

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

4.00PM MONDAY 6 OCTOBER 2003

**THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
HOVE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Mitchell (Chair); Councillors Mrs Cobb, Framroze, Hawkes, Meegan, Mrs Simson, Wells, Williams and Willows.

Sussex Police: Chief Superintendent Paul Curtis, Sgt. Peter Castleton, Chief Inspector L Gray and Jean Smith.

Sussex Police Authority: Judith Corcho and David Simmons.

Communities of Interest: Robert Cristofoli (Brighton & Hove Mediation Service); Terry Davies (Business Crime Reduction Partnership); Patrick Elliott, Housing Panel Representative); Michael Meik, (East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service); Sharon Otoo, (Racial Harassment Forum); David Smart (Older People's Council.)

Council Officers: Linda Beanlands, (Community Safety Manager), Ruth Condon, (Research & Performance Monitoring Officer, Community Safety), Jonathon Fortune, (Head of Operations, Public Safety Division), Louise Hanrahan, (Legal Services), Nigel Lewis, (Brighton & Hove YOT), Judith Macho, Assistant Director, Public Safety.

Apologies: Councillor Elgood, Bernadette Dawes, Hangleton and Knoll Project and David Standing, Hove YMCA.

PART ONE

ACTION

11. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

11A Declarations of Substitutes

Substitute Councillor
Wells

For Councillor
Kemble

11B Declarations of Interest

11.1 Councillor Mitchell declared a personal interest in item 17. Role

of Community Support Officers as her son was one of the intake of new police officers.

11C Exclusion of Press and Public

11.2 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.

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

12. MINUTES

12.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2003 be approved and signed by the Chair.

13. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

13.1 Mr Scott asked a question about the obstruction of footpaths by A Boards and tables and chairs outside restaurants. He referred to the legislation mentioned in the previous meeting, when Colin Bennett raised concerns about this issue. Mr Scott asked officers to consider public rights of way as a further method of enforcement.

13.2 Mr Scott asked if council traffic wardens could be authorised to use their electronic cameras to take photos of obstructions to the pavement. The photographs could be used as evidence by officers, when taking enforcement action.

13.3 Mr Scott further asked the police representatives for more assistance in reclaiming pavements for pedestrians.

13.4 The Chair informed Mr Scott that every premises that had tables and chairs or A Boards on the pavement was required to hold a licence from the Council. The licence should be displayed in their shop window. The measurements for the area concerned were clearly set out in the licence. Mr Scott would receive a detailed written answer to his questions.

**Jonathan
Fortune**

14. COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM – REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE

14.1 The Forum considered a report of the Community Safety Manager setting out proposed terms of reference (see minute

book). The review of the terms of reference had taken account of the Best Value Review of consultation undertaken by Sussex Police Authority and with the objective of increasing the effectiveness and capacity of the Forum to contribute to the reduction of crime and improved safety. The review had also taken account of comments made at the last meeting.

14.2 Judith Corcho asked for paragraph 5.1 to be amended by the deletion of Sussex Police Authority from the list. Paragraph 6.0 second bullet point should include reference to the Sussex Policing Plan.

14.3 The Community Safety Manager confirmed that both council and housing association tenants were represented on the forum.

14.4 The Chair informed the Forum that the terms of reference would be reviewed on an annual basis.

14.5 **RESOLVED** - That the terms of reference be agreed, as set out in paragraph 4 of the report, with the amendments mentioned above.

**Linda
Beanlands**

15. DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION

15.1 Judith Macho, Assistant Director, Public Safety explained that the new Public Safety Division included the Community Safety Team, Environment and Licensing, Trading Standards and the City Enforcement and Inspection Teams. The Division would place a strong emphasis on partnership working and would focus on "grime and crime" hotspots in liaison with partners.

15.2 The Chair informed the Forum that they would be shown structure charts of the new division in due course (see appendix 1). She hoped that a map showing areas in the city with local action teams would be available at future meetings.

15.3 The Community Safety Manager explained the makeup of the Community Safety Team. In addition to the officers listed in the presentation to the July Forum meeting, the Anti Social Behaviour Team had 2 new members of staff joining the street outreach patrols. A Domestic Violence Co-ordinator had also been appointed. The Community Safety Team would be moving to 162 North Street in December 2003.

15.4 Chief Inspector Gray read out a letter of support for the Action Teams and mentioned the crime reduction website.

15.5 Councillor Framroze stressed the importance of co-ordinated action from the police, local ward councillors, teachers and the local community to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. This

approach had worked in Coldean, where there had been significant problems. Public meetings had been set up and 350 households had received letters asking them give details of their experience of crime and anti-social behaviour. The results had been analysed and after 6 months of regular meetings the police had taken enforcement action and a co-ordinated approach had been taken by the police, teachers and community leaders. Diversionary activities had been arranged for young people and the action had been successful. He commended this method for other areas of the City.

15.6 Councillor Mrs Simson mentioned that it was proving difficult to engage the community in setting up a local action team in Woodingdean. She stressed the need for support from the community.

15.7 Councillor Hawkes mentioned that her ward had three action groups. Work was also being undertaken in Stanmer Village where there were only 20 households. She thought that Woodingdean was probably too big an area for one action team.

15.8 Councillor Williams stressed the value of action groups but felt that they were only part of the solution for city centre areas such as St Peters and North Laine.

15.9 Patrick Elliott congratulated the successful approach in Coldean but complained that there had been no beat officer in Woodingdean for 14 months.

15.10 The Chair suggested that it might be helpful to arrange a public meeting in Woodingdean with police representatives present, in order to discuss the problems being experienced in the area.

15.11 David Smart reported that there were action teams in Hangleton & Knoll, however there was no CCTV or community police officers.

15.12 Chief Superintendent Curtis informed the Forum that the police were keen to work with all communities in the city, but stressed the need for communities to want to work with the police.

16. IMPACT OF DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACES ORDER ON SERVICES AND ON HOT-SPOT AREAS

16.1 The Forum considered a report of the Community Safety Manager which provided members with an update on effects and events following the implementation of the Designated Public Places Order on 12 August 2003 (see minute book). Members were informed that joint police and street outreach team had carried out daily joint patrols, from early morning and throughout the day,

concentrating on 18 hot spot areas. A future report would provide more detailed information about the findings of the joint patrols and enforcement and service outcomes.

16.2 Councillor Wells asked for an explanation of paragraph 4 of the report. The Community Safety Manager reported that although there had been a reduction in violent incidents, there had correspondingly been an increase in people needing medical attention at Accident and Emergency for assault injuries. It would seem that people who were drawn to Equinox were more needy than had previously been the case.

16.3 Councillor Williams congratulated the team at Equinox for meeting the changes in the workforce professionally. However, he expressed concern that there had been 363 stops yet, with the exception of Equinox, the DPPO had not resulted in a higher number of people accessing services, who were not already clients of those services.

16.4 The Chair agreed that this was a very important issue. The monitoring and engagement of clients was taking place, but it was necessary to refer people to alcohol treatment centres.

16.5 Chief Superintendent Curtis expressed the view that it would take a long time to start seeing results from the work being carried out. It needed to be recognised that some of the people requiring treatment had a life long problem with alcohol abuse.

16.6 Councillor Meegan mentioned that some attention should be paid to the Brighton Station area. The Community Safety Manager reported that there had been some action taken around Brighton Station and she would discuss the matter with the Street Action Team. The British Transport Police were supportive of this action.

16.7 Questions were raised about graffiti and Big Issue sellers. Terry Davies reported that members of the Business Crime Reduction Partnership were identifying people who had lost their permits. Judith Corcho mentioned that Graffiti removal "Buster Packs" were available for the private & public sector.

16.8 **RESOLVED** – That the following be noted.

(i) The Joint Police and Street Outreach Team patrols have implemented over 363 'stops' which have resulted on over 30 arrests.

(ii) That with the exception of the Equinox Wet Centre, the DPPO has not yet resulted in a higher number of people accessing services, who were not already clients of those services. Higher levels of engagement and support are however being given to clients by

their support services and there is early evidence that clients are engaging where otherwise that would not have happened.

(iii) That a further allocation from the Home Office is enabling the appointment of four additional staff to assist the implementation of the DPPO. Two of those staff will work with the Street Outreach Team and joint patrols and two staff will work within Equinox, enabling the Foundation Service to be extended to drinkers and additional management of the external space around the Centre.

17. ROLE OF POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

17.1 Chief Superintendent Curtis reported that there were now 20 Police Community Support Officers in Brighton & Hove. PCSO's had a visible presence on the street and were very successful. There had been positive feedback from the public. He hoped that more Community Support Officers could be employed across Sussex.

17.2 Councillor Mrs Cobb asked how long it took for the police to respond, when PCSO's required assistance. Chief Superintendent Curtis replied that the police response would be based on need.

17.3 Patrick Elliott expressed some concern about the cost of employing PCSO's. The Chair stressed that community safety was a top priority for most people who wanted a highly visible uniformed presence. She hoped that more CBO's could be employed across the city.

17.4 Councillor Hawkes agreed that the PCSO's had a useful presence on the street but hoped they had opportunities for career development.

17.5 Councillor Williams mentioned that there were problem areas for the LGBT community, particularly in St James's Street. He asked if the PCSO's were on duty 24 hours a day.

17.6 Chief Superintendent Curtis replied that the PCSO's were on duty in St James's Street every day, however, they were not available 24 hours a day.

17.7 Councillor Willow expressed concern at the drug problem in the city and was disappointed that the Home Office were not funding more police officers.

17.8 Chief Superintendent Curtis replied that it took eight months to train a police officer and only four weeks to train a PCSO. PCSO's were providing a service that police officers were unable to provide. Meanwhile, there had been no reduction in the number of police officers.

18. POLICE AUTHORITY JOINT INITIATIVE FUNDING: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

18.1 Members of the Forum were reminded that Police Authority Joint Initiative Funding was available for organisations who wished to apply. Ruth Condon, Research and Performance Monitoring Officer, Community Safety, could be contacted for application forms. Her telephone number is Direct Line 291103.

19. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (CDRP) FAMILY 10 – CRIME COMPARISONS 2002/3

19.1 The Forum considered the report of the Research & Performance Monitoring Officer, Community Safety, which explained that the Home Office published data for all CDRP areas every July. The report presented the results for 2002/03 and showed Brighton & Hove's position within the group since these CDRP benchmarking families were set up (see minute book).

19.2 Chief Superintendent Curtis reported that the overall reduction in crime was down by 5% from April to the end of August compared with the same period the previous year. Violent crime was down by 9% and vehicle crime down by 2%. Unfortunately, burglary figures had increased over the last year.

19.3 Councillor Meegan asked how much of the violent crime was indigenous to the area. Sgt Castleton reported that research had shown that most violent crime in the area was committed by local people.

19.4 The Chair reported that a great deal of good work was being carried out to tackle violent crime. There would be a presentation on violent crime at the next meeting.

19.5 Sharon Otoo encouraged the use of the racial incident report form.

19.6 **RESOLVED** - That the report be noted.

20.(A)CONSULTATION ON POLICING PLAN 2004/2005

20.1 Members were consulted on a number of issues relating to policing in the city. The results of the survey would feed into the process of consultation on the Policing Plan 2004/5 (see attached results of survey taken at the meeting – appendix 2).

20.2 Each person present was given an IML handset in order express their view on the following questions: - when did they last have reason to contact police and the reasons why. How satisfied they were with the result. What the policing priorities were in their

area. Whether the council tax paid to the Police Authority was too high. Did the police receive enough funding and whether they provided value for money. The percentage of money that should be spent on a variety of policing issues. Had the performance of Sussex Police improved or worsened over the last 12 months. Finally, the Forum was asked to choose four preferences for future consultation.

20.(B)REPORT OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY HELD ON 17 JULY 2003

20.3 The Forum had before them a report of the Sussex Police Authority meeting held on 17 July 2003 (see minute book).

20.4 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

21. REPORT OF MEETINGS OF THE EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY HELD ON 12 JUNE AND 18 SEPTEMBER 2003

21.1 The Forum had before them reports of the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service held on 12 June and 18 September 2003 (see minute book).

21.2 **RESOLVED** – That the reports be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.02 p.m.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2003