROAD, LEYTON

Present

Name	Representing
Mark Benbow	Metropolitan Police Service - Borough Commander WalthamForest
Darren Dovey	London Fire Service
Mary Pilgrim	Probation Service
Alastair McCorkindale	LBWF Community Safety
Ayo Awoyeugt	CPS Crown Prosecution Service
Mike Cave	WALB Community Council
Abid Hussain	Walthamstow West Community Council
Jane Brueseke	Leytonstone Community Council
Kevin Wyatt - Lown	N Chingford Community Council
Steve Williams	Leyton and Whipps Cross Community Council
Neil Collins Voluntary Action WF	Community Group Representative
Laurie Treloar WF Carers Association	Community Group Representative
Vacant	Community Group Representative
Vacant	Community Group Representative
Chris Casey	Victim Support Group
Afzal Malik	Race and Equality Group
Alan Carlton	Disability Group Representative
Teresa Sharpe	ELOP / LGBT Lesbian Gay Bi and Transgender
Faisal Raja	Faith Forum
Vacant	Gender Group Representative
Vacant	Youth Group Representative
Edith Poulsen	Elderly Group Representative
Afzal Akram	Community Safety Lead Councillor

Richard Sweden	Councillor – Labour
Liz Phillips	Councillor –Lib Dem
Graham Sinclair	Councillor - Conservative

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from

Peter Jaggs	South Chingford and Highams Park Community Council
Michael Pollidari	WF Chamber of Commerce
Huw Richards	HM Court Service
Robin Tuddenham	Head of Community Safety
Chris Horton	British Transport Police
Jennette Arnold	Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) Representative
John Robson	Crown Prosecution Service
Ian Mohammed	WF Carers Association

Members of the Public

Shah Ahmed, Colsum Akanjee, E. Brownbill, Agasrair Currig, Sandra Dacosta, Frances Dunsmore, Roger Desouches, G O Goddard, E. Gold, Greg Hale, Sue Ho, Graham Hodgkiss, Elma Houston, Munir Iqbal, John Lawal, Anna, Morell, N. Petrou, A. Petrou, Sylvia Poulsen, M Y Quereshi, M.A. Raja, Bill Ravenscroft, Gerry Richardson, Abdul Shakour, R Swingler, Gulhum Thakor, Brian Wilks, Margaret Wilks, Gwen Williams.

Others in attendance

Supt Adrian Hutchinson, C/Insp Gary Buttercase, PCJune Saunders (All Waltham Forest Police), David J Knight (Administrator), Neil Murphy and Matthew Smith (LB Waltham Forest staff).

- 1 **Welcome and Introductions** Mr Benbow welcomed all those present and made a short presentation on the history of the former PCCG, the necessity for moving forward and the evolution of the new Community Safety Board (CSB). He confirmed that there was a shift in emphasis of purely being a consultative group with greater emphasis being accorded to partnership working and engagement with the public through WF CSB and any sub groups. He explained that options for change had been presented to the

former PCCG and they had approved the proposed new structure for the WF CSB.

- 2. Election of Officers** It had been proposed to hold elections for the posts of Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer at the meeting. However after some discussion on this matter Members present felt that the elections should be postponed until issues relating to membership of the CSB had been resolved.

Accordingly it was agreed that the elections be deferred until our next meeting, and that this meeting be chaired by Graham Sinclair the interim Chair elected by the former PCCG.

- 3. Borough Commander's Report** Mr Benbow reported that across London from April to July 2007 total crime fell by 5.8% when compared to same period last year. This must be tempered by the fact that gun enabled crime increased by 22.3% although Trident gun crime declined slightly.

The matter of youth violence – especially involving guns, gangs and knives is becoming a multi-agency priority, and new effort must be focussed on this.

Safer Transport teams have been introduced across 21 outer-London boroughs with officers travelling on public transport.

A Quality Call back scheme is being used - where callers are contacted after initial calls to get more accurate feedback on what it feels like to use the services of the Metropolitan Police and to identify points of good practice

In local terms the borough has been set targets for ten areas with an 8.9% overall reduction level expected. The following figures show that for some individual crimes reduction is achieving or exceeding the targets set

Personal Robbery

Reduction Target of -15%.

Currently we are achieving a -21.8% reduction.

Residential Burglary –

Reduction target of -7%

Currently we are achieving -10.8%

However these must be judged against a 7% increase in the last performance year.

Additionally the following was reported.

- **Criminal Damage** + 2.4% (increase)
- **Theft person (10% reduction Target)** – 13.5%
(decrease)
- **Gun Enabled Crime** + 10.3% (increase)
- **Common Assault** – 3.2% (decrease)
- **Theft of MV** (A reduction target of 11%) – 6.2%
(decrease)

In the area of specific achievements Mr Benbow reported that in May two Leyton youths were jailed for more than 17 years for rape, robbery and assault offences committed at Walthamstow Marshes in October 06.

Operation Blunt, which ran from 7th to the 27th of May resulted in 70 arrests for crime related offences.

Also during the summer months

- Up to 18 transport PCSOs were launched on the borough on the 26th of April
- Two bogus builders who took £37,000 from a 78-yr-old man were jailed for eight and six-years
- Grove Green Safer Neighbourhood Team closed a large cannabis factory. Eight large bags of cannabis were seized along with 300 cannabis plants,

- Up to 280 children from across the borough took part in team building activities at Stubbers Activity Centre in Upminster.
- Sky Sansom was jailed for life on for repeatedly raping a 19-yr-old woman in E17 in November 2006. He was jailed for a further 8 years after admitting robbery and possession of a firearm in an investigation led by JC Sapphire.

Arising from his report Members asked the following questions of Mr Benbow.

Question Michael Cave	Is the remit of PCSOs to be expanded to allow powers of arrest?
Response C/Supt Mark Benbow	The MPS wants to ensure that this does not happen, as these Officers have a specific role within the community which could be compromised by any change in their remit.
Questions Cllr Phillips	Can you tell me what levels of reduction have been achieved in vehicle crime in Leytonstone, and was the petition asking for Leytonstone Police station ignored as the station is now to close?
Response C/Supt Mark Benbow	I can only give you figures that relate to the whole borough for car crime there was a 12% reduction in thefts of cars and a 15 % reduction in the theft from cars over the borough. The petition was not ignored but a decision had to be taken about closure as the building was out of date and in poor condition. The new site at Waltham House will afford better accommodation and will be open longer hours for the public.
Comment A Hussain	We need to develop a strategy to deter sensationalist reporting in the local press as recent headlines have been damaging to the borough image.

Response C/Supt Mark Benbow	I do have a column in the Walthamstow Guardian and they do not try to edit that, but the press is free to print what it feels fit.
Comment Steve Williams	The safer Neighbourhood Teams are running short handed in some areas, can this be addressed?
Response C/Supt Mark Benbow	It is true that numbers are down in some areas, but the selection process is rigorous and turnover has been high and thus it has been difficult to keep numbers up. However the teams are working very well and are a success.
Question Jane Brueseke	Could the Chief Superintendent come to the next Leytonstone Community council to talk through the closure of Leytonstone Police station and explain the accommodation strategy being pursued?
Response C/Supt Mark Benbow	I do not attend every Community Council but I believe I am available to come to this to explain the closure etc.
Question Roger Desouches	We seem to suffer from a high turn over of Inspectors in North Chingford. Can you guarantee that the next appointee will stay a reasonable length of time – say 3 years.
Response C/Supt Mark Benbow	I cannot guarantee that, but I have agreed with Superintendent Hutchinson that the new appointees will stay for an 18 month minimum. It must be realised however that Officers will move on to develop their career prospects. You cannot hold somebody back because they are doing an excellent job. Insp Jane Connors has recently been promoted to C/Insp and we are retaining her on borough

4. **Borough Criminal Justice Group Report (BCJG)**

Chief Superintendent Benbow reported, as Chair of the BCJG, that it meets on a monthly basis and is composed of representatives

from all the criminal justice service providers, many of whom are also represented on this board also.

He explained that it had eight work streams designed to improve the execution of justice in the Borough and that these were

- **Domestic Violence Courts** – specialist courts introduced locally to deal with an increasing problem.
- **Director’s Guide Quick Practice** – an attempt to reduce bureaucracy in the Criminal Justice system
- **Integrated Prosecution Teams** – the introduction of CPS personnel in Police Stations
- **Persistent Young Offenders** – the introduction of strict time limits to deal with persistent young offenders
- **Enforcement** - speedy enforcement of penalties on offenders who ignore court orders etc
- **CJSSS – Criminal Justice Speedy Simple Summary** – basically getting cases to court as quickly as possible.
- **Community Penalty Breach**
- **Community Engagement**

5. **SafetyNet Report**

Alastair McCorkindale reported, on behalf of Robin Tuddenham the Council’s Lead Officer responsible for Community Safety, on the work being undertaken by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) – SafetyNet.

He explained that SafetyNet currently had five ongoing work – streams (set out below) and asked that the CSB indicate what information it should receive at its meetings.

- Anti Social Behaviour
- Drug Action
- Violent Crime
- Property Crime
- Youth Crime

He stressed that partnership working was integral to the work of SafetyNet and that far improved results were achieved when a partnership approach was undertaken.

As an example of this he cited the work being undertaken to reduce drug related crime. In the past drug users who stole to

finance their habit were caught and punished accordingly, but often returned to re-offend as the root of the problem had not been addressed.

Currently, offending drug users are encouraged to enter programmes to break their drug dependency and thus break the cycle. This initiative involves input from the MPS, the Probation Service, and the Primary Care Trust. This has led to both falling levels of drug related theft and a rising number of people being involved in drug rehabilitation.

On this matter the question of treatment for alcoholics was raised, as this was felt to be a wider problem. It was explained that this initiative was funded solely for drug users and funds could not be diverted for other dependencies, although a number of alternative treatment programmes were known to exist.

6. Public Questions

The following questions and comments were raised by the public attendees

Comment B Wilks	It is good to see a representative of the HM Court Service is a member of the CSB, if not present tonight, perhaps they will be able to answer questions regarding sentencing of criminals at future meetings.
Question G Williams	Comment has been made tonight about problems caused by alcohol. Can we address the matter of street drinkers in Hainault road?
Response Alastair McCorkindale	I will report this to the SafetyNet Anti - Social Behaviour team and see what can be done.
Question Alan Carlton	What initiatives are being undertaken to deal with disability hate crime, as this is a growing problem?
Response C/Insp Gary Buttercase	Locally officers are having awareness raised on this matter and there is ongoing signing training for safer neighbourhood Officers to build up confidence in reporting amongst the deaf community. Issues relating to hate crime generally are a SafetyNet priority and there is a partnership

	commitment to deal with them.
Question Afzal Malik	Will the CSB be receiving reports on hate crime including levels of reporting and prosecution?
Response Alastair McCorkindale	This can be provided.
Question Graham Hodgkiss	Is alcohol a greater or lesser causal factor in crime than drugs are?
Response Alastair McCorkindale	We cannot really say whether or not this is true.

7. **Date of Next Meeting** It was noted that our next meeting would be held on Wednesday 21st November 2007 at Waltham Forest Town Hall, Forest Road E17 4JF