

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

4.00PM – 26 FEBRUARY 2007

HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Bodfish (Deputy Chair in the chair); Councillors Barnett, Mrs Drake, Lepper, Morgan, Oxley, G Theobald, Watkins, Wrighton

Sussex Police Authority: Dr Sue Iles-Jonas JP

Sussex Police: Divisional Commander Kevin Moore, Inspector Bill Whitehead, Inspector Paul Smith

Communities of Interest: Bob Cristofoli, Brighton & Hove Mediation Service; Ray Blackwood, Older People's Council; David Standing, Rachel Brett and Taz Fletcher, Hove YMCA; John Stevens, Area Housing Panels

Officers: Judith Macho, Linda Beanlands, Ruth Condon, Eric Page, Simon Court, John Peerless, Estelle Woodcock, Nara Miranda

Apologies: Councillor Bodfish (absent on Sussex Police Authority business)

PART ONE

ACTION

32 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

32A Declarations of Substitutes

32.1	<u>Councillor</u>	<u>For Councillor</u>
	Morgan	Turton

32B Declarations of Interest

32.2 There were none.

32C Exclusion of Press and Public

32.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were

present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100A(3) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 32.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any items on the agenda.

33 MINUTES

- 33.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair.

34 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 34.1 There were no communications.

35 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 35.1 Mr Richard Scott asked whether Sussex Police Authority could review the Sussex Police Disability Equality Scheme, which he considered to be full of aspiration but lacking concrete information, and whether they could ensure that it appeared on the Police website. Dr Iles-Jonas agreed to discuss the matter with her colleague Mrs Ann Swain, who held the responsibility for disability matters on the Authority.

36 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW – POSITION AT END DECEMBER 2006

- 36.1 The Forum considered a report of the Research and Performance Monitoring Officer giving statistical information on crime trends and progress against targets relating to the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy, 2005-08 (see minute book). The officer's presentation was followed by a question and answer session about the statistics.
- 36.2 To a question about the drop in domestic burglary and the rise in handbag snatching, the Divisional Commander stated that Magistrates were responding to this by giving custodial sentences for bag snatching. The Divisional Commander informed the Forum that, following the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003, more police were deployed on the streets at night, which had encouraged more reporting of violent offences. The Divisional Commander advised that the higher figures for racist incidents might be due to increased confidence in reporting and to improvements in recording procedures. Anti Social Behaviour Orders had been imposed in cases of racial harassment. He added that improved recording of LGBT crimes would be introduced with the new police recording system.
- 36.3 The Research and Performance Monitoring Officer explained that the BCS Comparator statistics aim to reflect crime against households and residents. They do not include crime types such as fraud and,

forgery, business crime, non-domestic burglary or shoplifting.

- 36.4 It was suggested that racist incidents involving East European workers be monitored and that the Forum receive more information on this.
- 36.5 John Stevens asked the Forum to note that assault could be mental as well as physical and the psychological effects could be long-lasting for families as well as victims. He asked for a definition of "vulnerable" people in the context of crime statistics and was advised that police data recorded whether victims were elderly but not whether they were disabled.
- 36.6 The Forum then received a more detailed report from the Head of Community Safety on Domestic Violence. The figure for Brighton & Hove has been consistently high for 2 years at 3,500 a year, or 10 a day, with a higher prevalence in neighbourhood renewal areas. The key agencies are doing a good job, with a decrease in repeat crimes. The Chair reported that additional funding had been agreed by Council to support the Safe As Houses Domestic Violence Project and to spread their best practice and support domestic violence work across the city.

37 DIVISIONAL POLICING PLAN

- 37.1 The Divisional Commander made a presentation on the draft Divisional Policing Plan (slides attached). The three key local priorities are: dealing with issues surrounding alcohol abuse and misuse and its links to violent crime; tackling drug dealing and abuse, thereby having a positive impact on acquisitive crime; resolving issues around anti social behaviour with particular focus on youth.
- 37.2 The Divisional Commander invited the Forum's comments. Councillor Barnett was concerned about drug dealing. Mr Moore invited her to contact him about individual cases. Councillor G Theobald agreed with the list of priorities; his particular concern was the number of police officers employed. Derek Peacock hoped that the number of PCSOs would not decrease as they dealt efficiently with hate crime. Sue Iles-Jonas stated that it was very disappointing that the Home Office was not now intending to fund the number of additional neighbourhood police previously promised. The Chair replied that the Respect agenda would enable parenting support.
- 37.3 Councillor Oxley enquired about the timescales and it was noted that the Plan would come into effect next year and that the funding would be time-limited. Ray Blackwood asked about the proposed police station in Hollingbury and Mr Moore stated that a planning application had been submitted.

38 WORK OF THE TRADING STANDARDS TEAM IN RELATION TO COMMUNITY

SAFETY

- 38.1 The Forum received a presentation by John Peerless, Head of the Trading Standards Team. He spoke about the wide range of work covered by the Team with particular emphasis on the sale of alcohol to young people and rogue trading.
- 38.2 Mr Peerless stated that his team was pro-active in making enforcement visits to off-licences and that they liaised with the Police Licensing Unit in this. A campaign in October 2006 using young volunteers in test purchasing had resulted in some persistently-offending off-licences losing their licences. The Home Office regarded Brighton & Hove as an example of best practice. Councillor Lepper thanked both Trading Standards and the Police for their work in sending a clear message that anti-social behaviour was often caused by young people who had been able to buy alcohol and that this was unacceptable.
- 38.3 Mr Peerless advised that the Rapid Action Team assisted in tackling doorstep crime in liaison with East and West Sussex Trading Standards. Some victims were very vulnerable people and were regularly targeted. It was therefore essential to respond quickly to calls. He asked ward councillors to inform him about problems in their wards. John Stevens stressed the need for the Trading Standards telephone number to be widely advertised in places accessible to vulnerable people.

39 TACKLING CYCLE THEFT

- 39.1 The Forum considered a report concerning cycle theft in Brighton & Hove (see minute book). The Head of Community Safety stated that this was an important issue; cycle use was widely encouraged nowadays. The appendix to the report showed the strategy to be used in partnership with BikeOff. She added that bids were being made to fund the implementation of the strategy.
- 39.2 Bob Cristofoli mentioned the need to educate cyclists on safety and the Chair replied that the Cycle Demonstration Town project was addressing this issue.

40 CENTRE FOR PUBLIC INNOVATION PROJECTS FOR DEALING WITH ALCOHOL RELATED DISORDER: AN EVALUATION

- 40.1 The Head of Community Safety introduced Rachel Brett and Taz Fletcher of Hove YMCA and Eric Page and Christine Thornton from her team. They had all been involved in projects to deal with alcohol related disorder in the city centre over the Christmas/New Year period, using funding from the Centre for Public Innovation. Members

then viewed a video about these projects.

41 EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2006

41.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the East Sussex Fire Authority meeting be noted.

42 SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2006 AND 15 FEBRUARY 2007

42.1 The minutes of the 14 December meeting had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair also agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2007 should be taken on to the agenda as a matter of urgency in order to consider the budget decisions made by the Police Authority.

42.2 Sue Iles-Jonas stated that the money available to the Police Authority had been capped after the merger plans failed. The shortfall left the budget depleted. In addition the counter-terrorism grant had been reduced. The Authority had therefore had to consider a number of options. It had been decided to increase the policing element of the council tax, but she considered it still represented good value for money. However further economies would have to be made.

42.3 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Sussex Police Authority meetings be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.20 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2007