Brighton & Hove City Council

Report of the Older People and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Panel

August 2009

Older People and Community Safety

Investigating older people's concerns about community safety and how older people can be helped to feel safer

Panel Members

Councillor Mo Marsh (Chairman)
Councillor Amy Kennedy
Councillor David Smart
Councillor David Watkins
Mr John Eyles, Older People's Council (Panel co-optee)

Chair's Foreword

Older people can tend to be less visible and quieter than younger people in the community and may have unnecessary concerns about crime.

This scrutiny panel was set up to investigate how older people view community safety and what are the main issues from an older person's perspective.

We found that older people are less likely than the rest of the population to become victims of crime. We heard evidence of a large range of community safety preventative and support services from the Council and partner organisations that are available for older people.

However having heard from residents at the Panel meetings we agreed that all this information, and sources of advice and help are not as well known as they could be, especially amongst older people who are socially isolated.

Therefore we identified that well-coordinated community safety messages should be given to all older people, in the form of a purpose-designed booklet similar to those in use by other local authorities. Also that further research and analysis coordinated between the Council and its partners should focus more on the needs of older age groups as well as the wider population.

We also want to support community development schemes that help build the resilience of older people.

We hope that the recommendations in this report will contribute to helping people in later life feel safer.

On behalf of all the Panel Members I would like to thank Age Concern Brighton Hove and Portslade Director Jim Baker, who raised this matter. Thanks are also due to everyone who came to discuss their work with the Panel and most of all to the members of the public speaking at the meetings.



Mo Marsh

Councillor Mo Marsh
(Chair, Scrutiny Panel on Older People and Community Safety)

Executive Summary

The scrutiny review was set up to investigate how older people view community safety, what are the main issues from an older person's perspective and how older people can be helped to feel safer.

The panel heard evidence of the community safety services and initiatives provided by the Council and partner organisations for all age ranges. Older residents also gave their views.

Members identified a need for well-coordinated community safety messages, purpose-designed for older people and recommended further consultation and engagement, plus support for schemes developing resilience and social inclusion of older people.

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Information for older people
The panel recommends that a purpose designed booklet be provided to older people in user-friendly format to engage and inform on community safety and keeping safe

Recommendation 2 – Inter-generational initiatives
The Panel recommends inter-generational initiatives to help raise awareness, build resilience and feelings of safety of older people and better understanding between different age groups

Recommendation 3 – Equalities Impact Assessments
The Panel recommends Equalities Impact Assessments be brought forward with wide consultation with older people on policies/strategies of the Council and Partner organisations. This will help eliminate or minimise adverse impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and their ability to interact fully in society

Recommendation 4 – Mainstreaming successful schemes
The Panel recommends that the Neighbourhood Care Scheme, and other programmes shown to be successful in working with isolated vulnerable older people, be mainstreamed.

Recommendation 5 – Housing policy
The Panel recommends that the Council consider giving some priority for a move in an area near family or friends where support for an older person would be nearby.

Recommendation 6 – Cold calling
The Panel recommends that to help combat doorstep crime including distraction burglary, Trading Standards consider the introduction of 'no cold-calling' zones in areas identified from intelligence.

Recommendation 7 – Domestic Violence
The Panel recommends that regular training be further developed for every professional carer and volunteer working with older people in looking for early signs of elder abuse and domestic violence.

Recommendation 8 – Information on Domestic Violence
The Panel recommends that additional research and analysis be carried out including with service users. This would provide the council and partner agencies with better information on the extent and nature of domestic violence involving older people and elder abuse to help further develop preventive and support services.

Recommendation 9 – Select Committee on Dementia
The Panel recommends that operational protocols between agencies regarding elder abuse in cases of mental illness be referred on to the Select Committee on Dementia.

Recommendation 10 – Good Practice
The Panel welcomes the many initiatives regarding racial harassment and older people. The Panel recommends that good practice examples such as 'Reporting Centres' be extended where possible to other vulnerable older people including LGBT communities and disabled older people for example.

Recommendation 11 – Alcohol and older people
The Panel welcomes the social marketing campaign on the serious health consequences of alcohol abuse by older people and recommends that NHS Brighton & Hove be asked to report the outcomes of the campaign.

Recommendation 12 – Social spaces for older people
The panel recommends that licensed and unlicensed venues be encouraged to consider offering good value daytime activities and food and drink with the aim of attracting older customers.

Recommendation 13 – Data on older people
The panel recommends to enable the Council jointly with partners target future preventative work with older people, that where possible consistent data be distinguished by age and gender for vulnerable older people. This includes alcohol-related incidents and harm, black and minority ethnic population, domestic violence, disabled, LGBT and other minority groups.

Recommendation 14 – Police independent advisory group
The Panel recommends that the Older People's Council be asked to nominate an older person to serve on the Sussex Police Independent Advisory Group.

Recommendation 15 – Customer relationship management
The Panel recommends that to facilitate contact with older vulnerable people, the Council's Customer Relationship Management system be extended to include this population group.

Recommendation 16 – Consultation
The Panel recommends further consultation and analysis using the Community Engagement Framework to identify and respond to older people's specific concerns about community safety.

Recommendation 17 – B&H Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011
The Panel recommends that the particular needs of older people for keeping safe and maintaining independence should feature more prominently in the review of the B&H Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011.

Recommendation 18 – Monitoring action
The Scrutiny Panel asks its parent committee ECSOSC to monitor the implementation of actions following this scrutiny review. It also requests ECSOSC to add community safety work regarding minority older groups, to its work programme.

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18. List of Background Papers

1 – Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011

2 – PCST Scoping report

3 – PCST Services to Older People Domestic Violence; Sexual Violence and Abuse; Racist and Religiously Motivated crimes and incidents; LGBT Community Safety; services for older people; Burglary; Environment Improvement; Communities against drugs; Anti-Social Behaviour; Family Intervention Project; Refugees and Migrants

4 – Reporting and Addressing Racism

5 – Cheers!? Project on Alcohol and Older People

6 – OPC Annual Report

7 – Community Engagement Framework

1. Introduction

1.1 The Scrutiny Panel on Older People and Community Safety was established following 6 October 2008 Community Safety Forum meeting. The Director of Age Concern Brighton Hove and Portslade said the perception of crime by older people was a particularly important issue and that better contact was needed with older age groups. The Director later gave evidence to the Panel.[1]

1.2 The Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC) agreed to set up a scrutiny panel and invite the Older People's Council (OPC) to nominate a co-optee. ESCSOSC resolved that the Panel's remit would be to investigate

- To what extent are the views of older people known, regarding community safety?
- Do older people have specific concerns about safety in the community?
- How can older people be helped to feel safer in the community?

1.3 Councillors Amy Kennedy, Mo Marsh, David Smart and David Watkins plus OPC co-optee Mr John Eyles served on the panel and Councillor Mo Marsh was elected Chair.

1.4 Two informal meetings were held to agree the main scope of the review and work programme, and to gather initial information. Four meetings were held in public and a final informal meeting was arranged for the Panel to agree the draft scrutiny report.

1.5 The Partnership Community Safety Team (PCST) conducted an analysis for the Scrutiny Panel on crime, safety and fear of crime as experienced by older people. This sets out population characteristics, housing tenure, crime by older people, crime and reporting levels, crimes experienced by older people and perceptions of crime, based on police crime data, Office for National Statistics, British Crime Survey, Place Survey 2008 and Citizen's Panel 2008.[2]

1.6 Additional commentary and analysis was also provided to the Panel the Partnership Community Safety Team Members on Community Safety Services to older people.[3]

1.7 Compared with currently published information on local Community Safety, both reports focussed specifically on people over the age of 50. This more detailed information on older people in the two reports was particularly welcomed by the Scrutiny Panel.

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[1] Letter to Scrutiny Panel from Age Concern (Appendix 1) and minutes 24 April 2009 (Appendix 2)
[2] Community Safety and Older People Scoping Report, March 2009 (Background paper 2)
[3] Partnership Community Safety Team paper on Services to Older People.(Background Paper 3)

1.8 Together with other key issues raised by the Panel Members and by members of the public and organisations working with older people, the Partnership Community Safety Team information formed the main basis of the scrutiny findings and recommendations.

1.9 For the purposes of the Panel, an 'older person' was taken to mean over 50 years of age although different agencies use various definitions.

1.10 Community safety is defined by the Home Office as "an aspect of 'quality of life' in which people, individually and collectively, are protected as far as possible from hazards or threats that result from the criminal or anti-social behaviour of others, and are equipped or helped to cope with those they do experience."

1.11 Amongst the vast range of work the main areas investigated by the Panel have been vulnerable, isolated older people, focussing on feelings of safety, alcohol-related harm and incidents, domestic violence and doorstep crime. These are identified as relating in particular to older people in the Brighton & Hove Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011.[4]

1.12 The Panel regretted that their work was time-limited, and so they were unable to cover many key areas. The Panel asked that community safety work regarding minority older groups such as disabled and LGBT people for example be included in the work plan of the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.13 The final report of the Scrutiny panel will be considered by ECSOSC for endorsement and reported to the Community Safety Forum. It will be taken forward to decision-makers and on to full council.

1.14 The Panel would like to thank all the witnesses who gave information either in person or in writing.

1.15 The Panel would like to give special thanks to the members of the public and organisations working with older people who attended the meetings or gave their comments.

2. Key findings

2.1 There is a large amount of work with older people by the Council, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and other organisations working with older people.

[4] Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011 (Background Paper 1)

2.2 Older people are less likely than younger people to be victims of crime but older people's fear of crime is disproportionately greater; the impact of any crime can be greater.

2.3 Older people as a group are not prioritised within the current published Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011. However all other priority crime areas incorporate targeted crime reduction activities, which are appropriate to the needs of older people.

2.4 There is a higher level of reported domestic violence crimes and incidents from older people than from the population as a whole.[5]

2.5 The older black and minority ethnic population are least likely to report racially or religiously motivated crimes and incidents but the reasons for this are not known[6]

2.6 Despite current partnership work, older people would benefit from more targeted information on community safety and crime prevention services

2.7 Further close working between Council services and partners based on shared evidence can build on existing strategies to keep older people feeling safer

2.8 Recommendations within the body of this report address these key findings.

3. Older People and Community Safety

3.1 The Panel acknowledged the wide range of local Community Safety initiatives across all age ranges, set out in the Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011.

3.2 The panel recognises the success of neighbourhood policing teams working with key partners - especially welcoming the developing work of the growing network of Local Action Teams (LATs), and praising Police Community Support Officers. [7]

3.3 Brighton & Hove's Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) website campaign 'Safe in the City' gives a wide range of information on all the priority areas of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and measures being taken to tackle them, and ways of becoming involved, with contact details. *(www.safeinthecity.info)*

3.4 This Scrutiny Panel's work, although limited to four public meetings, was important in that it was investigating the needs of older people which can often be different from the rest of the population.

[5] Scoping Report Background Paper 2 para 7.1.3
[6] Reporting and Addressing Racism, Senior Racial Harassment Caseworker Background Paper 4 p5
[7] Minutes of Panel meeting 10 July 2009 (Appendix 5)

3.5 Some older people are likely to feel uncomfortable in settings where most people appear younger or even where there are young people laughing and shouting.

3.6 Older people may generally have different perceptions of their own safety in the community compared with younger people. They may have lower tolerance levels and feel more vulnerable compared with other age groups who might feel better able to shrug off anti-social behaviour.

3.7 Other factors can be associated with ageing such as social isolation, physical or mental illness, disabilities, sensory impairment or reduced mobility. These may affect an older person's perception of their own safety in addition to their ability to tap into the available support and services.

3.8 The Panel especially wished the Council and partner organisations to try to reach more 'out of sight' older people; those who had little or no support or contact with individuals or groups.

3.9 All the public meetings were reminded that older people do have a disproportionate fear of crime both nationally and locally, despite much lower levels of victimisation for most crime types. (Scoping report, page 4). This may be because older people might tend to avoid areas they see as higher risk or less willing or able to report crime, but also because there can be a greater impact on older people who are victims, than on younger people.

3.10 Members made the point that this message needed even higher visibility and it should be better targeted at older people. Older people are less likely than younger people to have internet access and socially isolated older people may be less aware of information that would help them feel safer.

3.11 Members wanted this message and other relevant information to be more widely communicated to older people in appropriate ways.

4. Communications and information

4.1 Throughout the scrutiny review the Panel members were aware that for a variety of reasons information and community support and services were likely to be less accessible to older people than younger people.

4.2 Older people in the public gallery at Panel meetings indicated that more information would be helpful. Representatives of two groups asked for talks or presentations on policing at their local meetings. Respondents from Sheltered Housing Action Group also wrote that improved communications could assist in improving an older person's feeling of safety.

4.3 Other safety measures such as personal safety, home security and smoke alarms had been raised at the final panel meeting and it was felt that this type of information and advice should also be more widely publicised for older people's benefit.

4.4 The Panel are aware of the wide range of existing publications and communications channels and forums for contacting older people about community safety matters. Amongst others these include local media organisations, City News, The Pensioner, other local newsletters and magazines, 'Grey Matters' The Patrol, information via NHS organisations, Age Concern, Community and Voluntary Sector Forum, Community Safety Forum, Local Action Teams, Older People's Council and the annual Older People's Day.

4.5 The Panel concludes that older people would benefit from better access to consistent community safety information, advice and services which are targeted to their needs.

4.6 The Panel wished to support and extend the current outreach work to older people, especially to minority groups and those who are socially isolated. From experience Members said that some older people liked to have information on paper handed to them and discussed in person, rather than just pushed through the letter box.

4.7 The Panel asked that a 'one-off' publication for older people be produced similar to the 'Be Smart Be Safe' example that had been successfully used in other local authorities such as Essex County Council, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Shropshire Council,
Middlesbrough Council and Plymouth City Council.

4.8 This would need to be tailored to Brighton & Hove style and format requirements including, with full contact details:

1. Explanation of community safety services, action to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and community cohesion
2. Neighbourhood policing and role of PCSOs
3. When and how to report incidents
4. How to recognise and report elder abuse and Domestic Violence
5. Reporting hate crime
6. Doorstep crime advice and reporting
7. Personal safety advice
8. Care assessments
9. Home fire safety assessments
10. Home security measures

Recommendation 1 – Information for older people

The panel recommends that purpose designed booklet be provided to older people in user-friendly format to engage and inform on community safety and keeping safe

4.9 In hearing from the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) about home fire safety assessments the ESFRS Head of Community Safety e-mailed concerning all care agencies' fire assessments. This additional

matter does not fall within the remit of this scrutiny panel and the Panel Chair has asked the Council's Director of Adult Social Care and Housing to reply to ESFRS. (See Appendix 8)

5. Inter-generational Initiatives

5.1 Some older people may not have much contact with the younger generation, other than when they are on 'good behaviour' in front of elderly relatives. Conversely, younger people may well be unaware of the serious impact their behaviour can sometimes have on older people.

5.2 The Panel Members were aware of good examples of community safety information being taken in to schools and other groups and felt that older people could be encouraged to take opportunities to engage with younger people for mutual benefit.

5.3 Members were interested to support outreach schemes that include working in the community for instance with the Youth Council and in schools encouraging children to pass on information and advice to older relatives and friends. Trading Standards and RISE (Refuge Information Support and Education; formerly Women's Refuge Centre) said that officers regularly visit schools. An event involving older and younger people had been held at St Richards Centre, Hangleton and younger people had been at a presentation during a Local Action Team meeting.

5.4 The Panel Members wish to encourage inter-generational programmes to help build up greater understanding between older and younger people; for example by way of history projects and explaining how young people's behaviour may cause distress to older people.

Recommendation 2 – Inter-generational initiatives

The Panel recommends inter-generational initiatives to help raise awareness, build resilience and feelings of safety of older people and better understanding between different age groups.

6. Assessing the Impact on Older People of Policies and Strategies

6.1 The Panel noted and supported Age Concern's principles and values. Under the future Equality Act public bodies will need to consider the needs of everyone who uses their services, regardless of their age.

6.2 The International Development Manager, on the steering group of the Cheers!? Project on alcohol and older people also made the point that strategies should be interlinked with the needs of an ageing population.[8] The Panel wishes to recommend longer-term measures to increase the general resilience and independence of older people.

[8] Minutes of the Panel meeting 3 July 2009 (Appendix 4)

Recommendation 3 – Equalities Impact Assessments

The Panel recommends Equalities Impact Assessments be brought forward with wide consultation with older people on policies/strategies of the Council and Partner organisations. This will help eliminate or minimise adverse impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and their ability to interact fully in society

6.3 Members asked that this scrutiny report be referred to the cross-party group on equalities which had recently been established.

7. Community Schemes

7.1 Members of the Panel were pleased with the success of the partnership work on Bristol Estate, set up to deal with anti-social behaviour.[9]

7.2 Consultation at the estate on people's perception of anti-social behaviour and crime before and after taking action had shown that local neighbourhood schemes can significantly strengthen a sense of safety.[10]

7.3 The Cabinet Member for Community Affairs, Inclusion and Internal Relations and Chair of the Community Safety Forum Councillor Dee Simson highlighted the importance of work to build inclusive communities. Information being gathered would help to shape future community safety services.

7.4 The good neighbour scheme Neighbourhood Care Scheme was described to the Panel; it helps older people and carers by recruiting local volunteers to support them in a variety of ways.

7.5 The Panel Members are aware that fostering a good sense of community takes a long time to establish and attracting funding can be a lengthy process. There seems to be scope for the Council to work closely in partnership, to improve the sustainability of community inclusion and cohesion projects that help maintain older people's feelings of safety, resilience and independence.

7.6 Therefore the Panel wishes to support and where possible mainstream, community programmes that are shown to be successful in helping isolated older people, such as the Neighbourhood Care Scheme.

Recommendation 4 – Mainstreaming successful schemes

The Panel recommends that the Neighbourhood Care Scheme, and other programmes shown to be successful in working with isolated vulnerable older people, be mainstreamed.

[9] Minutes of the Panel meeting 10 July 2009 (Appendix 5)
[10] Results of Surveys on Bristol Estate (Appendix 7)

8. Housing Policy

8.1 Homemove, the council's choice-based lettings system for council and housing association properties, allows tenants and prospective tenants to bid for the available properties they are interested in. The letting system is currently under review.

8.2 To help assist a care network of family and friends the Panel agreed it would be helpful as a part of the review, if priority could be given to bids for a move in an area near family and friends where care and support for an older person would be nearby.

Recommendation 5 – Housing policy

The Panel recommends that the Council consider giving some priority for a move in an area near family or friends where support for an older person would be nearby.

9. Doorstep Crime

9.1 Older people are known to be more affected than younger people by doorstep criminals such as bogus doorstep callers, rogue traders and distraction burglars.

9.2 Doorstep crime is a particularly heinous crime against vulnerable people and the Panel heard of the work being done locally and regionally to counteract it.

9.3 In national and local surveys older people have been shown to dislike cold calling and were worried about being conned in their own homes. Some local authorities had successfully introduced 'no cold-calling' zones. A member of the public asked if 'no cold calling' stickers can be made available.

Recommendation 6 – Cold calling

The Panel recommends that to help combat doorstep crime including distraction burglary, Trading Standards consider the introduction of 'no cold-calling' zones in areas identified from intelligence.

10. Domestic Violence

10.1 Domestic violence and elder abuse are not easy to recognise or talk about. Chief Executive Officer of RISE (Refuge, Information Support and Education and formerly Women's Refuge Centre) gave the Panel some examples and an anonymous case study of an older service user.

10.2 The Panel heard evidence of under-reporting of domestic violence and elder abuse and possible reasons why older women may be particularly

reluctant to disclose abuse. Some members of the 60+ Action Group had difficulty engaging with a speaker on Domestic Violence services.[11]

10.3 First indications can start with financial abuse when firm evidence comes to light for example because of unpaid bills, and may then lead on to other forms of abuse and even physical violence. A part-time worker at the Accident and Emergency Department at Sussex County Hospital helps to find signs of Domestic Violence and abuse.

10.4 There is a lower level of awareness of elder abuse compared with child abuse even amongst professionals and consistent data on domestic violence and elder abuse in older age groups is limited.

10.5 In its summary of older people's main concerns about community safety the Sheltered Housing Action Group listed more action and information on elder abuse and domestic violence as one of its top priorities.

10.6 The Panel received only limited data on domestic violence but there is evidence of a higher level of reported domestic violence crimes and incidents from the older population than the population as a whole[12].

10.7 The scoping report showed that the most common location for violent crime against older people is within a dwelling. This differs from 'violence against the person' offences within the population as a whole, which are more likely to occur in a public place than a dwelling. Older people are shown to experience domestic crimes at the hands of family members.

10.8 Information from the Lead Commissioner for Mental Health, NHS Brighton & Hove indicated a likely link between domestic violence and alcohol misuse.

10.9 Members were concerned at cases of domestic abuse victims having to leave home while the perpetrator remains.

10.10 The Panel's view was that older and more vulnerable might be expected to be less 'visible' to the authorities and probably less likely than younger people to arrive at Accident and Emergency hospital departments.

10.11 Having considered the evidence presented the Panel concluded that further work including with service users, was needed. This would involve community safety and adult social care officers and council partners getting a clearer picture of the needs of less visible and vulnerable older people in relation to domestic violence and elder abuse.

[11] Summary of replies to the Scrutiny Panel (Appendix 8)
[12] Scoping Report Background Paper 2 para 7.1.3

Recommendation 7 – Domestic Violence

The Panel recommends that regular training be further developed for every professional carer and volunteer working with older people in looking for early signs of elder abuse and domestic violence.

Recommendation 8 – Information on Domestic Violence

The Panel recommends that additional research and analysis be carried out including with service users. This would provide the council and partner agencies with better information on the extent and nature of domestic violence involving older people and elder abuse to help further develop preventive and support services.

10.12 In a rare case, information was given to the Panel by a carer in the Older People's Mental Health Team of an older person with mental illness needing additional protection from a perpetrator in their own home. Though rare this was a serious incident. The Head of Community Safety reassured the Members that operational protocols between agencies in these circumstances were being drawn up via the Safeguarding Adults Board and reported to the Community Safety Forum.

10.13 A Select Committee on Dementia set up by the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee is in progress. Despite this case being rare the Panel did have a high level of concern because an incident could be serious. The Panel asked that the matter be forwarded to that Select Committee.

Recommendation 9 – Select Committee on Dementia

The Panel recommends that operational protocols between agencies regarding elder abuse in cases of mental illness be referred on to the Select Committee on Dementia.

11. Racist and Religiously Motivated Incidents

11.1 The definition of racist and religiously motivated incident (RRMI) is wide enabling the recipient to determine what is inappropriate and unwanted behaviour.

11.2 The Senior Racial Harassment Caseworker gave the Panel a comprehensive account of incidents that can be experienced by minority ethnic and religious groups. This was a complex area of work to analyse not least because people may be targeted for identities other than age and ethnicity eg disability or sexual orientation and also because the numbers of instances are relatively low.

11.3 Older people in general are thought to be less likely to report incidents than younger people *(Scoping report)*. For ethnic and religious groups there

can be additional barriers to reporting for older people such as language capacity and potentially, fear of repercussions.

11.4 There is evidence that the older black and minority ethnic population are the least likely to report racially or religiously motivated crime and incidents. However there is no information as to whether or not that is as a result of a lower level of experiencing those crimes or a lack of trust and confidence, knowledge or unwillingness to report. [13]

11.5 There was already a great deal of work already under way with elderly BME community members including monitoring levels and trends, providing advocacy and support to victims and where possible working with partner agencies to respond to the incidents - for example taking action against the perpetrator.

11.6 At the end of a Panel meeting further advice and information was requested by members of the public from minority groups. This was given separately in person by officers in the Partnership Community Safety Team.

11.7 Accessing preventative and support services by minority communities where there are language, cultural and bureaucratic barriers had been identified as a priority by the City's Racial Harassment Forum.

11.8 Members welcomed the RRMI action plan 2008 - 2011 and all the outreach work under way to improve communication via translation, interpreting jargon and engaging in more accessible ways.

11.9 The folded booklet 'Racism – Don't Accept It' and Pan Sussex racist incident report form used by partner agencies were good examples of this. Enabling elderly BME members of the community - who may not find reporting easy – to report incidents through a known agency worker or at a local 'Reporting Centre,' could perhaps be extended to all vulnerable elderly.

Recommendation 10 – Good Practice

The Panel welcomes the many initiatives regarding racial harassment and older people. The Panel recommends that good practice examples such as 'Reporting Centres' be extended where possible to other vulnerable older people including LGBT communities and disabled older people for example.

12. Alcohol Abuse

12.1 It is not uncommon for people to greatly underestimate the amount of alcohol they drink. Alcohol is a disinhibitor of violence and reduces constraints around social behaviour, and can be linked with physical ill health, anxiety and depression. This can be a sensitive matter that people may feel uncomfortable to raise even with their GP. The Lead Commissioner for Mental

[13] Reporting and Addressing Racism Background Paper 4

Health, NHS Brighton & Hove said the most prolific users of alcohol unhealthily, is probably the 50+ age group.

12.2 Availability of low-cost alcohol and higher drinks costs in pubs and restaurants can lead to more solitary drinking, especially amongst older people who are likely to spend more time at home than younger people.

12.3 The scoping paper indicates a link between violent crime committed by people aged 50+ and alcohol. *(Scoping paper page 9)*

12.4 Unlike smoking where there is a clear message for health reasons to stop smoking, drinking alcohol should not always be seen as negative.

12.5 The effects of alcohol on younger people at present has a higher profile compared with older age groups so Members welcomed a new social marketing campaign targeted at older people. This is one part of a major programme on awareness and intervention being initiated by NHS Brighton & Hove.

12.6 Scrutiny Panel Member John Eyles Older People's Council co-optee, would serve on the interview panel to select the marketing company.

Recommendation 11 – Alcohol and older people

The Panel welcomes the social marketing campaign on the serious health consequences of alcohol abuse by older people and recommends that NHS Brighton & Hove be asked to report the outcomes of the campaign.

12.7 Cheers!? Is a local joint research project that looks into the reasons for older people's drinking because this was seen as a neglected area of research, policy and practice.[14] International Development Manager and member of the project steering group told the Panel that the needs of older people who are overlooked within the general population are likely to be greater for those who are already marginalised. This work linked in with the Healthy Cities Programme.

12.8 The project highlighted the importance of maintaining social spaces where older people can meet others.

Recommendation 12 – Social spaces for older people

The panel recommends that licensed and unlicensed venues be encouraged to consider offering good value daytime activities and food and drink with the aim of attracting older customers.

[14] Cheers!? A project about older people and alcohol Background paper 4

12.9 No detailed evidence on older people and alcohol misuse was given. The Panel suggested that where possible agencies collect and disaggregate consistent data on community safety for older age groups as well as for younger people. (See Crime/incident data below)

13. Crime/Incident Data

13.1 For the purposes of the scrutiny review an 'older' person was taken to mean someone over 50 years of age. Different agencies use other age ranges or none to record community safety data.

13.2 Part of the questioning for the Scrutiny Panel has been around coordinating the considerable amount of high quality information that is already available for planning services and conveying consistent messages to the public.

Recommendation 13 – Data on older people

The panel recommends to enable the Council jointly with partners target future preventative work with older people, that where possible consistent data be distinguished by age and gender for vulnerable older people. This includes alcohol-related incidents and harm, black and minority ethnic population, domestic violence, disabled, LGBT and other minority groups.

14. Neighbourhood Policing and Reporting Incidents

14.1 Evidence provided by the PCST indicates that rates of reporting crimes and incidents by older people are lower than by other age groups *(Scoping Paper page 12)*

14.2 There could be a number of reasons for this. But questions asked at Panel meetings indicated that older members of the public do not necessarily know when and how best to report incidents. Without internet access, people may not easily be able to find this out.

14.3 Amongst responses from individual older members of the public and written submissions from Sheltered Housing Action Group and 60+ Action Group, there was a view that the police ought to be more visible on the streets. It also seemed that the role of Community Police Support Officers (PCSOs) was not fully clear to residents and there was a question whether PCSOs could be issued with business cards.

14.4 Police representatives presented the neighbourhood policing plan to the Panel and said that the police were more accessible and visible than ever before. Around 95% of all police work did not need to involve a warrant-card-holding regular police officer. The PCSOs worked closely with local communities and Local Action Teams. Older people are the least likely to become victims but younger people needed to understand better the impact

they can have on others. Conversely older people could be encouraged to understand the younger generation better and perhaps visit schools or youth groups and explain how they feel.

14.5 The police representatives said that if necessary messages for PCSOs can be left at the Lewes call centre. Regarding when to report an incident; false alarms are preferable to ignoring serious incidents.

14.6 Historically the fear of crime had been overlooked but with a reduction in levels of crime, work to address this had now become important.

14.7 This and other community safety messages had to be communicated over the whole Division. At the same time more detailed information and intelligence needed to be addressed at a very local neighbourhood level. The Police were looking at ways to contact people other than via the Internet or 'The Patrol' monthly newsletter. (See Communications below)

14.8 There was praise for the work of PCSOs from Panel Members and some people in the public gallery who had worked closely with them. Members agreed that the PCSO role and responsibilities should be explained more widely.

14.9 As part of the Sussex Police Consultation strategy, an Independent Advisory Group advises the police on the impact of critical incidents and the Police were seeking an independent older person to serve on this. The Panel felt that the OPC were well placed to facilitate a nominee. The Older People's Council's Annual Report 2008 – 2009 had been circulated[15].

Recommendation 15 – Police independent advisory group

The Panel recommends that the Older People's Council be asked to nominate an older person to serve on the Sussex Police Independent Advisory Group.

14.10 There was a question about using a database of older vulnerable or isolated people to simplify contact in cases of emergency. Details entered on to a Customer Relationship Management system would enable a caller and background details to be identified from the phone number alone.

Recommendation 14 – Customer relationship management

The Panel recommends that to facilitate contact with older vulnerable people, the Council's Customer Relationship Management system be extended to include this population group.

[15] Older People's Council Annual Report 2008 – 2009 Background Paper 6

15. Consultation

15.1 The Panel publicised its work via press releases prior to meetings and via direct mailings to organisations working with older people and tenants' and residents' associations. The information received in reply from residents and groups working with older people is included in the minutes of the Panel meetings or otherwise summarised in Appendix 8.

15.2 Full details on the use of the Community Engagement Framework have been presented to the Panel by the Community Engagement Improvement Officer. The Panel noted that faith groups, regularly making home visits were important in the context of contacting older people.

15.3 Members are grateful to the residents and members of the public and groups working with older people who gave evidence to the Panel. Similarly to other Scrutiny Panels, this review has been restricted to only four meetings. Where responses concerned other matters such as access and pavement obstacles these have been passed on to relevant officers

15.4 Referring back to the Bristol Estate initiatives and consultation (Appendix 7), Members also welcome and support all the coordinated partnership work that has been presented to them. Over time the Panel would like this to become even more inclusive by further:

- developing consultation arrangements with older people including service users on their perceptions of anti-social behaviour and crime

- improving the Council's knowledge of the most vulnerable and isolated older people including those who either by choice or lack of information do not engage with services or organisations

- providing more publicity and coordinated information on current services

15.5 This should be done consistently over time by specialists working in partnership in front-line services and together with Community Engagement officers.

Recommendation 16 – Consultation

The Panel recommends further consultation and analysis using the Community Engagement Framework to identify and respond to older people's specific concerns about community safety.

Recommendation 17 – B&H Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011

The Panel recommends that the particular needs of older people for keeping safe and maintaining independence should feature more

prominently in the review of the B&H Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011.

16. Monitoring the Recommendations of Scrutiny Review

16.1 The Panel asked that the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitor action following this scrutiny review.

16.2 It also asked ECSOSC to add to its work programme .community safety work regarding minority older groups, that were not covered by this scrutiny review,

Recommendation 18 – Monitoring Action

The Scrutiny Panel asks its parent committee ECSOSC to monitor the implementation of actions following this scrutiny review. It also requests ECSOSC to add community safety work regarding minority older groups, to its work programme.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Letter from Jim Baker, Director, Age Concern, Brighton Hove & Portslade

BACKGROUND

1.1 Age Concern Brighton Hove & Portslade has a central and essential role of ensuring that the perspective of older people in this City is considered by decision makers within the City. Our Mission and Core Values are below, and we hope that these show our desire to act in partnership to ensure that our client group are able to receive a quality, unified, service from all providers across the City.

1.2 Our intention in making a submission to the Scrutiny Panel is to assist the Panel's deliberations discussing and making recommendations in relation to:

(i) **Impact & Communication**. Communicating with 30%+ of the population when there is no free newspaper and many of them do not purchase the local paper or welcome unsolicited correspondence is a significant problem in this City

(ii) **Trust & Rumour** Within a context of lack of information, or lack of choosing to access information it is very easy for people with a negative perspective to cause distress amongst others

(iii) **Collaboration & Value for Money.** There is a considerable amount of quality information and organisations currently available in the City in relation to community safety but how effective can numerous leaflets and consultations be, if older people are expected to read them all and know what is relevant at a given time

(iv) **Targeted Support.** City wide information may not deal with the problems experienced (or believed to be occurring) in specific localities

(v) **Network of older peoples organisations.** How do we ensure that they have a chance to be involved, even if they are small and do not have a constitution. This is critical if we are to make this work in neighbourhoods

(vi) **Role of the Older Peoples Council**. Although it is true that there are a number of organisations involved in working with older people the only formally elected body across the City is the OPC. Its role within this process requires clarification

(vii) **Relationship to the Local Area Agreement targets**. In particular

- N14: People who feel they can influence decisions in their locality;
- N16: Participation in regular volunteering;
- N17 Creating an environment for a thriving third sector.

AGE CONCERN

Our mission
Our mission is to promote the well-being of all older people and to help make later life a fulfilling and enjoyable experience.

Principles
Values and principles underpin what we do, why we do it, and guide how we work to achieve our mission. Our underlying principles are:

- Ageism is unacceptable: we are against all forms of unfair discrimination, and challenge unfair treatment on grounds of age
- All people have the right to make decisions about their lives: we help older people to discover and exercise these rights
- People less able to help themselves should be offered support: we seek to support older people to live their lives with dignity
- Diversity is valued in all that we do: we recognise the diversity of older people and their different needs, choices, cultures and values
- It is only through working together that we can use our local, regional and national presence to the greatest effect.

Values
Our work is also guided by a set of values:

- Enabling: we enable older people to live independently and exercise choice
- Influential: we draw strength from the voices of older people, and ensure that those voices are heard
- Dynamic: we are innovative and driven by results and constantly deliver for older people.

- Caring: we are passionate about what we do and care about each individual.
- Expert: we are authoritative, trusted and quality-orientated

Corporate priorities 2007 – 2010

- Prevent poverty and maximize income in retirement
- Promote age equality and enable older people to make full contributions to our economy, society and neighbourhoods.
- Maximize healthy life expectancy and promote health, independence and wellbeing for all older people
- Achieve greater social inclusion of the most disadvantaged older people and challenge the causes of exclusion
- Achieve a step change in effectiveness and efficiency, in which a crucial element will be a greater focus on older people as customers and contributors to all that we do

APPENDIX 2

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AD HOC PANEL - OLDER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

11.00am 24 APRIL 2009

VALLEY SOCIAL CENTRE

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Marsh (Chair)

Also in attendance: Councillor Watkins, Smart and Kennedy

Other Members present: Mr John Eyles Older People's Council co-optee

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1.1 There were no substitutes – substitutes are not allowed on scrutiny panels.

1.2 Councillors Kennedy and Marsh said they had personal and non-prejudicial interests as they were volunteers for and supported the Neighbourhood Care Scheme. Councillor Smart said his wife was a recipient of NCS support.

1.3 There were no declarations of party whip.

1.4 Members of the press and public were not excluded from this meeting but the Panel noted that anyone could ask to give information to the Panel in private session.

2. TO NOTE THE REMIT OF SCRUTINY PANEL AND INITIAL FOCUS

2.1 The Panel noted the remit of the Panel and particular areas that they may wish to pursue as per agenda.

3. INFORMATION GATHERING

Introduction

The Chair Councillor Mo Marsh welcomed members of the public attending the meeting in the Valley Social Centre. The Scrutiny Panel Members and speakers introduced themselves. The Chair explained that for the purposes of the Panel an older person was defined as anyone 50 years or over. The

Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011 had been developed by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

Information from Age Concern

3.1 Mr Baker Director of Age Concern Brighton Hove and Portslade, had first raised the issue of older people and community safety at a meeting of the Community Safety Forum. He welcomed the panel investigation.

3.2 Older people were far less likely to be victims than younger people yet older people's fear of crime was greater but disproportionate to the actuality. This message had to be spread.

3.3 Mr Baker stated that there needed to be stronger communication with older people; both to receive and give information. He thought business sponsorship or other funding sources could be attracted to produce an independent publication for older people in Brighton and Hove. Consultations with older people would be better received in a publication that was already being regularly read and could work out cheaper than at present for statutory consulters including health organisations.

3.4 Mr Baker envisaged this as a free quarterly newsletter that would include for instance good news regular features local events and emergency phone numbers aimed at older people. He felt the Older People's Council and other organisations could be involved with this. He did not criticise any current publication but said more collaboration was needed and the proposal would not affect any existing newsletter such as the Council's City News, the Leader or The Pensioner, published by the Pensioners' Forum.

3.5 Councillor Smart said that in his ward the Knoll Scroll and Hangleton Harbinger were now circulated to more than 6000 households. This had taken years of hard work to establish.

3.6 From his experience of supporting local clients Mr Baker said social inclusion of older people was an area to be developed, to help people feel safe. Older People could lose their sense of independence and yet often they themselves did not recognise this and did not see themselves as vulnerable. Supporting social networks and developing these should be an area of priority in his view. One example was give; tenpin bowling.

3.7 Speaking about interaction with local groups he said a full list did not exist of local organisations working with older people. Putting together such a contact list and keeping it up to date would be a long process; however it would be a simple task and would help communicate key issues such as fear of crime.

3.8 More personal alarms for local vulnerable older people could be provided if unwanted mobile phones were collected for emergency use by older people in Brighton and Hove, rather than being sent for recycling elsewhere. Handsets could be programmed with a 'one-touch' key if necessary and linked with a Geographical Positioning System to help identify and locate an alert.

3.9 Regarding future grant funding rounds, Mr Baker said closer partnership working by the Council had the potential to demonstrate the various client groups thereby strengthening funding applications.

3.10 Mr Baker said that the Council should give more support to the Older People's Council, and commented that he felt more could be done 'Designing out Crime' as for example in award-winning West Yorkshire. The Head of Community Safety pointed out the long-term input into planning policies and into individual planning applications of the Environmental Initiatives Team and its direct practical environmental work.

3.11 Answering questions Mr Baker said that from 1 April 2009, Age Concern and Help the Aged had merged. These were national charities and therefore those who wished to make a donation or leave a legacy for local use needed to specify 'to be spent in Brighton and Hove.'

3.12 Age Concern held a number of contracts within the council, accounting for around ¾ of its services and around ¼ were funded by legacies and donations. Responsibilities for Older People's Services within the Council lay with Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Cabinet Member for Housing.

3.13 Regarding lines of communications Mr Baker said he had meetings at Cabinet Member level. It was a period of change for both Age Concern and council Members and officers and there was room for improvement in communications with partners. An example of a need for closer working was a 'Patient's Choice' health event targeted at older people.

3.14 The Head of Housing Management who was also the scrutiny link officer for the Panel, lead officer for the Older people's Council and manager of the 50+ Community Programme, said that the Panel had seen and liked the handbook 'Be Smart Be Safe' produced by the Safety Education Foundation and if wished, could recommend the funding of this, tailor-made to Brighton and Hove.

3.15 Individual's names could not be shared because of data protection legislation; however the list of clubs/activities and organisations formerly compiled and maintained by Adult Social Services was likely to be part of the remit of a council officer in the near future. This would be helpful to many, including the Access Point. Information on the 50+ Community Programme had been provided to the Panel and was available to view on request.

3.16 Mr Baker told the meeting Age Concern had a free counselling service. Client confidentiality was important. He said elder abuse typically started with financial abuse, perhaps by a family member or carer which could lead on to criminal, physical psychological or emotional abuse. An older person may tend to internalise emotions, feel guilty or responsible and timescales in arranging help - such as the support of a social worker - could be so long that unrepairable damage may have been made to the client.

Neighbourhood Care Scheme

3.17 Mr de Podesta had run NCS, the Neighbourhood Care Scheme (different from Neighbourhood Watch) since 1998. He said many elderly people were isolated and 'invisible' and had inescapable difficulties which required support which could best provided by NCS. A paper giving facts and figures and leaflet was circulated.

3.18 The Scheme was key to helping people stay active alert and involved and gives emotional and practical support to vulnerable people. It gives neighbours an opportunity to help which he said as responsible concerned people, they often wanted to do. People wishing to volunteer were first interviewed then checked with the Criminal Records Bureau, then had induction sessions and on-going support and training.

3.19 He gave examples of people needing help and volunteers who often formed lasting friendships. Answering a question about risks associated with introducing befrienders, Mr Podesta said that NCS do risk assessments for both client and volunteer. Though the scheme was risk-aware it was not risk-averse and just comparable to everyday life.

3.20 Despite major Neighbourhood renewal programmes that had been funded across the country, Mr de Podesta said that fostering a sense of community and good neighbourliness had not been promoted well.

3.21 Mr de Podesta said he knew of no other scheme in the UK that put such a stress on giving people the opportunity to help their neighbours and reduce social isolation. There was great potential for the scheme to grow, describing it as an un-mined seam of neighbourly good-will.

Older People's Mental Health Service

3.22 Staff from the Older People's Mental Health Team gave examples of safeguarding adult alerts involving those with dementia or mental health problems that concerned the meeting. These indicated gaps in procedures between agencies; operational protocols needed to be addressed directly, to enable a victim to be protected in their home from a perpetrator. Progress would be reported back to this Panel.

3.23 In discussion the OP MHT said that those supporting the elderly including NCS volunteers might benefit from further training on looking for signs of abuse. It was noted that people with dementia and mental health problems were not good witnesses and evidence was difficult to gather, except where financial transactions were on record.

3.24 Regular courses for staff were run at a nominal fee. Identification cards could be issued to those with serious dementia in case police or other services needed to intervene but the use of these had other implications.

3.25 The Panel had received a copy of the Safeguarding Adults Annual report and work programme, available to view on request, and a summary of the Older People's Mental Health Service structure was circulated.

Head of Community Safety

3.26 The Head of Community Safety said that a strategic assessment (crime analysis) had been provided to the Panel in a report available to view on request on the extent to which older people experience and perpetrate crime.

3.27 The report drew out the risk areas that were not normally discussed such as alcohol-related harm and incidents, domestic violence, doorstep crime, criminal damage and hate crime, for which the number of incidents reported by older people, although low, had risen in comparison with the rest of the population.

3.28 Members discussed:

a) Extent of awareness of elder abuse and compared with child abuse
b) Training for councillors, staff
c) The attrition rate for perpetrators
d) Role of the Older People's Council, particularly in contacting individual older people electorate

4. FUTURE MEETINGS

4.1 The Panel noted that a Select Committee on Dementia and a scrutiny panel on pavement obstructions such as A- boards would shortly start work.

4.2 Summarising the Chair said the Panel would be asking for more information on alcohol and older people and hopefully more public interest would be generated as the Panel progressed. The Chair would be discussing the next agendas with the scrutiny officers.

4.3 Possible/probable items for next meetings 22nd May and 3rd July

- Cabinet Member Cllr Dee Simson
- Primary Care Trust and older people risk from alcohol-related incidents/harm
- Community engagement and meeting the particular needs of older people
- 60+ Action Group
- Progress following 24th April
- others

The meeting concluded at 1.30pm

Signed Chair

Dated this day of

APPENDIX 3

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AD HOC PANEL - OLDER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

11.00am 22 MAY 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Marsh (Chair) Smart and Watkins
and Mr John Eyles OPC cooptee

PART ONE

5. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

5.1 The Panel Chair welcomed all to the meeting including all the speakers and Councillor Dee Simson the Cabinet Member for Community Affairs, Inclusion and Internal Relations and Chairman of the Community Safety Forum. The Chairman was pleased to see more members of the public in attendance than previously and reminded everyone of the Panel's remit.

6. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 APRIL

6.1 Subject to a minor amendment by Sean de Podesta the minutes of the 24 April meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

6.2 With the agreement of the Chairman, Ms Joan Moorhouse Chair of the Brighton & Hove Pensioners' Forum; which published 'The Pensioner' magazine made comments on the minutes. She said that 'The Pensioner' was written by older people for older people and thought it would indeed be adversely affected by an additional publication in this area. Ms Moorhouse handed out copies of the latest edition and said there was no need for any similar publication.

6.3 Two Members of the Older People's Council (OPC) served on the Editorial Board and the OPC contributed articles to the magazine. 'The Pensioner' was supported by statutory providers including the Council and health organisations and was distributed across Brighton & Hove. However circulation numbers had recently been reduced from 6,000 to 4,000 and it was difficult to attract more business and statutory sponsorship. The Pensioners' Forum had 600 individual and group members and was actively trying to recruit more affiliated organisations.

6.4 Mr Eyles, OPC co-optee to the scrutiny panel, said 'The Pensioner' was a useful way to publicise older people's issues. Other Panel members praised the quality of the magazine and it was suggested that Council funding of OPC could be used to buy advertising space in the magazine. The Panel heard of production and distribution costs and advertising fees. The Head of Housing Management said that Adult Social Care had contributed to the newsletter's production costs and paid for OPC members' expenses not programmes.

6.5 Ms Moorhouse told the Panel that the Brighton & Hove Pensioner's Forum organised a joint 'Older People's Day.' The event typically attracted more than 1,000 delegates and this year was being held in Hove Town Hall on Thursday 19 November.

6.6 The Chairman asked if the following Panel meeting could appear in the next edition of the magazine and thanked Ms Moorhouse for her comment.

7. DISCUSSION WITH CABINET MEMBER AND CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

7.1 Councillor Simson, Cabinet Member for Community Affairs, Inclusion and Internal Relations, referred also to her relatively new role of Chairman of the Community Safety Forum. She said older people had a greater fear of crime and were particularly fearful of groups of young people. It was important to help reduce these fears by encouraging schemes that brought the age groups together.

7.2 Noting that the Panel may wish to focus on domestic violence and violence in the home Councillor Simson said as Cabinet member she was working to build inclusive communities to increase individuals' resilience and reduce vulnerability; for example via discretionary funding for third sector organisations which was currently under way. Helping older and younger people to work more closely and reaching out to older people especially for instance when they are isolated or confined indoors were important.

7.3 Councillor Simson noted that partners including the Primary Care Trust and Sussex Police were also contributing to the scrutiny panel, and referred to the work of the City Inclusion Partnership. Housing policies could be key in helping to keep families and communities together she said.

7.4 The Panel's remit was potentially wide and the information being gathered would help increase the visibility of older people and help shape future community safety services.

8. INFORMATION-GATHERING AND FUTURE MEETINGS

Head of Trading Standards, John Peerless

8.1 The Head of Trading Standards outlined the history of the Service from 'weights and measures' to fair trading, product safety, food standards and Consumer Advice to taking steps to address some of the wider agendas such as Health and Community Safety.

8.2 He said older people were more affected by doorstep criminals than younger people and that doorstep crime was linked with distraction burglary. A national survey of people aged over 55 by the Institute of Trading Standards showed that 96% disliked cold calling such as energy sales and property repairs. The survey revealed that 60% were worried about being conned in their own home and 70% thought the development of an 'approved' trader scheme would be helpful.

8.3 Scams and rogue trading tended to be cross border issues. Whilst steps were taken locally to help support residents it was recognised there was a need to work regionally and nationally with enforcement colleagues.

8.4Trading Standards South East (TSSE) a group of Trading Standards Authorities co terminus with the GOSE region have collaborated to develop a regional response. The group was funded by BERR (Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform) to produce a Community Safety Toolkit which brought together best practice. A Community Safety project was also financed including the musical 'trickster' which was organised a number of times by Trading Standards during 2006 and 2007.

8.5 More recently TSSE had implemented a Regional Intelligence Unit to collate and disseminate intelligence across the region and with colleagues across the country. The Unit liaised with 'Operation Liberal' a Derbyshire Police-based national reporting database for incidents of doorstep crime.

8.6 The Head of Trading Standards said that there were a number of different commercial trader schemes that could help the public identify suitable traders; but it was recognised that a Trading Standards Approved Scheme would help provide even better protection. Therefore in 2006 Brighton & Hove implemented the 'Buy with Confidence' scheme which had been started 2 years before by Hampshire Trading Standards.

8.7 ‘Buy With Confidence’ had been adopted across the region and there were now 80 local members. Potential members have to undergo a very stringent process including the vetting of their terms and conditions and obtaining references. The scheme is publicised in ‘The Pensioner’ and ‘The Argus’ works with East and West Sussex and Brighton & Hove to produce a quarterly advertorial.

8.8 Consumer Direct South East (CDSE) was the regional arm of a national consumer advice line that receives all first contacts for Trading Standards in the region. CDSE identifies and refers potential 'doorstep crime' incidents by telephone immediately. A Rapid Action Team (RAT) aims to respond to these calls within 40 minutes and since 2006 RAT has responded to more than 50 calls.

8.9 The CDSE number is 08454 040506. Doorstep crime can also be logged with Sussex Police by calling 08457 606999.

8.10 Brighton and Hove Trading Standards was one of the few Services to employ an Education Officer. The officer works with a wide range of organisations involved with older and vulnerable people and uses links with schools to give information to children to pass on to older relatives and friends.

8.11 Jointly with the Community Safety Partnership Team alternative prevention measures are used including the fitting of locks, door chains and the provision of posters designed to deter door step callers.

8.12 Answering a question, the Head of Trading Standards said the service could investigate providing 'no cold calling' stickers for individual households and would also support the implementation of ‘no cold calling’ zones in relevant communities or areas identified from intelligence.

8.13 Asked about rogue management agents the Head of Trading Standards indicated that he was not aware of reports of this particular problem.

8.14 However all consumers were encouraged to report suspicions of rogue trading or scams via CDSE, Trading Standards or the Police to help build the case for targetting resources.

8.15 Some Panel members said they had not been not aware of all the various initiatives and contact details.

8.16 The Chair thanked the Head of Trading Standards who was about to begin a secondment to manage a Regional Fraud Unit funded by BERR. The Scambusters Team has a remit to work with 61 local authorities in the South East and East of England and London to tackle cross border crime including doorstep crime.

RISE Refuge, Information, Support and Education (Formerly Women’s Refuge Centre)

8.17 Gail Gray spoke to the scrutiny panel as the Chief Executive Officer of RISE, Refuge Information Support and Education, formerly the Women’s Refuge Project. She explained that domestic violence included emotional, physical, psychological sexual and financial abuse that takes place within an intimate or family type relationship and forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. Although professional carers may not come into this category they may have a close and intimate relationship with the person being cared for that may become abusive.

8.18 A briefing note was handed to the Panel and case study was given.

8.19 Anyone could experience domestic abuse but most were women. It was difficult to disclose abuse and there was some evidence of considerable under-reporting. An Australian study had shown that 1/3 of all older women had experienced domestic violence at some time but as much as 60% of these had not reported it.

8.20 An older person could suffer the physical and psychological consequences of domestic violence that had happened during their lifetime or later in life when retirement, deprivation, disability or sexual changes could exacerbate abuse. Under-reporting by older people could be due to a sense of shame, embarrassment, guilt or, particularly amongst BME communities, honour; that may not exist to the same extent amongst younger people. Older people who were physically and socially isolated would find it more difficult to report domestic violence for lack of someone to talk to.

8.21 In some cases there may be a fear of the consequences of reporting, such as the response of the professionals or, for families with a concern for an older family member, fear of having a dependent relative.

8.22 Perpetrators could be adult children perhaps financially dependent on a vulnerable mother. An older woman may be the carer for the perpetrator or may depend on the perpetrator for care. In many cases the criminal justice system was not appropriate and specialist resources to help and support the sometimes more complex physical and medical needs of those involved were limited.

8.23 Domestic abuse often breaks up families. However there is some success in bringing families together via local support services for perpetrators and Rise services working separately with grandmother, mother and children before re-integrating the father into the family.

8.24 Neither nationally nor locally was there firm information; reporting was the responsibility of different individuals and agencies for example GPs – for whom more training was needed - and hospital Accident and Emergency (A+E) departments. RISE had recently appointed an independent adviser partly based in A+E to do this.

8.25 Domestic violence is often subsumed under ‘elder abuse.’ It seemed that there was a low level of knowledge and awareness of domestic abuse even amongst professionals. Signs of domestic violence were not being well recognised

8.26 Local research and data collection was necessary and there needed to be agreement as to what level of support was needed in the City as a whole and what were the appropriate resources for older people and domestic violence.

8.27 Ms Gray said RISE was the only specialist domestic violence provider in the City and formed part of a coordinated crisis response. RISE had disabled-friendly refuge but this accommodated families often with younger children and complex needs and so was not usually the best option for older people other than in an emergency.

8.28 It had a dedicated helpline and also outreach services in areas of Whitehawk and Moulsecoomb which is now a citywide resource though with

limited capacity due to funding ending. Community outreach was the best way to work with older people and this had also been done successfully in partnership in Tarner and Eastern Road areas. RISE provided preventative education in schools on healthy relationships and young people's groups. A recent development has been a group for young people who are aggressive in their relationships and a Carers' group that runs alongside this.

8.29 Rise worked together with the Safeguarding Adults Team and the Domestic Violence coordinator of the Community Safety team and was helping develop policies and protocols on domestic violence and vulnerable adults including a checklist and flowchart for professionals.

8.30 Ms Gray said there needed to be a level of risk assessment including for carers' schemes. Raising awareness was key and RISE was providing training and talks to local groups targeting older people. Feedback from these group said that leaflets should be printed in accessible and suitable formats and a Compact Disk (CD) for easy use would be useful. However more could be done.

8.31 Ms Gray stated that most domestic abuse victims have to leave home while the perpetrator remains. She said there was a need for housing for older people who had experienced domestic violence. She said in her opinion domestic abuse should be included in a cross-cutting older people's strategy and older people's safety included prominently within the older people's housing strategy.

Rise Helpline is 622822. Rise website is www.riseuk.org.uk

8.32 On behalf of the Panel the Chairman thanked all the speakers for their helpful information.

9. Discussion/questions from members of the public

9.1 A member of the public asked what could be done for older people who had neighbours who made them feel unsafe? The meeting heard that there was active working on anti-social behaviour between tenants associations, neighbourhood policing and Police Community Support Officers. A direct call line was available to give a rapid response.

9.2 Answering another question, the officers would investigate producing 'No cold calling' door stickers.

10. Future Panel meetings, Brighton Town Hall

10.1 It was agreed to start the final two meetings earlier; start times would now be:

10.30am 3 July and
1.30pm 10 July

10.2 Future probable/possible information

a) Alcohol-related Incidents and Crime

b) Feedback on Older People's Mental Health Team following evidence on 24 April

c) Community Engagement and older people

d) Feedback from 60+ Action Group

e) 50+ Programme Annual report

f) Older people from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and Community safety

g) Policing re Older People in the Community

The meeting concluded at 1.30pm

Signed Chair

Dated this day of

APPENDIX 4

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AD HOC PANEL - OLDER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

10.30am 3 JULY 2009

COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Marsh (Chairman), Kennedy, Smart and Watkins,

Co-optee: John Eyles (Older People's Council)

PART ONE

9. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

a Declarations of Substitutes
Substitutes are not allowed on Scrutiny panels

b Declarations of Interests
Councillor Smart said he had formerly been a trustee of Hangleton and Knoll Project.

c Declaration of Party Whip
There were none.

d Exclusion of Press and Public
In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was 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 100I (1) of the said Act.
RESOLVED: That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

10. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

12.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May were signed by the Chair.

11. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

11.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Members of the public who wanted to make a comment or ask a

question were requested to say if they were speaking for themselves or on behalf of an organisation.

12. ALCOHOL AND OLDER PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY SAFETY

12.1 Lead Commissioner for Mental Health Simon Scott, NHS Brighton and Hove, spoke to the Panel about the impact of alcohol across the City on people above 50 years old. He said there was evidence to show that the most prolific users of alcohol unhealthily, was the 50+ age group and resources were being allocated to addressing this via the Joint Commissioning Board, chaired by Councillor Ken Norman.

12.2 It was not uncommon for people to underestimate by half the amount of alcohol they drink. It was thought that the group in the general population who drink most above the recommended levels of alcohol are 50+ old and living on a low income in social housing.

12.3 Unlike smoking for which the clear and simple message is to stop smoking; the alcohol message is not necessarily to abstain but to drink in moderation and there was not one single message to send out for all parts of the community. Unhealthy drinking over a number of years has a physiological impact especially on liver kidneys and the brain (cognition) which accrues over time.

12.4 Over a single year there was thought to have been a 17% rise in alcohol-related hospital admissions including falling, fighting and domestic violence or, more commonly, adverse effects on physical health.

12.5 Falls and alcohol can be more associated with older people, whose mobility can be more affected, than younger people. Existing information did not show the extent to which older people were victims of alcohol misuse but it was likely that even hearing younger people drinking laughing and shouting would not aid an older person’s sense of wellbeing.

12.6 Alcohol was an disinhibitor of violence and reduced constraints around social behaviour. Violence in the home was a serious concern for the city.

12.7 Brighton & Hove was known to have significantly more alcohol-related problems than the national and south east region averages, and other seaside towns.

12.8 Answering questions the Lead Commissioner said alcohol was associated with the young onset of dementia. Existing dementia services were seeing people younger and younger and there was not optimism about a cure.

12.9 Prompt early action was needed but this was difficult when alcohol was widely available and ridiculously cheap, he said. The cheaper the alcohol is, the more it was consumed.

12.10 Alcohol was a relaxant and depressant but excessive misuse exacerbated depression. The use of alcohol could affect a healthy sleep pattern, leading to poorer ability to cope.

12.11 Low income, below £10,000, was a key factor associated with greater use of alcohol and anxiety and depression were also interlinked. Asked about reasons there was no other known explanation, other than the social circumstances that older people can find themselves in. Intelligence was poor as to why people drink but there is anecdotal evidence that social isolation can lead to drinking at home. The Cheers!? Project to be described later at this meeting, would help to shed light on this, said the Lead Commissioner.

12.12 The Lead Commissioner outlined a recent alcohol-related initiative: Firstly to understand what is healthy drinking and persuade people to drink healthily. Social marketing to young people was now to be extended to people over 50 years. Interviews were being held on 24 July re tenders for social marketing to older people and NHS would like a volunteer to serve on the panel. Older People's Council co-optee John Eyles agreed to do this.

12.13 Secondly a series brief interventions sessions were being arranged for people drinking at a harmful level, to encourage more sensible drinking patterns. This contract has been let to a voluntary sector organisation.

12.14 Thirdly focussed intervention was being provided on the hospital ward to a dependent group for whom alcohol is known to be a problem for example domestic violence offenders/victims, public place violent crime perpetrators, and other people presenting to hospital. Those over 50 were likely to form a large part of this group.

12.15 The Chair thanked the Lead Commissioner for his helpful information.

12.16 The Chair welcomed Cheers!? Steering Group member Angela Flood, International Development Manager, working across City Council Adult Social Care and NHS Brighton and Hove. Her work was also related to the development at city level of the World Health Organization's Healthy Cities Programme. A 4-page summary of the Cheers!? project had been distributed to the Panel.

12.17 Cheers!? A project about older people and alcohol, was a joint research project between Age Concern, the University of Brighton School of Applied Social Science, NHS Brighton and Hove, the City Council and the Drug and Alcohol Team and was funded through the Brighton and Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange. It was carried out because alcohol and older people was seen as a neglected area of research, policy and practice – the focus had been on young people's drinking - and the reasons for older people's drinking were not well documented.

12.18 The project, built on a previous scoping study carried out by the Health & Social Policy Research Centre enabled older people themselves to carry out the research and included representation from the Older People's Council.

The research findings were disseminated at a special launch event on 11 June and the project also won the University of Brighton's Research and Innovation Award for 2009, attracting further funding to develop the research.

12.19 Drinking should not always be seen as negative but could have a negative impact from the point of view of health, social life and relationships with family and friends. The Brighton and Hove night-time economy, aimed at younger people, was linked to economic development but ageing can exclude older people from certain locations and some areas were perceived to be unsafe. Perceptions can have a powerful impact on behaviour, potentially leading to an increase in social isolation.

12.20 The availability of low-cost alcohol, sometimes cheaper than bottled water, and higher drinks costs in pubs and restaurants could lead to more solitary drinking at home. Negative uses of alcohol tended to decrease for those with an active social life.

12.21 Some older people who feel their drinking is becoming a problem will seek help; however, some GPs may feel reluctant to raise this sensitive and confidential subject and possibly risk spoiling their relationship with the patient. The needs of older people which are overlooked within the general population, are likely to be worse for those who are already marginalised.

12.22 Main findings from the study which impacted adversely on drinking habits:

- Feelings of exclusion/social isolation
- Life transition points can trigger drinking (e.g. bereavement, unemployment, retirement)
- Current and previous lifestyles ('hanging onto youth')
- Cost and easy availability of alcohol
- Inactive social life
- Night time drinking economy affects perceptions of safety (e.g. 'no-go' areas)
- Leisure spaces aimed at younger people

12.23 Strategies and policies should be interlinked and planned collaboratively to provide an overall holistic approach to the needs of an ageing population.

12.24 A member of the public said that older people can also be fearful in their own homes (for example fear of users of drugs and alcohol in high-rise flats) in addition to certain places from which they feel excluded. Another member of the public said that many women feel isolated at home in the evenings as they are scared to go out.

12.25 Some panel members felt there were not enough suitable social meeting places where older people would feel comfortable.

12.26 The International Development Manager said that older people could be fearful of something that had happened in the past which would have an impact on their perceptions of safety and future social mobility.

12.27 Publicans could play a key role in offering good, reasonably priced food so that establishments provided a social not just a drinking-only environment. Ideally, the City should be age-friendly; a place where all ages should feel comfortable and included.

12.28 The Head of Community Safety reminded the Panel that there is clear information that older people are least likely to be victims of crime. She would be happy to speak to community groups including the Women's Institute

12.29 The Chair thanked the International Development Manager for her helpful information.

13. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OLDER PEOPLE

13.1 The Community Engagement Improvement Officer circulated a copy of her presentation. The Community Engagement Framework had been developed for use city-wide and not only across the Council.

13.2 There had already been much good practice but some poor practice in community engagement work in the city. Before starting any engagement activity it was important to research what had already been done in the area.

13.3 There was a need to learn from experience and improve quality and coordination of engagement activity. It was important to be clear and honest when engaging with communities; if there were no extra resources, then that information should be included.

13.4 Many local organisations and groups already had good relations and know their client groups within communities, and should be engaged in the process at the outset. Members noted that there were well-established existing ways of communicating – such as 'The Pensioner', 'Grey Matters' and 'City News.'

13.5 The Community Engagement Improvement Officer reminded the meeting of the Duty to Involve and said that there was a commitment to respect and build upon existing structures and organisations. This would be a gradual process that would take time but it shouldn't be assumed that anything new was needed.

13.6 Some Members had the impression that, having completed many surveys over the years, there were no results to show.

13.7 The comment was made that older people were likely to prefer information to be provided in paper form.

13.8 A Member of the public felt that older people preferred a physical presence at a help desk rather than use the phone, a publication or the internet. For example the Pensioners' Service was a low-level and effective

service available at libraries. A database of all older, vulnerable or isolated people in the City might be helpful for the local statutory authorities to know of their existence in cases of emergency and to help older people to feel included, he said.

13.9 The Head of Housing Management would reply to the Panel.

13.10 The Chair thanked the Community Engagement Improvement Officer for her presentation and handout.

14. ANNUAL REPORT OF 50+ PROGRAMME

With the agreement of the Chair this item was postponed to the following meeting.

15. RACIAL HARASSMENT AND OLDER PEOPLE

15.1 The Senior Racial Harassment caseworker reminded the meeting that the Partnership Community Safety Team (PCST) was a partnership of the Brighton & Hove Council with the Sussex Police, the Racial Harassment Forum, the Domestic Violence Forum, and the LGBT communities. Some members of the Team were employed by the Council and others were employed by the Police.

15.2 She said together the team worked to reduce racist and religiously motivated crimes and incidents. The aims of the service included increasing reported incidents, ensuring victims and witnesses are fully supported and building their confidence in the criminal justice systems.

15.3 The Senior Racial Harassment Caseworker tabled a briefing on Racist and Religiously Motivated Incidents and Older People, available to view on request. She emphasised that the definition of racist/religiously motivated incident was intended to empower the victim; it was for the recipient to determine what was inappropriate and unwanted behaviour.

15.4 In some incidents there may be direct verbal racial hostility demonstrated by the perpetrator/s and in other cases the incidents may not be accompanied by direct racist abuse and the victim / witness or a third party may have attach a perception that 'these things are done to them' because of their race / faith / ethnicity / culture / colour / language / nationality etc. Prejudice is taken into account in their investigation of the incident by Police, Schools, NHS and employers, both statutory and private. Actions against the perpetrator / s are evidence led.

15.5 Incidents could be verbal or physical violence in the home or in the neighbourhood or in other public domain.

15.6 As shown in the PCST scoping report (available to view on request and circulated to the Panel previously) there was evidence to show that older people in general were less likely to report incidents than younger people. There were additional barriers to reporting racially motivated incidents such as language capacity, and fear of backlash. Surges in incidents occurred for example after the July 2005 London bombing and failed London bombing.

During such politically turbulent times minority communities were known to restrict their mobility and also expect incidents/ abuse and may not report incidents, believing it to be normal. Older people may fear a backlash more than younger people.

15.7 Older people may be targeted due to their race or because of more than one identity for example BME, disabled, and sexual orientation. The statistics presented in the paper accounted for the racist and religiously motivated incidents only.

15.8 At present, available data showed the types of incident against ethnicity for all people and did not distinguish between older and younger people. Around a quarter of incidents were directed at Asian people and around a quarter against white ethnic groups.

15.9 Racial and Religiously Motivated Incidents can be experienced by anyone, not necessarily from an ethnic group – for example by association with partner, children or friend.

15.10 Current work in progress by the Racial Harassment caseworkers included advocacy and casework support. This could be done by meeting at a person's home, which was especially relevant for older people. There used to be drop-in Neighbourhood Surgeries in East Brighton, Tarner and Central Hove. Language or sign interpreter, could be provided if needed and information about available services and reporting forms had been translated.

15.11 The Senior Racial Harassment Caseworker gave an example of successful work with Chinese older people in Brighton & Hove. The Chinese Community in the city was larger than the national average and represented around 0.5% of the population. There were manly older people, many have issues around English language capacity, work in family owned shops/takeaways/are front line workers, and many had limited access to services. The Partnership Community Safety Team had translated the reporting forms in Cantonese and Mandarin and worked in partnership with a community organisation called 'Chinese Information Pilot' to effectively access Chinese older people. Recently a visit by Chinese elders was organised to the police station together with information on rights and how to report incidents with a view to increasing trust and confidence in the community. This has led to increased reporting levels.

15.12 The PCST attended and took stalls to relevant events of the minority communities and neighbourhoods. This has led to increased reporting and improved mechanisms and access to services.

15.13 Councillor Smart said he was serving on a local steering group concerning the Bangladeshi community and asked if this was a citywide process.

15.14 A member of the public said that although she contacted the police and local councillors with concerns about community safety, these were not

always followed up. Councillor Watkins said that elected Members should be informed about incidents in their own wards.

15.15 The Senior Harassment Casework said that local councillors would only be informed about individual incidents with the consent of the client.

15.16 A Pan Sussex Racist Incident Report form was tabled at the meeting. This was for use by all organisations to record racist and religiously motivated incidents and then send the completed forms to the Partnership Community Safety Team (PCST) for monitoring and casework. Individuals could go to any organisation and fill in form thus increasing access to the reporting and casework services. This also meant that people could report at locations other than the police station. For example St Richards, Hangleton & Knoll Project, MOSAIC etc. were trained to be a reporting centre so people do not need to go to the City – can use existing staff. Individuals could also directly complete self reporting forms or contact the team to report incidents.

15.17 Casework services could help individuals if they gave their names and contact details. The Partnership Community Safety Team monitored levels and trends of incidents and reporting systems enable people to report anonymously, should they wish. On the central database, some 60% of reports come from the police – the remainder from other organisations including PCST which accounts for around 15 – 20%. Other organisations were now submitting more reports.

15.18 Asked by a member of the public about reporting to Crimestoppers the Head of Community Safety said local organisations should be used. Older people who were victims of RRMI were often not able to telephone and speak in English. The right local agency trust and confidence is important. Access is complex issue.

15.19 The Chair said people did not always know who to contact to get information or report incidents. Local Councillors were not always directly contactable. Councillor Marsh said she thought a printed publication aimed at older people would be helpful. The Internet was not the favoured tool of the elderly.

15.20 Members thanked the Senior Racial Harassment Case Worker for her presentation and especially for good outreach work.

16. SUMMARY AND NEXT MEETING; 10 JULY, 1.30PM BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

The Chair thanked all the contributors to the meeting and invited members of the public to the following meeting, being held at 1.30pm on 10th July in Brighton Town Hall.

The meeting concluded at 1.15pm

APPENDIX 5

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AD HOC PANEL - OLDER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

1.30pm 10 JULY 2009

COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Marsh (Chairman), Kennedy and Watkins,

Co-optee: John Eyles (Older People's Council)

PART ONE

17. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

18a Declarations of Substitutes
Councillor Smart had given his apologies. Substitutes are not allowed on Scrutiny panels

18b Declarations of Interests
There were none.

18c Declaration of Party Whip
There were none.

18d Exclusion of Press and Public
In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was 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 100I (1) of the said Act.
RESOLVED: That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

18. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

19.1 The Chair stated that the draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 July were not yet published. Anyone who wanted to receive a copy could leave their contact details on the attendance sheet left in the public gallery.

19.2 Sergeant Castleton gave additional information following the previous meeting; the Police Equality Working Group had identified a pattern of racial harassment for older people; for people up to 60 years old, there were more men than women reporting racial harassment; after 60 years old there were more women than men reporting racial harassment.

19. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

20.1 The Panel noted that the Annual Report 2008 – 2009 of the Older People's Council had been circulated with the agenda.

20.2 Councillor Marsh had attended the Community Safety Forum (CSF) meeting on Monday 6 July as Chair of the Coombe Road LAT. There she found out that there had been a commitment to hold a Scrutiny Panel meeting in Portslade and Hangleton areas and she had been unaware of this. Councillor Marsh quoted in full the extract from the 9 March CSF minutes:

> "44.1 The Head of Community Safety presented a report on the Scrutiny of Community Safety and Older People and stated that this was the first issue that had been referred from the Community Safety Forum onto an Overview & Scrutiny Committee agenda.
>
> She stated that meetings to discuss the issues were taking place on 24 April at the Valley Social Centre, 22 May at Hove Town Hall and 3 July at Brighton Town Hall. As many agencies and community organisations as possible were being invited to submit information.
>
> 44.2 A member of the Forum asked whether the focus on tackling crime should be shifted to a focus on the prevention of crime, which was more in line with Sussex Police policies. The member felt a proactive approach was needed to ensure community safety. The Head of Community Safety stated that all issues around this subject would be discussed and a report would be produced with recommendations for action that could be taken forward by the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).
>
> 44.3 Councillor Barnett asked that a further meeting be arranged in either Portslade or Hangleton to allow people from those areas to attend more easily. The Head of Community Safety agreed and stated that meetings would be arranged in both of these areas.
>
> 44.4 A member of the Forum welcomed the work being done, but highlighted that safety for disabled people needed to be addressed as well. The Head of Community Safety stated that this piece of work had a specific focus on older people, but noted that work had begun on addressing the issue of community safety for those with disabilities and those who experienced hate crimes, which was recognised as a highly

important piece of work and would be taken forward later on in the year.

44.5 A member of the Forum welcomed this information and asked that GEMS was included as well when taking forward the work on community safety for those with disabilities and those who experienced hate crimes. The member asked whether baseline levels of crime would be established before work began on this report. The Head of Community Safety confirmed that baselines would be established and where possible targets would be set and recommendations produced.

44.6 Councillor Watkins stated that the scrutiny panel set up to examine Community Safety of Older people was time and financially limited and noted that this was a large subject to scrutinise. He asked for assurances from the Chairman that full support would be given to the recommendations and outcomes. The Chairman agreed and stated that she fully supported the scrutiny of this issue.

44.7 A member of the Forum raised the issue of material being accessible for older people and the Head of Community Safety stated that all literature about the subject would take into consideration its target audience and be accessible for all."

20.3 Councillor Marsh said that safety for disabled people and hate crimes were important pieces of work that the Scrutiny Panel had not had an opportunity to investigate although relevant organisations had been invited to contribute information to the scrutiny review.

20.4 Asked about monitoring the safety of minority groups Sergeant Peter Castleton said that number of crimes against all older people were low and reduced significantly as people got older, irrespective of other identities such as ethnicity or sexuality. This would be partly because many older people tended not to put themselves in situations where they might become vulnerable and partly for other reasons; for example there were now more older BME workers in frontline services. People were not vulnerable because they were older, per se.

20.5 Councillor Marsh asked that Councillor Dee Simson Chair of Community Safety Forum and Cabinet Member for be kept informed of progress with the scrutiny review.

20. 50+ PROGRAMME ANNUAL REPORT (POSTPONED FROM 3 JULY)

21.1 The Head of Housing Management outlined her role as the Council's Adult Social Care and Housing link to the scrutiny review and outlined the Community development work at the Bristol Estate, situated north of the Royal Sussex County Hospital, that had been described at the Panel's first

scoping meeting. This work to tackle anti social behaviour issues on the estate, had been funded jointly by Housing Management and the Police.

21.2 Research into the initial outcomes of the work showed that feelings of safety increased and general satisfaction with the Estate had been improved. For the first time, people now wanted to move to the Estate rather than avoid it. Further research was now under way with a 100% survey being carried out.

21.3 The Panel asked for the data to be added to the evidence received, especially information on links between age and feelings of safety on the Bristol Estate.

21.4 The Head of Housing Management also introduced the annual report of the 50+ Community Programme. This team of workers and volunteers from a range of services and voluntary organisations delivered services to support people aged 50 and over in the Queens Park Ward, Craven Vale and Hangleton and Knoll areas. It is led and funded by Brighton & Hove City Council jointly with the Primary Care Trust in line with the Local Area Agreement and most projects had exceeded the annual targets

21.5 The Panel had heard evidence on 24 April from the Neighbourhood Care Scheme NCS – a citywide scheme which helped people stay active alert and involved and actively put people in touch with each other. NCS also helped strengthen links and develop trust between older and younger generations and helped maintain older peoples' independence and resilience. The Head of Housing Management said NCS was a prime example of a scheme that required relatively low resourcing compared with high benefits for both volunteers and older people.

21.6 There was reassuring evidence from evaluation of people's feelings, that 50+ Community Programme activities are having a positive effect, so resourcing is continuing for this year. However funding from one year to the next may not allow for the best value from community development projects because these take time to establish. The Panel may wish to encourage the mainstreaming in partnership, of successful community projects to enable future stability of resourcing.

21.7 The Panel were aware of the 3- year discretionary grant funding process and the considerable skills that organisations needed in order to attract additional funds. Members felt that there was scope to work more closely in partnership, to improve the sustainability of community development projects that help maintain older people's feelings of safety, resilience and independence

21.8 Asked about the effect of the Council's housing allocations policy on the ability to keep families within close contact the Head of Housing Management said that with choice-based lettings, people can say where they would like to go, but as the city has limited social housing it could take a long time for people to get their preference. Officers could help older people

without social networks to move, to release family sized homes and there were good news stories of how older people's lives had been changed in this way.

21.9 A Member of the public asked about the success of choice-based lettings for older people and heard that this was being reviewed.

21.10 Members of the public asked about coverage of the community projects in the Programme and heard that the Bristol Estate project was in a neighbourhood renewal area but had not been included in the New Deal for Communities Neighbourhood Regeneration Programme. Therefore together with the police separate prevention work had been arranged for the estate. Hangleton and Knoll and Queens Park/Craven Vale were selected because of the Local Area Agreement priorities based on the highest proportion of older people and levels of deprivation, which were key areas of interaction with Primary Care Trust.

22. FEEDBACK RE EVIDENCE FROM OLDER PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH TEAM

22.1 As requested by the scrutiny panel, the Head of Community Safety reported back from the 24 April meeting which had heard evidence from officers from the Older People Mental Health team. The officers worked with older people with alzheimers or dementia who live in their own homes, privately rented or social housing and who, in rare cases, could be victims of crime because of mental ill health.

22.2 Despite cases being rare, the Panel did have a high level of concern because incidents could be serious and because of the possible vulnerability to abuse by carers who may be family members, or others. A potential victim would not necessarily be protected from a potential perpetrator and so may be preyed upon by a burglar or drug dealer befriending them and identifying their home as a place to use as a drug den; a relatively new crime known as cuckooing.

22.3 Statutory services did protect the needs of this small but very vulnerable group however only limited joint working between Adult Social Care and Community Safety Team had been done to put in place extra prevention and protection actions and strategies.

22.4 The Head of Community Safety reported she was one of the senior managers serving on the Safeguarding Adults Board which works with Police Representatives, and senior Health and Adult Social Care Managers. An action plan being drafted in consultation with police colleagues in the coming weeks would soon be reported to the Community Safety Forum.

22.5 Council lawyers were now using new powers, in joint operations with police, housing, landlords and the community safety team to deal with closure of premises in this type of case, especially where the resident was the victim.

The victim who was unable to protect him/herself could then go to appropriate accommodation and the offenders suitably dealt with.

22.6 Sergeant Castleton stressed that only rarely were significant powers used and then only as a last resort.

22.7 A Member of the public representing a residents association said she had been concerned about cuckooing it had taken too long to secure premises; she heard that the new protocols and working arrangements would speed up the process.

22.8 The Panel were pleased at the important work being done with care and consideration to safeguard older vulnerable people on their own premises, and that serious offenders faced the full force of the law. Members felt that this work could be shared with other local authorities.

22.9 A representative of a Tenants and Residents Association made a number of points;

- can a speaker visit his area, to reassure senior citizens about community safety and fear of crime
- nobody would know if someone with a mental illness had been allocated sheltered housing accommodation
- was community safety funding available for his area

22.10 Sergeant Castleton said mental health varied widely from minor issues to serious conditions requiring people to be 'sectioned' under the Mental Health Act; detained for treatment against their will. The Head of Housing Management replied that there was a new requirement in the Single Assessment Process for a community care assessment including mental health needs, before someone moves into sheltered accommodation. This information was shared with Sheltered Housing.

22.11 As regards fear of crime, Sergeant Castleton told the meeting that until recently this had tended to be overlooked. However actual crime levels had fallen to such an extent that this and perceptions of crime, anti-social behaviour and crime prevention measures for example design of the built environment had become more important areas of work.

22.12 The Head of Community Safety said that additional Local Action Teams could be set up. There were currently 38 and the number was growing. It was challenging for only 4-5 officers to attend all LAT evening meetings but information and support was available and LAT representatives could be co-opted onto the Community Safety Forum.

22.13 The Chair encouraged people to be involved in their LAT, where community safety issues could be raised.

22.14 Representatives of the Women's Institute and the Pensioner's Forum said that older people's fears about safety can extend to dying alone in their own homes. The Head of Housing Management said that one of values of the

50+ Community Programme was to reach large numbers of older people. The Neighbourhood Care scheme did try to identify and then support older people who may feel isolated. A Council officer was available to arrange and attend a funeral service where there was no-one else to do this.

22.15 The Head of Community Safety said this question was only on the border of community safety. The Panel could simply recommend a process whereby someone can refer an older person for an assessment of their needs. This process already worked well but perhaps greater publicity would be helpful.

22.16 A Member of the public felt that face to face contact with the public was especially important for older people. The Head of Housing Management said issues could largely be resolved by phone to make best use of resources. Not everyone needed a full care assessment and face to face help was available for more far-reaching matters.

23. POLICING STRATEGY

23.1 Police Sergeant Peter Castleton handed out copies of the Local Policing Plan for Sussex 2009 – 2012 and explained to the Panel how it impacted on older people. The approach to Neighbourhood policing was:

- Being visible and accessible (enhanced teams in neighbourhoods, the public influencing our priorities and building confidence)
- Working with communities (Managing demand, enhancing supervision and delivering effective interventions) and
- Providing a quality response (building string relationships, achieving best outcomes through partnerships and communicating effectively)

23.2 He said there was not a police officer at every corner. However the police were more accessible and visible than ever before and made professional judgements about the best policing programme. The Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) provided a high quality response.

23.3 PCSOs worked closely with communities and Local Action Teams and with older people because they often had more time. PCSOs could signal crimes such as damage to benches and this impacts on people's feelings of safety and actual safety because criminals tended to operate in areas perceived to be lawless.

23.4 Inspector Delacour said people's confidence depended on the ability of the service to deal with matters but acknowledged that an older person may regard a 'quality response' differently compared with a younger person.

23.5 He referred to bogus callers who tended to prey on older more vulnerable people with minimum defence. They remained a day or two in an area and then moved on.

23.6 Neighbourhood Watch tended to be populated by people at home during the day, often older people being good neighbours. The service was moving away from phone- to internet-based.

23.7 Turning to a potential gap between generations he said young people need to understand better the impact they can have on others. Conversely many older people without contact with children and younger people needed to understand the younger generation better.

23.8 He said he would like to encourage older people into schools to explain how they feel about groups of children in the streets. The Panel may wish to make a recommendation on this.

23.9 Free upgrade to locks could be provided for older people without the means to do the work themselves. Advice could be given to individuals about personal safety and how to conduct themselves when out at night. Older people were least likely to become victims but they could take extra precautions, for instance with their personal belongings, he said.

23.10 As part of Sussex Police Consultation strategy, an Independent Advisory Group advises the police on the impact of critical incidents and the Police were seeking an independent person from the older community to serve on this. The Panel felt that the Older People's Council were well placed to nominate an independent older person.

23.11 Inspector Delacour said the Police were looking at other ways to contact people without access to the internet. The monthly newsletter 'The Patrol was placed in accessible places such as doctors' surgeries.

23.12 The conduct of most young people was fine and this message needed to be promoted. For instance at Hangleton Local Action Team, Members of the Youth Council as well as older people were given a presentation. This involvement of Younger people was specially welcomed by the Panel.

23.12 Members also preferred the paper newsletter for older readers as otherwise people without use of the internet missed out on latest developments. There was concern about the move of Neighbourhood Watch to internet-based and a suggestion that older people be provided with a computer.

23.13 Mr Eyles OPC Co-optee to the scrutinypanel remarked that communications was vital. Neighbourhood Watch was one source of information. However not all publications covered the whole of the City.

23.14 Inspector Delacour said there would be a communications and media centre at police headquarters in Lewes. While there were overarching community safety messages to be communicated over the whole Division, detailed information needed to be addressed to specific areas at a very local neighbourhood level.

23.15 A Chair of a Residents Association stated that even though young people may not intend harm, even playing loud music or driving fast around the block can have much more serious consequences for older people than for younger people. There needed to be much wider recognition that older and vulnerable people were likely to have different needs and reduced tolerance levels. Earlier intervention was necessary in those cases, he said.

23.16 Another person in the public gallery said older people who have issues or concerns wanted to be better recognised and respected by public sector services. He felt that PCSOs and Neighbourhood officers should be issued with standardised business cards linked with incident numbers recorded at a call centre.

23.17 Inspector Delacour said a message could be left for a PCSO at the call centre in Lewes if have the name and number are known. There was a facility on the Operational Information System which recognised a person by name from the phone number; however this was accessible only by a named senior police officer. Referrals from Adult Social Care system would be useful for example where a person was unable to speak and was feasible for some vulnerabilities. A person's phone number could be added to the OIS at the request of ASC or a relative but not all information on the ASC database could be transferred to the OIS. Officers would investigate possible options.

23.18 A questioner from the Women's Institute asking about police coverage of Preston Park and Patcham which were not generally regarded as deprived areas, heard that problems could occur anywhere. Preston Park LAT held regular meetings with PCSOs. A local councillor or local police officer could be invited to a WI meeting.

23.19 Inspector Delacour said each Neighbourhood policing area – West, East and Central had a Police Sergeant/Inspector and 20 PCSOs who integrated into the community and gathered neighbourhood information. In addition there was 24-hour police coverage for the city plus CID and other police-force-based teams.

23.20 More than 95% of police work did not involve the use of a warrant card

23.21 The Panel had received comments that older people wanted to see 'more bobbies on the beat.' However having heard evidence today, the Panel wished to collectively enforce the message that 95% of policing is about other work. There was praise for their local PCSOs from several members of the public.

23.22 A representative of the Pensioners Forum asked about providing locks for older people and it was confirmed that there was a fund to provide deadlocks where there was a need, based on a person's vulnerability.

23.23 Asked when it was appropriate to dial 999 or the general police line Inspector Delacour acknowledged that it was sometimes impossible to distinguish between high spirits and real emergencies. Officers would go

where they thought there would be a problem. False alarms were preferable to ignoring serious incidents.

23.24 There was a comment from the public gallery that reinforced the view that there were many rowdy behaviour incidents and while these may not be unlawful they can make older people feel uncomfortable or unsafe and impact on their quality of life. Everyone would become an older person and the ageing process can affect sight, hearing, mobility and perceptions.

23.25 The Chair thanked the police officers and all the speakers who had contributed to this meeting.

24. AREAS OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS

24.1 The Panel sketched out its main headline areas of recommendations and agreed to hold an informal meeting not in public, on 11 August. This would be to consider a first draft report with the intention of reporting back to the parent Committee, the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 September.

24.2 A member of the public asked for information on smoke alarms.

The meeting concluded at 4.45pm

Signed Chair

Dated this day of

APPENDIX 6

List of Scrutiny Panel meetings

Scoping Meeting - 23 January 2009

Agree Chairman – note remit of Panel – agree publicity and press release – contacting older people and groups – Letter from Age Concern

Scoping Meeting - 20 March 2009

Receive PCST Scoping report and PCST papers on details of services for older people – agree witnesses and scope: contacting the vulnerable elderly, fear of crime, alcohol-related crimes and incidents, domestic violence and elder abuse and burglary artifice.

Valley Social Centre, Whitehawk, Meeting in public - 24 April 2009

Evidence from:
Age Concern
Neighbourhood Care Scheme
Older People's Mental Health Team

Hove Town Hall, Meeting in public - 22 May 2009

Evidence from:
Cllr Dee Simson, Cabinet Member
Trading Standards
Refuge Information Support and Education (Formerly Women's Refuge)

Brighton Town Hall, Meeting in public - 3 July 2009

Evidence from:
Lead Commissioner for Mental Health Services, NHS Brighton & Hove
Board Member - Cheers!? Alcohol project
Community Engagement Framework Improvement Officer
Senior Racial Harassment Caseworker

Brighton Town Hall, Meeting in public -10 July 2009

Evidence from:
Head of Housing Management
Head of Community Safety
Representatives of Sussex Police

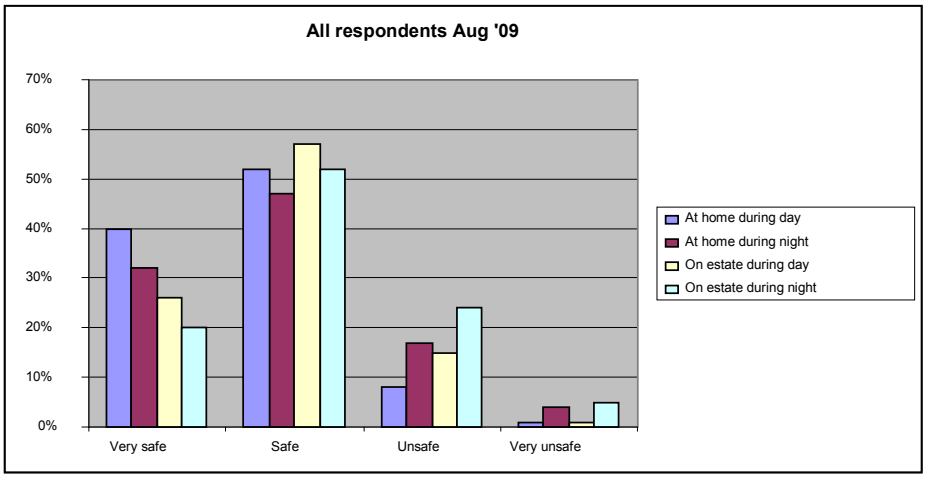
APPENDIX 7

Survey of outcomes of Community Development at Bristol Estate

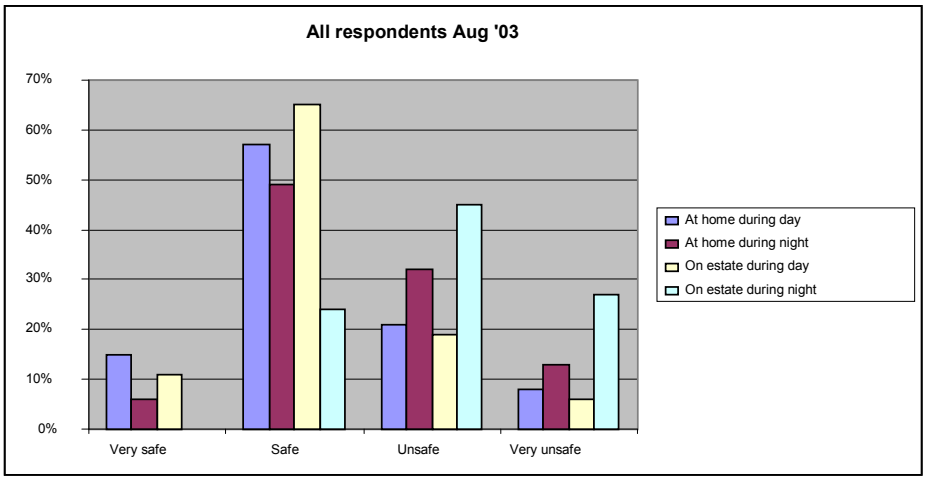
Residents on the Bristol Estate were surveyed before community development support, and then annually, being asked: How safe do you feel – At home during the day; At home during the night; On the estate during the day and On the estate during the night?

The latest survey results (August ’09; see graph A below) show high percentages of households feeling safe or very safe, with households of people over 50 years of age (which relates to about a third of all households) showing little difference from all households. See graph C below.

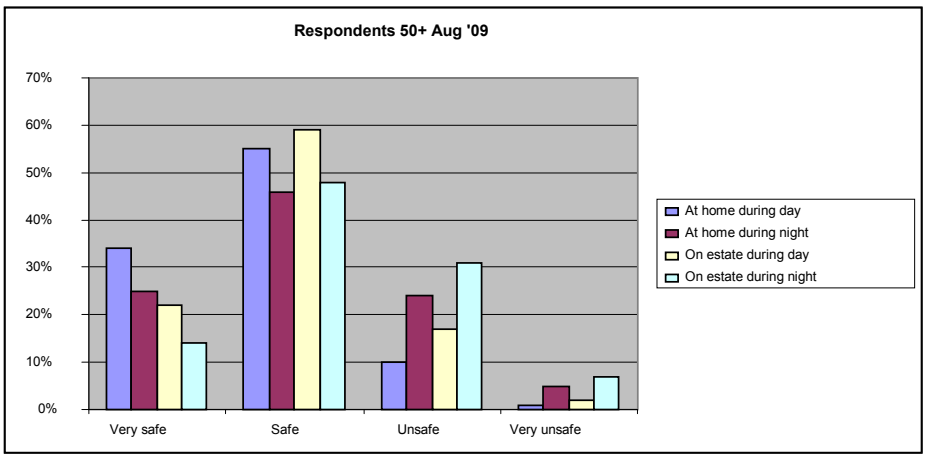
This compares with August 2003 when there were fewer households feeling safe or very safe and more households feeling unsafe or very unsafe as shown in graph B below. This 2003 survey data was not disaggregated by age.



A. Feelings of safety in August 2009 for all households who replied



B. Feelings of safety in August 2003 for all households who replied



C. Feelings of safety in August 2009 for households of people aged 50+.

Andy Silsby
Community Development Consultant
Serendipity Enterprising Solutions CIC

APPENDIX 8

Other Information Received by the Panel

1. SHAG Sheltered Housing Action Group

Introduction
Below is a submission to the Older People's Community Safety scrutiny panel from the Sheltered Housing Action Group. The group is made up of tenants from across the city that live in Brighton & Hove City Council sheltered housing.

Representatives were asked to list what older people's main concerns about community safety are and what could improve matters. 26 tenants from 18 schemes took part in the consultation.

Findings
Two areas were considered a priority for older people: more police on the street and more action and information on elder abuse.

Increased Police Presence
This was the most popular suggestion for improving community safety for older people particularly at night and in known trouble spots. It was thought that this would also help reduce graffiti and vandalism.

Elder Abuse
Elder abuse and domestic violence was highlighted as a real concern for older people. It was mentioned that being 'bullied and picked on' by staff is a worry as is financial abuse.

The following are other suggestions made by group members:

- Better street lighting would improve community safety
- More secure windows on the ground floor of sheltered schemes
- Stop cars from parking on pavements and ramps, as wheelchair and scooter users have to go on to the road
- Excessive speeding in Winfield Avenue is extremely dangerous for residents when they cross from the bus stop, as there isn't a crossing. Also crossing the road near Hazelholt in North Portslade is a problem as it is such a busy road
- The failure of lifts and the time it takes to repair them is a problem for older people as is not getting a repair completed 'first time'

- Not having a call on a Sunday in sheltered schemes is an issue for some residents

- Door stop distraction / burglary is a concern for some older residents

- Alcohol and drug related incidents and crimes are a worry with incidents sometimes being the fault of visitors to the scheme rather than residents

- The fear of crime as opposed to actual crime was noted has having an impact on an older person's feeling of safety. It was suggested that an improvement in communication between council staff and residents could assist with this, as scheme managers are often aware of residents' fears and concerns

- Fire safety talks were suggested as a way to increase the feeling of safety within schemes

- CCTV to flats to allow tenants to see who is at their door was a recommendation from one scheme

2. 60+ Action Group

The only firm messages we have so far from our groups are that a) group members are more concerned about the state of municipal services, e.g. cracked pavements, inadequate street lighting, lack of handrails in strategic places, etc. than about crime, domestic violence or alcohol; and b) they want more "bobbies on the beat" – they say that the PCSOs are "not the same". We haven't had the opportunity to explore the latter in more depth in order to find out what PCs would provide compared to PCSOs – i.e. would they feel safer, and what makes them feel unsafe?

We did discover that members were actively hostile to a speaker from domestic violence services and determined this had nothing to do with them. I suspect alcohol issues might provoke the same reaction. Bearing in mind that the average age of our members is over 70, and the great majority are widowed women, I suspect they are too uncomfortable with this type of issue to talk openly about their experiences.

3. Summary of Telephone Comments from residents to the Panel (Referred to officers)

1. Numbers of police
2. Obstacles on pavement
3. Hours of Police Community Support Officers
4. Work of the Carer's Centre
5. 20 mph speed limit in town / residential areas and 40 mph speed limit on rural roads
6. Bicycle and cars obstacles on pavements
7. Feels threatened by young people out on Saturday nights
8. Phone kiosk vandalised
9. Drug dealing location
10. Night-time noise and shouting
11. Neighbour's behaviour
12. Road speed limit
13. Mobility of scooter on pavement
14. Safety and security advice/ older ethnic minorities issues
15. Elder women and domestic violence/ well-being issues
16. Reporting alcohol/drugs incidents
17. Drug dealing

4. Potential 'Doorstep Crime' or Rogue Trader incidents

To contact Consumer Direct South East, the Regional Consumer Advice Line and Rapid Action Team

Telephone 0845 040506

5. Domestic Violence: RISE Refuge Information Support and Education (Formerly Women's Refuge Centre)

Rise Helpline is 01273 - 622822. Rise website is www.riseuk.org.uk

6A. East Sussex Fire and Rescue Home Safety visits

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Home Safety visits are available to all members of the community. One of the most vulnerable and therefore largest target group for East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service are the elderly and disabled.

The visits are completely free and are carried out by dedicated teams and all Firefighters. The home safety visit provides a risk assessment and advice and safety in the home.

The teams can also refer the occupier on to partner agencies for assistance with matters other than Fire Safety. Where necessary smoke alarms will be fitted free of charge.

To arrange a visit call on 0800 1777069.

You will be asked a few simple questions to help us provide the right service based on the individuals needs.

6B. E-mail re Fire Assessments from Head of Community Safety, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

e-mail to Mrs van Beinum
Scrutiny Support Officer (Older People and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel)

“Thank you for your enquiry. East Sussex Fire & Rescue recently launched the "Who Cares?" campaign. The campaign is specifically targeted at carers (both professional carers and others, such as family members or members of the community) . The aim of the campaign is to generate referrals to our long-standing home safety visit service. This service is free of charge and includes (where appropriate on safety grounds) the free fitting of smoke detectors.

The home safety visit scheme is widely advertised , in publications, new papers etc, it is regularly mentioned on local radio stations and always promoted in our press releases relating to relevant incidents. That said , it is a message that bears repeating and wide promulgation. ESFRS have produce a pack which has been provided to all our (fire) Boroughs for staff to use a tool with which to engage local care workers & their managers.

ESFRS has frequent contact with a wide variety of agencies in it's effort to identify the most vulnerable in the community, for example we have many referrals made to us by the Pensions Service. We recognise that older people are the amongst the MOST vulnerable and that is exacerbated where other conditions apply , such as living alone or where a person suffers physical or other impairments. ESFRS aim (across the Service area) to complete 11,000 home safety visits each year and in addition to our operational staff we have ten dedicated community safety advisors who are primarily engaged in this work. The Service has a target of 60% of all home safety visits to be conducted at homes where an occupier is regarded as 'vulnerable' . We are meeting this target but would like to target our resources better still. There is no doubt whatsoever in our minds that the most effective way of achieving better targeting is for other agencies (such as the BHCC) to refer to us individuals who most need our assistance.

The "Who Cares?" campaign was born of circumstances in which a number of individuals did their best to assist (by specifically looking at fire risk) a very vulnerable person. No-one thought of contacting the Fire & Rescue Service. That individual later died in a home fire. We very much need carers to contact us and not rely solely upon their own best efforts.

A recent inquest in to a fire death in Brighton has resulted in the HM Coroner writing to the City Council with a view to ensuring that vulnerable people are identified and best protected. That communication has a resonance with the

outcomes of a Serious Case Review (in respect of juvenile fire deaths) and a recommendation that relevant agencies consider the issue of fire risk for those individuals that they have contact with. ESFRS would like to see all care agencies include 'fire' within their various & individual assessments as a matter of standard practice.

ESFRS are able to monitor the number of referrals that are made to us by other organisations and by that means are able to identify of those organisations that are thinking seriously about fire risk.

I would delighted to assist the scrutiny panel in any way that they consider to be helpful. I have spoken with the ESFRS (fire) Borough Commander for Brighton & Hove, Area Manager Keith Ring and he too is very willing to ensure that opportunities to identify the vulnerable are fully exploited.

I should add that in conducting home safety visit we are able to fit specialist equipment (usually free of charge) for people with impairments and in the most extreme cases of risk we will work with partners in considering fire suppression mechanisms such as sprinklers. During our home safety visits we often identify people who need the caring services from other agencies, we therefore, make reciprocal referrals to facilitate this.

Please do not hesitate to contact Keith Ring (email keith.ring@esfrs.org) or myself for further information. We would be pleased to arrange for a presentation to be made to the panel.

Regards
Chris Pascoe MA,BA **|** Head of Community Safety | Directorate of Prevention & Protection | East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters | 20 Upperton Road | Eastbourne | East Sussex | BN21 1EU | **Tel:** (01323) 462497 | **Fax:** (01323) 462044 | **Mobile:** 07949 285560 | **E-mail:** Chris.Pascoe@esfrs.org | **Web:** www.esfrs.org | “

As this matter is not directly within the remit of this scrutiny panel the Chair Councillor Mo Marsh has written to the Director of Adult Social Care and Housing, asking for a reply to ESFRS.