

# **BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM**

**4.00pm 14 MARCH 2011**

### **COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

#### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Simson (Chair); Barnett, Carden, Deane, Hyde, Janio, Morgan (Opposition Spokesperson), Phillips and Watkins

**Sussex Police:** Chief Superintendent Bartlett and Sergeant Castleton

**Fire Authority :** Brigade Commander Ring

**Communities of Interest:** Gail Grey, RISE, Francis Tonks, Older People's Council; Ted Harman, Council Area Panel Rep; Patricia Weller, Hangleton and Knoll Community Action Group; Mohammed Asif Zaman, Turner and Queen's Park LAT; Eileen Oliver, Moulsecoomb LAT; Councillor Mo Marsh, Coombe Road LAT; Chris Cooke, Kemptown Community Safety Group; Faith Matyzak MBE, Whitehawk Crime Prevention Forum and Racial Harassment Forum; Caroline Brennan, BOTLAT; David Standing, Sussex Central YMCA; Rachel Brett, Sussex Central YMCA and Emma Daniels Community Voluntary Sector Forum

**Officers:** Officers: David Murray, Strategic Director, Communities; Linda Beanlands, Lead Commissioner, Community Safety; Michelle Pooley, Community Safety Team; Caroline Palmer, Community Safety Team; Simon Court, Lawyer and Penny Jennings, Democratic Services Officer

#### **PART ONE**

### **37. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

#### **37a Declaration of Substitutes**

37.1 There were none.

#### **37b Declarations of Interest**

37.2 There were none.

#### **37c Exclusion of the Press and Public**

37.3 In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the Act'), the Community Safety Forum considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of

the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I of the Act).

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

### **38. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 38.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Community Safety Forum meeting held on X be agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **39. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **39a In Memorium**

- 39.1 The Chairman, Councillor Simson, acknowledged the sad deaths of two long serving hard working community members both of whom had been very active participants in Local Action Teams, Tony Munday who had worked within the Kemptown area and Roy Taylor who had worked in Hangleton & Knoll and at St. Richards. The Chairman referred to the long and tireless commitment of both men and of their individual achievements and contributions to their local communities over a number of years and to the fact that they would be greatly missed.
- 39.2 A minutes silence was then observed in memory of both men.

#### **Thankyou to LAT Chairs and LAT Members**

- 39.3 The Chairman stated that she wished to place on record her thanks to all LAT Chairs and members for their tireless work in helping to make their neighbourhoods safer. The focus on Bill Gandey and members of the Bevendean Local Action Team in the recent edition of "Homing In" gave well deserved appreciation of Bill's and everyone else's hard work.

#### **Achievements of Community Safety Staff**

- 39.4 The Chairman was pleased to report that Becky Poole from the Communities Against Drugs team had received a public service award for working with the Fire Service and lots of other agencies, to engage with 9-11 year olds in the Moulsecoomb area in order to help them to think through all sorts of safety activities from how to resist bullying and peer pressure to road, fire and water safety.

#### **Closure Order on a Flat in Brighton**

- 39.5 The Police had worked together with the council's legal and anti-social behaviour teams in both community safety and housing to implement the third Closure Order on a flat in Brighton – thus bringing to an end the fear and risks that neighbours had suffered as a result of drug misuse going on, in and around their block.

**Launch of New Service**

- 39.6 The Chairman reported that the community safety team had launched a new service to respond to any incident or crime that was perceived to be motivated by prejudice based on disability. The service formed part of the work of the whole “hate crime” team which also provided a very skilled service to those who experienced incidents that were believed to be motivated by prejudice based on race, ethnicity, colour or sexual orientation and identity.

**Booklets for use as a Resource for LGBT Community**

- 39.7 The Chairman explained that the council’s Domestic Violence Officer Michelle Pooley had worked with community members and partners to provide high quality information which would provide a resource for use by the LGBT community in the city. At the Chairman’s invitation Ms Pooley gave a brief presentation introducing the series of booklets (5 in all) which would be made widely available across the city and could be used as a “one stop” resource. A lot of thought had been given to their content and format and all signposted useful contact details for a range of relevant organisations and services. The five booklets under a “Domestic Violence, A Resource For” headline were entitled, “Bisexual Women in Brighton and Hove”, “Trans People in Brighton and Hove”, “Gay Men in Brighton and Hove”, “For Lesbians in Brighton and Hove” and “Bisexual Men in Brighton and Hove.”

**40. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

- 40.1 There were none.

**41. MEMBER QUESTIONS**

- 41.1 There were none.

**42. THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP : NOW AND POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE**

- 42.1 Mr David Murray, The Strategic Director of Communities introduced himself to the Forum explaining that he was one of the four recently appointed Strategic Directors and that his portfolio of services included Community Safety. Part of his role was to be instrumental in looking out across the council and the city and helping to build on what worked and seeking to respond positively to opportunities for change.
- 42.2 The Strategic Director went on to explain that existing partnerships in the city were solid, advanced and integrated and that there appeared to be a clear understanding of the germane issues. There were also areas where improvements could be effected, around well recognised issues such as the levels of alcohol and drug abuse found in some areas of the city. Also in relation to achieving better collaborative working at a time of diminishing resources and how the council and partners listened and responded to people. For the future it was important to build on what worked, to have

more and deeper collaboration and to adopt an intelligent commissioning approach to tackle city wide issues.

- 42.3 Councillor Carden referred to the anticipated reductions in Police resources enquiring how against that backdrop the Police and other partners would be able to meet their continuing responsibilities effectively. Whilst it was acknowledged that there would be continuing challenges, significant changes would need to take place given that there would be fewer resources and a need to work more creatively.
- 42.4 Councillor Barnett referred to the Strategic Directors invitation to discuss issues with community representatives including Councillors and Forum Members. Mr Murray confirmed that he was happy to do so and to unpick available data and to unlock the information behind the statistics in order to identify ways forward.
- 42.5 Councillor Morgan referred to a recent workshop he had attended discussing issues around domestic violence, there was a need to identify inter-disciplinary partnership working with partners to ensure that addressing the contributory factors formed part of the council's core business. If this did not happen the effect of any initiatives would be limited. Mr Murray explained that as part of their overarching responsibilities, the Strategic Directors (who were located in the same office) met together twice a week in order to discuss and identify the changes that needed to be effected.
- 42.6 The Strategic Director responded that it was recognised that there were vulnerable individuals in the city who had complex and difficult lives, a pro-active approach was needed as was the need to work collaboratively and supportively with third sector partners e.g., the Brighton Women's Centre and RISE to deliver results effectively was fully recognised. Regular twice weekly meetings were held took place between the Strategic Directors to seek to continue to identify those areas where and what changes were needed to unlock more effective use of existing resources.
- 42.7 Councillor Janio stated that he considered it was important not to talk up people's perceptions of crime, to do so could create a "self fulfilling prophecy". If fewer people were on the streets at night because of fear of crime, that in turn created greater fear of crime. Mr Murray responded that it was a question of getting the right balance in the way in which information was presented, for instance, the reality was that young men were at far greater risk of attack and injury from other young men than other sectors of the community. The Chairman stated that it was the responsibility of everyone to ensure that communities received a balanced and positive perspective in relation to community safety and crime.
- 42.8 **RESOLVED** – That the position be noted.

#### **43. COMMUNITY SAFETY ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES**

- 43.1 There were none.

#### **44. CRIME TRENDS AND PERFORMANCE FIGURES : POSITION AT END JANUARY 2011**

- 44.1 The Forum considered a report of the Lead Commissioner, Community Safety which set out crime trends and performance in Brighton and Hove to the end of January 2011. The report was intended to report on recent developments relating to priority areas in the Brighton and Hove Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy, 2008-11. Recent activities were set out as was statistical police data on key crime types up to the end of January 2011 and progress against targets.
- 44.2 Sergeant Castleton reported that after the first ten months of 2010/11 (to end of January) there had been a reduction in overall crime of 2.1% compared to the same months of 2009/10, this fell just short of the local target of 3% reduction. Numbers of total crimes had been particularly low in December but had risen again in January. The December “dip” was common to different sorts of crime, including criminal damage, vehicle theft and other types of theft and handling and violence against the person. Whilst overall crime levels remained low the Police were not complacent about this and continued to target identified areas.
- 44.3 Numbers of domestic violence crimes and crime related incidents remained high with numbers since May 2010 mostly above 300 per month. Over half of the reports received related to repeat victims. During the first ten months of 2010/11 numbers were 3% higher than during the same months of the previous year. Whilst seeking to decrease the incidence of DV, there was also ongoing work to increase reporting. The percentage of finalized court cases which had successful outcomes remained at 67%.
- 44.4 To coincide with LGBT history month a series of five domestic violence resources had been developed and gave in depth information across this community and had been developed in consultation with people from these communities (Paragraph 39 above also refers).
- 44.5 Sergeant Castleton stated that that data available up to the end of December indicated that the number of racist and religiously motivated incidents (RRMI) continued to decline. However, the number recorded through the multi-agency Hate Incident Report Form had remained relatively stable. There had been ongoing outreach work to encourage reporting of incidents, including holding stalls at community events and training to staff. The under reporting of hate incidents by health agencies had previously been identified and positive steps had now been taken to increase reporting and information sharing through use of the Hate Incident Report Form.
- 44.6 Twenty five disability hate incidents had been reported to the Partnership Community Safety Team between April and December 2010. Training to further embed reporting of disability hate incidents across voluntary and statutory agencies to increase access to support services is an important focus of current work.

44.7 **RESOLVED** – That the content of the report be noted.

#### **44a Gender of Victims**

- 44.8 The Lead Commissioner, Community Safety gave a presentation in relation to the headline data set out in the circulated report prepared in conjunction with Safe in the City. In summary victimization rates for total crime were higher amongst men than women both nationally and locally. Women were also more likely to experience

domestic and sexual violence, both of which were typically under reported to the police. Women were more likely to think that crime had increased over the last year. Women felt less safe in their neighbourhoods after dark than men, although this difference was not evident in the city centre. The Lead Commissioner also explained and gave examples of the complexities of analyzing crime types by victim gender.

44.9 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted.

#### **44b Community Safety and Older People**

44.10 The Lead Commissioner, Community Safety gave a presentation drawing out the headline data set out in the circulated report prepared by Safe in the City. The report also picked up on and addressed issues raised in response to the Older People's Scrutiny Panel. Both the Citizens Panel and police recorded crime data showed that older people were at less risk of victimization for almost all crime types. Crimes against older people showed similar seasonal patterns to total crime. The highest proportion of offences committed against older people were theft other offences, followed by criminal damage offences, followed by criminal damage offences. Domestic violence accounted for 3.8% of all crime against older people, 85% of suspects/offenders of domestic violence perpetrated against older people were male, 15% were female. 71% of older victims of domestic violence were aged 50 -59 and, as with all crime against older people were predominantly violence against person offences (82%).

44.11 Mr Gandey, SCLAT, referred to the fear of crime among the older population of the city. The Lead Commissioner referred to the fact that the issue was one of perception rather than actual risk, although it was recognized that such perceptions needed to be addressed by initiatives and education.

44.12 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted.

#### **45. NATIONAL CRIME STATISTICS WEBSITE**

45.1 Sergeant Castleton gave a presentation setting out information in relation to the National Crime Statistics which had been set up recently. Sergeant Castleton explained how to navigate onto the site. Data for each of the neighbourhoods across the city was recorded and this information was a resource available to LAT's across the city and to departments of the Council e.g., local housing offices and other partnership organisations.

45.2 Councillor Morgan (OS) welcomed this facility, but stressed that it was important that the data provided was set into context as bald data alone could be misleading and could serve to reinforce preconceived stereotypes. Councillor Simson concurred in that view. Mr Murray, the Strategic Director of Communities stated that he considered it would be useful to the Forum if a report could be brought to a future meeting providing an assessment of the available data and how meaningful information could be extrapolated from it. Sergeant Castleton agreed stressing that the statistical information available should not be considered in isolation.

45.3 Councillor Watkins requested that information regarding how this website and other related sites could be accessed be provided to LAT groups across the City and Forum

Members the Chairman agreed that this would be useful and it was agreed that this would be done.

45.4 **RESOLVED** - That the position be noted.

**46. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR FORUM: COMMUNITY SAFETY PRIORITIES**

46.1 A presentation was given by Emma Daniels of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum. The Forum had been in existence for some ten years and overall 60-100 local groups were represented through the Forum. Regular meetings were held and recently (January 2011) a meeting had taken place at Brighton Police Station in order to bring the sector up to date with some of the radical changes which were likely to take place over the coming months and years.

46.2 Notes arising from that January meeting were circulated and set out bullet points in relation to two key areas which had been identified , namely:

Community responses and solutions to tackling crime prevention work ; and

Young people and general equalities issues.

46.3 Councillor Watkins considered that the circulated document provide a useful information resource requesting that information arising from these meetings/workshops be circulated periodically as appropriate to the Forum. It was agreed that this would be done.

46.4 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the presentation be noted.

**47. DEFINITIONS OF "TRAFFICKING" AND OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARISING FROM BARNADO'S REPORT**

47.1 Rachel Brett, Hove YMCA gave a brief presentation drawing out issues relating to protection of vulnerable children and young people arising from the Barnado's report. She made reference to the WISE Project in which the Central Sussex YMCA had been an active partner. Primarily, the project did not deal with trafficking but sought to identify and provide advice and resources to identify and address sexual exploitation, including lesbian, gay or bi-sexual young people.

47.2 An inter agency approach had been adopted both to seek to ensure an over arching co-ordinated professional approach including staff training to under pin service delivery and advice giving in relation to housing and sign posting to other services. This included work associated with drug and alcohol services and seeking to unpick the circumstances which could lead young people into unhealthy lifestyles.

47.3 The Lead Commissioner explained that given the breadth and depth of work that had been carried out in relation to this area that it was anticipated as a further more detailed report would be brought back to the next scheduled meeting of the Forum, that report would also include work carried out in relation to trafficking.

47.4 **RESOLVED** – That the content of the presentation be noted.

**48. EAST SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON**

48.1 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the minutes be noted.

**49. EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON**

49.1 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the minutes be noted.

**50. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

50.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held from 4.00pm in the Council Chamber at Hove Town Hall on 4 July 2011.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of