

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

4.00PM – 9 JANUARY 2006

**THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
HOVE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Bodfish (Chair); Councillors Barnett, Mrs Cobb (Opposition Spokesperson), Elgood, Lepper, Mitchell (Deputy Chair), Mrs Simson, Turton, Williams and Willows.

Sussex Police: Chief Superintendent Jeremy Paine; Sergeant Peter Castleton.

Sussex Police Authority: Councillor Bodfish.

Communities of Interest: Asif Mohammed, Victim Support; Bob Cristofoli, Mediation Service; John Stevens and Pat Miles, Housing Association Tenants; K Christou, Women's Refuge Project; David Standing, Hove YMCA;

Brighton & Hove Council: Linda Beanlands, Head of Community Safety; Judith Macho, Assistant Director Public Safety; Jonathan Fortune, Head of Operations Public Safety; Nigel Lewis, Youth Offending Team; John Irvine, LGBT Community Safety Officer; Simon Court, Assistant Solicitor, Community Safety Team; Ruth Condon, Community Safety Team; Aaron Devereaux, Community Safety Team; John Mitchell, EB4U, Community Safety Team.

Brighton & Hove PCT: Gavin Bryce.

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Services: Gary Pearson.

Apologies were received from Derek Peacock and David Smart.

PART ONE

ACTION

18. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

18.1 Councillor Bodfish, the Chair, advised that he wished to take the agenda items in the following order: 20, 24, 26, 22, 25, 27, 21, 23, 28, 29 and this was agreed.

18.2 Councillor Mitchell took the chair for items 27, 21, 23, 28, 29, after Councillor Bodfish left for another meeting.

18A Declarations of Substitutes

18.3 There were none.

18B Declarations of Interest

18.4 There were none.

18C Exclusion of Press and Public

18.5 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.

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

19. MINUTES

19.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2005 be approved and signed by the Chair, subject to noting the following statistical information about Brighton & Hove Police. The total number of officers (uniformed and plain-clothed) is 475. There are 180 non-warranted officers, of which 46 are PCSOs.

19.2 Chief Superintendent Paine added that some of the police officers who had been attracted to move to jobs in London had now returned. However, firearms officers were particularly attracted to jobs in the capital.

19.3 He advised that police systems and procedures were kept under review in order to ensure that a maximum of officers were out on the beat at any time. He acknowledged that the public wished to see a visible police presence, engaged in meaningful activity.

20. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

20.1 Mr Richard Scott questioned the down-grading of Police jobs at senior level in Hove and Portslade and whether this would have a knock-on effect at lower grades. He asked why the matter had not been brought before public consultation bodies or the Police Authority for comment.

20.2 Councillor Bodfish confirmed that Sussex Police Authority takes no part in the matter of grading, which is the prerogative of the Chief Constable.

20.3 Chief Superintendent Paine stated that the changes had been made following the making of the area served by Brighton & Hove Police coterminous with the city boundaries. He advised that there were now 3 districts within the

city, each with its own commander and he gave details of grading. Chief Superintendent Paine added that the crime reduction statistics for Hove had been very encouraging since the change.

21. PERFORMANCE & ACTIVITY REPORT 2005/06 QUARTER 2

21.1 The Forum considered the report of the Research & Performance Monitoring Officer relating to Performance & Activity Report 2005/06 Quarter 2 (see minute book).

21.2 Sergeant Castleton responded to questions. He agreed that the increase in racist incidents was a matter of concern. He noted that quarter 2 corresponded to both the period following the London bombings, and the summer months when there are more overseas students in the city. At the same time, work was going on to increase trust and confidence in services and it was hoped that this was encouraging people to report incidents. The timescale for removing abandoned vehicles had improved over the past two years. He stated that it was too early to relate the increase in noise complaints to changes in licensing law.

21.3 John Stevens stated that the noise from Pride events was upsetting for housebound disabled people. Councillor Mitchell replied that all event organisers were given guidance on noise and disturbance, and that environmental health officers checked noise levels.

22. NATIONAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

22.1 The Forum considered the National Community Safety Plan 2006-2009, which is a government plan for community safety led by the Home Office. Copies were tabled at the meeting (and the plan is available at www.crimereduction.gov.uk/communitysafety01.htm). The Head of Community Safety made a presentation on the key points and responded to questions. The Chair added that the plan linked many strands of the council's responsibilities (in such areas as Housing, Children Families & Schools and Environment) to Community Safety.

23. UPDATE ON NEW LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS

23.1 The Forum considered a briefing paper by the Assistant Director, Public Safety and the Head of Licensing updating on the implementation of the new Licensing Arrangements (see minute book).

23.2 The Assistant Director, Public Safety stated that the council would soon be responsible for licensing gaming and gambling premises.

23.3 To a comment that there had been pressure on councils to grant applications, Councillor Lepper stated that all applications in Brighton & Hove had been considered on their individual merits and, where necessary, strict conditions had been applied to safeguard the amenity of neighbours. She recommended that the council should wait to review its licensing procedures until the effects of the Licensing Act had been properly assessed and until the

DCMS had published its own review.

23.4 Councillor Williams requested that the council website should show a list of licensed premises in the city and the conditions of their licences. The Assistant Director, Public Safety, stated that this work was already in hand.

23.5 Chief Superintendent Paine agreed that it was too early to comment, but the Police's initial feeling was that the longer hours did seem to cause a problem in that people were being arrested for drunkenness at 7.00 am. He stated that there was a need to research where people had purchased the alcohol in such cases.

24. POLICE FORCE : NEW STRUCTURES

24.1 Councillor Bodfish reported that the changes had been made in response to a government initiative to slim down police forces. The Chief Constable and Sussex Police Authority had chosen a federal model, where they would not amalgamate with another force, but would work with Kent, Surrey and also Hampshire, when it was appropriate to do so. This model would ensure local accountability.

24.2 Chief Superintendent Paine added that all forces had service areas which were hard to deliver, for example, when a major tragedy occurred. This was when they would collaborate with other forces. He felt that local neighbourhood policing would strengthen as a result of the changes.

25. "SUSSED ABOUT DRUGS & ALCOHOL"

25.1 The Forum considered a presentation by Gavin Bryce, Health Promotion Adviser for Brighton & Hove PCT relating to a web-based resource, "Sussed About Drugs", aimed at young people. (This is available at www.sussedaboutdrugs.net.) There will also shortly be a site "Sussed about Drink" (www.sussedaboutdrink.net). for the general public with a section for younger people, and the site "Sussed Professionals", opening March 2006, will give statistics and other information. Mr Bryce confirmed that young people had been consulted on the format of the site.

25.2 Members praised the website and suggested that Mr Bryce should send all ward councillors details. There was some debate about separate websites for drugs and alcohol, but Mr Bryce stated that some people did not consider alcohol to be a drug and would not think of looking there.

Gavin Bryce

25.3 Mr Bryce advised that he attended schools and sixth form colleges as part of his work and that the Danger of Drugs was on the school curriculum from age 10. He was in the process of preparing education packs for teachers. A question was raised about the value of ex-drug users going into schools to inform young people on the dangers, but it was noted that some parents had complained about the nature of information given in such sessions.

26 "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS"

26.1 John Stevens stated that the North and East Housing Panel, at its meeting on 4 October 2005, had expressed concern about policing in Woodingdean, Saltdean and Rottingdean. Chief Superintendent Paine asked Mr Stevens to send him full details and he would respond.

26.2 Councillor Mitchell stated that the police should report back to communities on issues of local concern. This might help reduce the fear of crime, which was often disproportionate.

**Sussex
Police**

26.3 To a question from Councillor Williams, Councillor Bodfish replied that the Sussex Police Authority was not yet considering accountability systems in connection with the new police structures. Councillor Elgood thanked the police for attending Brunswick & Adelaide Neighbourhood Forum meetings and asked how residents would be consulted about changes. Councillor Bodfish stated that Item 28, the Sussex Police Authority report of 20 October 2005, addressed this. Councillor Elgood considered that there should be consultation with individual residents.

26.4 Chief Superintendent Paine confirmed that PCSOs had only limited powers but they spent most of their working time on the street and could deal with anti social behaviour. He acknowledged the need to communicate with local residents, to be aware of their views, to inform them and to make neighbourhood policing better. Chief Superintendent Paine advised that he was keen to ensure efficiencies of service by reviewing IT systems, the use of helicopters, management, etc.

27. CONSULTATION ON EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY DRAFT INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2006/7

27.1 The Forum considered the Consultation on East Sussex Fire Authority Draft Integrated Risk Management Annual Action Plan 2006/7 (for copy see minute book). Gary Pearson made a brief presentation and stated that, although the formal consultation period had finished, he would report any comments to ESFA.

27.2 Mr Pearson responded to questions. He confirmed that members of the public could have free advice on fire prevention in their home; or fire officers could advise groups of residents. They would also advise on any building that was a workplace. Fire officers did provide smoke detectors, but did not currently supply carbon monoxide detectors in residential accommodation. He confirmed that the Fire service worked with local authorities to inform landlords and letting agencies, but that it was an enormous task to inform all small private landlords.

28. REPORT OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2005

28.1 The Forum noted the report of the Sussex Police Authority meeting held on 20 October 2005 (for copy see minute book).

29. REPORT OF THE EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 15

SEPTEMBER 2005

29.1 The Forum noted the report of the East Sussex Fire Authority meeting held on 15 September 2005 (for copy see minute book).

The meeting concluded at 6.15 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2006