

CROYDON SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

**Meeting held on Wednesday 4 October 2017 at 6.30 pm
in the Council Chamber, Croydon town hall, Katharine Street,
Croydon CR0 1NX**

Marion Burchell	IAG
Councillor Hamida Ali	Croydon Council
Councillor David Wood	Croydon Council
Councillor Steve O'Connell	Croydon Council and GLA
Penny Smith-Orr	Faiths Together in Croydon
Brian Udell	Neighbourhood Watch
Jean Pikett	Croydon Disability Forum
Tina Salter	North Neighbourhood Panel
James Stremes	Central Neighbourhood Panel
Marzia Nicodemi	Community Stop and Search Monitoring Group
Chuks Etuka	Victim Support
Jay Patel	Asian Resource Centre
John Thorpe	Independent Custody Visitor Panel
Sophie Linden	Deputy Mayor of London for Policing and Crime
Owen Murray	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
Chief Supt. Jeff Boothe	Croydon Police Borough Commander
Chief Insp. Craig Knight	Croydon Police
Supt Tony Josephs	Croydon Police
PC Lisa Haydney	Croydon Police
Morgan Younger	Metropolitan Police
Andy Opie	Director of Safety, Croydon Croydon
Ilona Kytomaa	SNB administrator

Also in attendance:

Ward Panel representatives:

Yvonne Abel, Cathy Gardiner, Mike Ginsburg, Marilyn Smithies, Maureen Levy, Janet Stollery, Sheila Bushell, Elizabeth Ash, Mary Cameron, Kate Clark, Tomas Howard-Jones),

Sarah Jones M.P., Craig Simpson (Croydon Advertiser), Bushra Ahmed (Stop and Search). Karen Morgan and Amony Lewis (Croydon Council), Aitor Martinez and Jenny Mammon-Krasto (Victim Support), Shalina Abibaksh (Skills Maze), Dawn Purt (Neighbourhood Watch), Stephen Aselford (Mobility Forum), Donna Murray-Turner (ANOS), H. Dalli-Pil (crime prevention), Mcoy Fitzroy (Friends of Norbury Park), Samera Shamim (Coulsdon R.A.), Erbil Faik (Chatsworth R.A.), Kim Wakely, Katherine Patterson, John Thorpe, Rosa Latham, Michael Swaddling, Inspector Alex Adams and police cadets.

1	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Marion Burchell welcomed all present and gave the chair to Croydon's Borough Commander. He asked all officers on the panel to introduce themselves.</p> <p>The Borough Commander explained that the meeting would be taken in two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Public Consultation on the Met Police's Draft Public Access and Engagement Strategy 2- The Safer Neighbourhood Board Annual General Meeting
2	<p>Public Consultation on the Met Police's Draft Public Access and Engagement Strategy</p> <p>A presentation was given by Supt Tony Josephs on the proposed Public Access and Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>The audience heard that there were currently 73 front counters across London. In May 2017, 7,800 had been reported at these front counters, equivalent to 3.5 crime reports per day per front counter. The ongoing reduction in the number of crimes reported at specific police stations showed that Londoners were using alternative methods of contact.</p> <p>Supt Tony Josephs emphasised that the priority of the proposed strategy was to provide more options on how people accessed the police and engaged with it. He added that resources needed to be diverted from poorly used facilities to support the front line, and to invest in more police officers.</p> <p>Supt Tony Josephs outlined the proposals for consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One 24/7 front counter at Croydon Police station in the town centre ➤ 5 new dedicated ward officer hubs – location to be confirmed ➤ All existing contact points to be closed ➤ Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) will continue to run community contact sessions to work face to face in their communities <p>It was explained that a new dedicated phone unit would be available to report accidents and various other incidents.</p> <p>The presentation ended with a commitment to increasing the number of DWOs and to making them more efficient and accessible through new technology.</p> <p>The Deputy Mayor of London explained that the above proposals had been drawn up against a very challenging financial background, requiring the Metropolitan Police to find £400m of savings. MOPAC were lobbying central government hard to secure a more generous government grant for police services in London. The Deputy Mayor of London added that MOPAC were committed to maintaining one 24 hour police station in each borough, and to ensuring that dedicated ward officers would not have to walk more than one mile to their bases. The five new hubs would not be front counters but bases for the police to engage with the community.</p>

The audience was advised that only 8% of crime was currently reported face to face at police stations, as opposed to 77% reports by phone and an increasing number of online reports, thanks in part to the improved online crime reporting facility. In addition, ward panels would have a part to play in maintaining good two-way communication channels between communities and the Police.

The Borough Commander commented on plans for a hub in Purley and stated that delays had been experienced due to technological issues with body-worn cameras but that there were being addressed in order to open the hub as soon as possible. The Police were also in talks with the council to identify additional buildings to be used as hubs.

As regards the police response to calls from the public, the Borough Commander explained that this borough's performance was consistently 2nd-3rd best in the capital.

Serious concerns were expressed regarding the severe cuts in funding. In addition, the police were advised that a lot of people were very unclear on how to contact the police. A good information campaign was urgently required to tackle these issues.

The Borough Commander reminded the audience of the recent closure of the South Norwood police station, which had not led to significant numbers of complaints. However, he stressed that the sale of the building had enabled Croydon police to secure more front line officers.

A number of ward panel representatives expressed concerns regarding the amount of time officers would have to travel to reach their hubs. The Borough Commander stated that officers in Coulsdon would eventually be based in Purley, thus alleviating the length of their journeys. A New Addington ward panel representative expressed the hope that the needs of officers would be cared for so that they would be safe and would be given reasonable travel options. The Borough Commander stated that a range of innovative travel options were being considered including the use of some form of car pool, and that a recent campaign had been conducted to highlight officers' own safety needs and how to address them.

A residents' association representative highlighted problems experienced in her area in contacting the police. She asked how to go about reporting crime online. She was particularly concerned about older people's ability to do so as they tended to have more difficulties using information technologies. She also asked which officers were going to deal with online reports. The Deputy Mayor of London observed that only 7% of various crimes were reported by people over 60, showing that this age group was more confident with information technology than many people thought. The Borough Commander stated that the Digital Investigation Unit tackled online crime reports, freeing up DWOs and reducing the need for them to travel to the crime site to investigate. He added that volunteers worked at places such as Access Croydon to support people to improve their digital skills and to access and use its computer facilities.

The Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety and Justice questioned the police about their choice of locations for the five hubs. She asked whether they

	<p>had been selected on the basis of population density and crime rates, and whether these would have clear police branding to help residents recognise them as police buildings. She was advised that the choice of locations had not been finalised and that suggestions for suitable sites were welcome. The Police confirmed that the hubs would have police branding. The Deputy Mayor of London added that the proposed locations identified thus far had been identified using computer analysis and had been chosen to ensure an optimal deployment of resources.</p> <p>A ward panel chair made a plea to allocate increased resources to the 101 crime reporting line as she and residents in her ward panel had experienced severe delays in getting through on that line. She added that these delays had led to a misuse of the 999 emergency number, which was now so busy that she had found it to be engaged when she rang that number in an emergency.</p> <p>The Borough Commander stressed the importance of getting prompt access to the police, particularly in traumatic circumstances such as Domestic Abuse.</p> <p>The audience put forward a request for an information campaign to ensure that residents in Croydon knew how to report to the police and asked to receive answers to two queries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the number of PCSOs increase under the new system? - Will police ward boundaries change in line with electoral ward boundaries in 2018? <p>The police were thanked for their fulsome engagement with the audience on the proposed strategy.</p>
3	<p>BREAK</p> <p>There was a brief comfort break.</p>
4	<p>ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR 2016-2017</p> <p>The SNB administrator announced the nominations.</p> <p>Further to the dispatch of the agenda, minutes and nomination papers on Wednesday 20 September, the SNB administrator stated that she had received the following nominations by Wednesday 27 September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a nomination by Jean Pikett to elect Marion Burchell as Chair, seconded by Dave Palmer - a nomination by Marion Burchell to elect David Palmer as Vice-Chair, seconded by Jean Pikett <p>As no other nominations had been received by 27 September, she stated that Marion Burchell and Dave Palmer were duly elected Chair and Vice-Chair respectively for the ensuing year.</p>

	<p>A request was made by a SNB member to delay the AGM as she had been away when the papers for the AGM arrived.</p>
5	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2017</p> <p>As stated in the minutes, It was noted that this meeting had been inquorate and that the AGM had been deferred to the following meeting.</p>
4	<p>The work of the police with ward panels in the borough</p> <p>A presentation was given by Supt Tony Josephs providing an overview of police work with ward panels. He stated that police priorities for ward panels – the “MOPAC 7” - had changed somewhat since the election of the new Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, with a greater emphasis on safeguarding vulnerable residents in the borough, such as missing persons (often young people), child sexual exploitation and residents with mental health issues. In addition, the police had recognised the fact that residents were concerned about such issues as fly-tipping, issues relating to travellers, etc., which were the responsibility of the council.</p> <p>Supt Tony Josephs invited the audience to comment on their experiences of running ward panels. He stated that overall, residents felt that these were well attended. This view was echoed by a number of residents. However, a couple of ward panel representatives highlighted the difficulties they had had in endeavouring to engage more residents in their panels e.g. changing the time and location of meetings, which had led to very disappointing results.</p> <p>One SNB member stated that she could find no information on ward panels in her area online and could not therefore attend them.</p> <p>A discussion took place as to whether ward panel meetings should be held in public or not. Some ward panel chairs stated that their meetings were held in public while others said they were not. In addition, some ward panels held some meetings in private and others in public, with different objectives.</p> <p>A member of the audience commented that some ward panel meetings might be poorly represented because the interests of residents were not represented. Another member of the audience cautioned ward panel chairs against encouraging single issue agendas as this was likely to divert attention away from the community’s more important safety needs.</p> <p>The police was told that one key priority for ward panel meetings was that they should be attended by a Croydon police representative, which was not always the case. The police agreed. Another ward panel chair felt that there should also be representation from neighbourhood watch, which she was disappointed was not happening in her ward panel.</p> <p>The Borough Commander stated that ward panel meetings were run by people who cared for their communities and acknowledged the importance of this. He added that there needed to be flexibility in how panels were run in order to</p>

attract a better attendance and participation in them, and that this had to be done in partnership with all relevant stakeholders.

The Borough Commander explained that Croydon had eight of the top wards in London in terms of deprivation and crime levels. These wards were also the ones where engagement with ward panels was the poorest. He emphasised the need for flexibility in endeavouring to improve engagement in these wards, which constituted a challenge for the police, communities the voluntary sector and any organisations involved in these wards. .

There was agreement that ward panels should provide a two-way dialogue and that residents should have the opportunity to say what the policing priorities should be in their area.

A resident representing a local forum which was not a ward panel stated that her meetings had had very good attendances and engagement, but that attendees had felt that the police was not engaging with the public. The Borough Commander stated that ward panels were not necessarily the only way to engage with local communities and that the police also needed to engage with such forums.

One ward panel representative felt that the cuts in police funding over the last thirteen years had had an impact and that there appeared to be no clarity on how ward panels should evolve. In addition, she highlighted the lack of police representation at some meetings and stated she was not sure whether her ward panel had been disbanded.

The police reiterated the need for flexibility in running ward panels. Whether they should be open to the public was a decision for each panel to make although it was repeated that they should be representative of their communities. A commitment was made that the police would engage with ward panels whatever their format and that agreement should be reached between the panels and the police on how to proceed.

The police reminded all present about the fact that panel members reported a range of issues including fly-tipping, graffiti, etc. which were not the responsibility of the police . He suggested that meetings might need to broaden their agenda somewhat and possibly involve council staff. The role of councillors in ward panels was also discussed and it was observed that they could play a useful role in forwarding council-related issues to the right departments.

A plea was made for guidance on the role of ward panels and the possible formats they might take. The MOPAC representative undertook to tackle this request. The police commented that MOPAC had previously provided such guidance - London being unique in the country in doing so - and added that it was right to review it at this stage. As regards participation in these meetings, the police suggested that all relevant agencies should be invited to attend their meetings in order to secure prompt responses and outcomes to reports of crime and anti-social behaviour. A request was also made to include advice on whether to hold public meetings or not.

	<p>Cllr Wood shared some thoughts regarding the Selhurst ward panel which was about to have its first meeting after several attempts. Perseverance was finally bearing fruit. He stressed the importance of relevance in holding successful meetings, stating that high attendances could be reached within days of an incident to enable residents to have their say, and of tangible outcomes, quoting improvements such as street lighting in the Selhurst area.</p> <p>Residents also asked the police to provide information on the outcome of arrests to improve confidence in the force and reduce fear of crime. Police stated that this could be difficult to provide in the short term as court cases could take a long time to complete and some information might be of a confidential nature. However, the police suggested that Dedicated Ward Officers might be in a position to provide some form of partial update at ward panel meetings.</p> <p>The police were thanked for their answers to residents' questions and comments and undertook to provide good practice guidance on ward panel meetings.</p>
5	<p>Dates of next meetings</p> <p>Wednesday 6 December 2017 in the Council Chamber Subject: violent crime</p> <p>Wednesday 14 March 2018</p>