

St Leonards Safer Neighbourhood Panel Meeting

15 October 2008

Minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies

This meeting was chaired by Vice Chair Amanda Austin.

Apologies were received from:

Lee Alley (Chair)

Cllr Brian Palmer

Cllr Roger Geiss

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13.08.08 and matters arising

The minutes to the previous meeting were accepted and adopted. There were no matters arising.

3. Police Update

Crime Figures (Sgt Miller)

The crime figures from the police are attached in Appendix A.

The key message was that as vice is a priority, attention has been taken away from burglary operations, which has resulted in the recent rise in burglaries.

The panel asked if there is a pattern to the timing of the assaults that are recorded in the figures, as this may be related to other issues such as vice or Street Drinking / Anti Social Behaviour (ASB).

ACTION (Sgt Millar) – Police to assess timing of assaults in recorded figures in relation to the above and report to the next panel meeting.

Further to previous details, the Police informed the panel that a break in to a house of seven flats could be counted as seven burglaries.

The panel noted a recent burglary on Ockley Road where a neighbouring house, on Becmead Road, that is undergoing building work may be a contributing factor.

Vice Update (PC Young)

90% of the team's effort is currently spent on vice operations and despite the loss of the specific skills and experience of the Vice Unit, the team is progressing well on a steep learning curve.

The team has built a good working relationship with Wandsworth Council and Wandsworth Parks Police, the latter having deployed an officer full time to the affected area 16:00 until 00:00.

Plain clothes police are patrolling affected areas with access to vehicles for support. This is helping to gather intelligence on both the working girls and the kerb crawlers. The primary focus of intelligence gathering has been the kerb crawlers with registration numbers recorded and letters sent to the owners informing them that their vehicle has been observed in a red light zone.

In order for a prostitute to be arrested the girl must have received two prostitution cautions in the last twelve months. The police have given lots of cautions and made lots of arrests recently.

The police are working closely with an outreach programme called Trust (www.faithworks.info/trustproject). This approach provides support for the prostitutes on many issues such as drugs, money, alcohol, housing, etc. It is considered to be best practice nationally.

The section 222 (which is a cross between an ASBO, a dispersal zone and an injunction) approach detailed at the last meeting is still being piloted in Brixton Hill. The 222s rely on intelligence as to be issued the police need to know the names of the prostitutes and kerb crawlers. Once issued, the subjects can't enter the affected area. As mentioned at the last meeting, this relies on a co-ordinated cross-border approach with partners in Wandsworth in order to avoid simply moving the problem around.

If the Brixton Hill pilot is successful, the team are ready to roll the approach out in St Leonards in partnership with Wandsworth.

PC Young introduced her colleague from CO14 – Clubs and Vice – John Russell. The panel welcomed John and thanked him for taking the time to come and address the meeting.

John explained that CO14 are concerned with brothels, street prostitution, trafficked women, pubs and clubs, obscene publications (including the internet) and obscenities (which covers a range of unpleasant things).

CO14 see vice in Streatham as a serious problem, with several prostitutes having been stabbed recently in Brixton.

The focus is primarily on the kerb crawlers, the background of whom is diverse. A recent operation in Hackney yielded the arrest of 31 men of various backgrounds, none of whom were from the area and one was a doctor.

Licensing Update (Sgt Miller)

Inspector Duffy, who is leading on this issue, did not attend the meeting. In addition, there was no representation from the Licensing Team. The panel expressed disappointment at this lack of attendance.

ACTION (Ben Everitt) – to write on behalf of the panel to express disappointment of meeting attendees at the lack of attendance by relevant officers.

Edo's bar has been closed for the last three weeks. Police have visited the premises regularly over the last few weeks and confirmed that it is closed. The deadline for objections to the recent licence extension application is the 29 October 2008.

The panel noted that it has provided all the information and support it has been asked for by the police and that in general patience is beginning to run out over this issue.

The panel also noted that there are rumours that serious offences have occurred in Edo's bar that are not reported to the police. If more evidence is required, the panel suggested that the TfL CCTV camera opposite the Edo's bar may be useful.

It was suggested that the panel are not satisfied that the policy of policing that is attached to the granting of a licence to the premises is being delivered.

In order to explore the above issues, the panel voted to undertake a special meeting to consider this issue and urged the relevant officers to attend.

ACTION (Amanda Austin) – Set up meeting regarding the above, as soon as possible.
(COMPLETE – 22.10.08, Woodfield Grove Tennis Club, 9 Woodfield Grove, SW16 1LR. 19:00 – 20:30)

4. **Trading Standards – No Cold Calling Zone presentation**

Robert and Mary, from Lambeth Council's Trading Standards service gave an introduction to No Cold Calling Zones. These are to deter door to door salesmen, rogue builders and distraction callers.

This is a serious and unreported problem. One incident in the borough involved an elderly victim handing over £10,000 to a group of rogue builders.

The No Cold Calling Zones are non-enforceable, however they are seen to work, with distraction burglary dropping up to 20%. Although they are not enforceable, legitimate companies tend to observe them.

There is already a No Cold Calling Zone in Thurlow Park Ward. The aim is to target small areas and the team is looking at setting up one in the south of the St Leonards.

The panel voted strongly to support No Cold Calling Zones. It would like to see them rolled out across the Ward where appropriate in support of action on burglary.

5. Peter Lloyd letter on Streatham Police Station

Peter Lloyd presented his letter regarding the closure of Streatham Police Station. Key points covered were: prostitution; robbery and shoplifting; drugs; street drinking; environment; and violence and murder.

The panel accepted Peter's letter and thanked him for his well composed and evidenced approach.

The panel noted that the Mayor has put the current Metropolitan Police asset management plan (that includes the closure of Streatham Police Station) on hold.

The panel noted that Cllr Bennett has invited the Mayor to attend a full council meeting.

Further, the panel also considered that if alternative accommodation for officers in Streatham needs to be found, the Future Streatham master plan and consultation should consider this.

The panel voted overwhelmingly to write to the Mayor to raise this issue.

ACTION (Ben Everitt) – Write a letter to the Mayor expressing the above.

6. Officers' reports

From the next meeting, the panel's officers will each be responsible for a policing priority, as determined by the panel by vote as normal. This should provide a more structured and robust conversation between the police and the panel at meetings.

Vice Chair's Report

Amanda reported no sustainable improvement in the prostitution issue around the north and centre of the ward.

Secretary's Report

Ben introduced Fiona, who live in Hoadly Road and has recently been subject to incident of aggravated burglary. Fiona is fighting back by setting up a neighbourhood watch in her area.

Community Safety Report

Nabil Mezoughi responded to a question from Cllr Bennett by explaining that the Coordinating Group is able to request help from other Safer Neighbourhood Teams and other arms of the police of council to respond to issues such as the case of aggravated burglary.

Treasurer's Report

As ever, Ruth treasurer's report was short because we still haven't got any money and we therefore haven't spent any.

7. **Any other business**

Any other business was taken before the priorities discussion, in order to fully inform the priorities debate.

Yom Kippur

The Police gave assurances that the policing of the recent Yom Kippur observations were in line with recommendations from the Board of Deputies.

Street Drinking

It was observed that street drinking around St Leonards church has recently increased and that drinker have latterly been rude and aggressive. In addition, the residue litter from street drinking that has periodically appeared around the Mainliners venue has returned.

Cllr Bennett volunteered to put a member's inquiry in to support actions related to the above.

ACTION (Nabil Mezoughi) – to report next time on progress in clearing the drinking debris at Mainliners and the possibility of putting a grill over the gap where the debris is deposited.

Dispersal Zone

The police informed the panel that the dispersal zone that applied to Streatham Green and St Leonards Church has now ended. Ideally the ongoing solution would be a council initiated no drinking zone.

The police still have the powers to move street drinkers along and the A23 team is well set to cover this. In addition the factor of the on-coming winter weather should mean that this can now be handled outside the parameters of Safer Neighbourhoods priorities.

The A23 team have five new officers and the panel agreed to pass responsibility for policing the street drinking areas around Mainliners (at Mount Ephraim Road), Streatham Green and St Leonards Church over to them.

ACTION (Sgt Miller) – to invite the A23 team to the next panel meeting

8. **Priorities discussion**

In the light of the above notes, the priorities were discussed and it was agreed that they should be:

- i. Vice
- ii. Burglary

The dropping of Street Drinking from the priorities list is dependent upon the A23 team picking up this responsibility.

ACTION (Ben Everitt) – to write to the police management on behalf of the panel to request additional PC resources for the Safer Neighbourhoods Team to enable them to cover these two priorities more comprehensively.

9. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is to be held on 10 December, 2008 at 19:00 at the Liberal Synagogue, Prentis Road, Streatham.

In addition, there will be a special meeting to discuss the licensing issue on 22 October, 2008 at 19:00 at Woodfield Grove Tennis Club, Streatham.

10. **Appendix A – crime figures from the Police**

Priority Crime and Antisocial Offences within the Ward

Crime Type	Volume	Volume in previous period	Numerical ↑ or ↓ comp. to previous period	% ↑ or ↓ compared to previous period	% Contribution to St Leonard's Offences
Other Theft	59	61	-2	-3.3	11.2
ABH/GBH	55	60	-5	-8.3	10.4
Residential Burglary	53	63	-10	-15.9	10.1
Criminal Damage	34	38	-4	-10.5	6.5
Possession of Cannabis	33	33	-	-	6.3
Robbery of the Person	32	30	+2	+6.7	6.1
NCB Domestic Incidents	31	28	+3	+10.7	5.9
Common Assault	27	21	+6	+28.6	5.1
Theft Person (Snatch and Dip)	22	18	+4	+22.2	4.2
Theft from Motor Vehicle	20	22	-2	-9.1	3.8
Criminal Damage to Motor Vehicle	20	24	-4	-16.7	3.8
Public Order	17	25	-8	-32.0	3.2
Theft of Motor Vehicle	11	17	-6	-35.3	2.1
Possession of Class 'A' Drugs	2	3	-1	-33.3	0.4
TOTAL	416	443	-27	-6.1	78.9