

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held Monday 17th January 2022

Held online via MS Teams at 6.00 pm

Chaired by: Kim Howell

Minutes taken by: Leila Al-Jeboury

1	Welcome, apologies and introductions Declaration of interest	Action
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting and thanked those present for attending.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that there would be 3 presentations from Chief Inspector Clare McCarthy, Inspector Tom Sincock, and Rachel Merriman from RBKC.</p> <p>The meeting was held virtually as it was not possible to hold face-to-face due to Omicron. Attendees were asked to submit any questions via the Teams chat feature or to raise their hands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comment was made that the meeting agenda and the minutes from the previous meeting via email but that these had not been received. <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION: Fenn Reynolds will look into why some attendees hadn't received papers ahead of the meeting.</p>	FR
2	Borough Crime Report & Police Issues	
	<p>Chief Inspector Clare McCarthy (CM) provided a crime overview of the borough with a performance pack presentation.</p> <p>CM outlined the statistics for total notifiable offences, noting an increase of 11.25% in December compared to last year, though this is difficult to measure due to lockdowns. Overall, Brompton and Hans Town has seen the highest number of total notifiable offences.</p> <p>CM outlined the statistics for notifiable offences including watch robbery and knife crime (intimated and actual). Whenever restrictions are loosened crime statistics generally increase and there was a concern that this will continue to be the case once all restrictions are removed.</p> <p>Noticeable offences discussed include:</p> <p>Knife crime is a priority and figures presented include robberies with knives involved, and whilst there is a downward trend in offences, numbers are still above the previous year.</p> <p>Serious youth violence is another important area. Figures are down on last year due to the level of work put into decreasing this and there was only 1 offence that resulted in serious wounding in the period.</p>	

Violence against the person – Brompton and Hans Town has seen the highest level of incidents and is currently ahead of the previous year though a downward trend is now being noticed. **Domestic violence** trends have levelled off and are similar to last year with the most offences seen in Notting Dale.

Robbery is increasing, and work is being conducted by ward offices to warn residents either side of a burgled address to help try and prevent further offences. The Stanley ward has seen the most residential burglaries in the period, followed by Royal Hospital, Courtfield and Redcliffe, with 93 offences overall in December and hotspots particularly in the south of the borough. Non-residential burglaries are mainly seen in the north of the borough with most offences seen in the Dalgarno ward and the number of offences rising compared to last year.

Drug possession and drug dealing figures are police generated and rely on stop and search or arrests. Drug dealing numbers have risen due to the proactive work taken by the ward teams.

Anti-social behaviour has decreased compared to last year with 590 reports in December. A number of these offences are due to reports of gatherings under Covid legislation.

'1' grade calls (emergency response) have increased in volume as they have come out of the pandemic restrictions and the borough is currently in line with the Met's average.

Questions raised and responded to as indicated:

- It was noted that Knightsbridge and the Kings Road are hotspots for robberies and asked how the police are handling these areas given the reduction in police stations.

CM confirmed that their emergency response units cover the whole borough and that they expect to respond to calls to robbery within 15 minutes.

- Question whether the hotspot around Notting Hill Gate due to a particular premises or issue?

Tom Sincock (TS) advised that this is due to Portobello Road, which is a known hotspot and is the target of a specific policing plan due to the area's night-time economy and gangs.

CM added that Earls Court is also an area of focus and that they are looking at particular problem-solving tactics.

- Question from a female member asking what should she do when out and being threatened when there are no police stations nearby.

CM commented that the reduction in police stations was due to a period of austerity though the number of stations shouldn't have an impact on the number of police officers in the area as they will spread out across the borough once they have left the station for their respective areas.

	<p>Technology helps officers see where crimes are taking place and see where other officers are.</p> <p>The closure of stations has not changed how police respond to crimes and they still rely on intelligence from the community to map where crimes are occurring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question whether there a correlation between drug offences committed by young people and when they are at school. <p>CM confirmed that she was unaware of any difference in drug offences between term time and school holidays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment that the closure of the police station on Kenway Road has made a difference with criminals no longer dispersed. <p>The Chair commented that the closure of stations was due to the Mayr of London budgets. Everyone wants to see more police officers on foot. Another member agreed that more police officers are required on the streets to help deter crime.</p>	
3	Borough Ward Panel Report	
	<p>Tom Sincock gave the update, particularly noting the operations that have come out of the smart objectives set at all ward panels. Priorities and police operations are set to tackle any issues, with a particular focus on violence as set by MOPAC (the London Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime), and then any other priorities linked to the needs of the specific ward. Operations targeting violence and drugs have resulted in 62 warrants in total from January 2021 to January 2022 with over £250k in assets seized, including £150k worth of drugs. 28 arrests have been made with 6 convictions so far and a number of investigations are still ongoing. These hit days will continue and come directly from intelligence passed to the police.</p> <p>Stopping drug supply is a top priority as this fuels anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>There has been a focus on watch robberies through Operation Big Rid, which identified Harrods, Sloane Street and Sloane Square as hotspots. Watch robberies have decreased by 50% from May-July 2021 to July-September 2021 as a result of the operation and a further operation is planned for January-March 2022.</p> <p>Operation Wheel targets e-scooters, a priority in most wards, with over 60 e-scooters seized. Operation Daytona is looking to tackle super cars and car meets, a particular problem in the borough, and this has seen positive results with a number of arrests or seizing of cars with further operations planned every weekend to help dissuade people from coming into the borough.</p> <p>Orientated policing plans are a priority, particularly around Earls Court and Portobello Road. Venue licensing reviews and repeat offenders are being looked at in these areas as well as long-term solutions and diversionary projects to help divert young people away from offending. Extra signage and designing out crime are also being looked at.</p> <p>Questions raised and responded to as indicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many fixed penalty notices have been issued as a result of e-scooters? 	

	<p>E-scooters are seized where possible. Over 60 have been seized so far and fixed penalty notices are likely double this figure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question whether the same policy is applied to pavement cycling. <p>TS stated that they will stop anyone cycling on the pavement where it is safe to do so and look to educate the offender. When this doesn't work, a fixed penalty will be given.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was stated by a member that there was an previous initiative to deal with super cars where officers spoke to drivers and explained the nuisance that they were causing, which had a certain amount of success. Has this approach been tried? <p>TS advised that they look to engage and educate where possible, though this has been an issue for some time and they have therefore progressed to enforcement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a comment that most boroughs issue a ward panel constitution that is published on their website and it was noted that this was not being done in RBKC. This should be done to establish places for councillors on ward panels to help with the public perception of crime. Ward panels need to receive the relevant data so that this can be shared with residents. <p>TS advised that a ward panel handbook has been produced by the Met and it indicates ward panel attendance which includes councillors.</p> <p>ACTION – TS to circulate ward panel handbook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another member noted the problem with drug dealing and use in Earls Court and asked if the Met would be taking action to object to the licence application for a gambling location on Earls Court Road as this will be a magnet for vulnerable people. <p>TS confirmed that they will review the licence and that it would also be put out to residents to raise objections. TS advised that they will put in an objection if they see it will have a detrimental effect.</p> <p>The team are working tirelessly to target drug dealers in the area although the focus needs to be on long-term solutions and tackling the source of the issue. Residents were asked to call 999 if they see drug dealing taking place to allow the police to respond and formulate their patrols.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a comment that people are complaining, and that drug dealing is overt in the area. <p>TS advised that they had a crime posting for a week outside Earls Court station with 2 sergeants and 12 PCs with a lot of stop and searches though it didn't result in the number of arrests hoped for.</p> <p>CM stated that people need to call the police when they see an offence happening.</p> <p>CM congratulated TS and his team for the proactive work undertaken and the results they are now seeing because of this.</p>	<p>TS</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that there are many issues in Earls Court and asked that their expectations be managed so that residents know what they can expect in 2022. • Question asking what is the day-to-day attendance by ward officers on the ground in the borough? <p>TS confirmed that this is being managed and there has been little impact by the need to self-isolate. Ward officers aren't often extracted. As part of the NPT (neighbourhood policing team) there are 6 sergeants, 64 PCs and 12 PCSOs. There are also around 20-25 from the response team that work out of the station at Hammersmith and Fulham as well the external assets that have to be bid for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a question as to whether the police were looking at the tactics used in Glasgow to combat knife crime. <p>Stuart Priestley advised that attendees should review his updated report (as part of the SNB Executive Reports sent to attendees) on the development of the youth violence strategy, which includes the recognition that violence can be treated through the public health virus model and there is a framework of evidence that informs their approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attendee commented that she has been a member of her local police panel for a number of years and asked what constitution or document would be promoted so that councillors attending ward panels will have some sort of recognition. <p>TS confirmed that the newly developed handbook includes who can be invited to ward panels and who should be present. This handbook will be circulated to all ward panel chairs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member noted the recent shooting at Princes Gate and asked for further comment on this. <p>TS explained that firearms discharges are rare and are often due to gang-on-gang violence. Firearms officers are strategically stationed around London and will be on the scene within 3 minutes with local officers arriving when the area is clear and safe. Officers receive training in firearms and are therefore trained to handle such incidents.</p>	
4	RBKC Wardens	
	<p>Rachel Merriman introduced herself as the Senior Community Safety Officer at RBKC and stated that she would talk through the warden service.</p> <p>The borough has 14 wardens that work every day, excluding bank holidays, from 7am to 11pm across 3 shifts. Wardens work across the borough, including parks and open spaces, and are now looking to expand coverage to the estates. Wardens are both reactive and proactive, and though they have access to a vehicle, typically to reach areas at the far ends of the borough at the beginning or end of a shift, most work is on foot. Wardens are never in plain clothes, have a body-worn camera and radio, and all recording of activities is done when out via a handheld device.</p> <p>Wardens deal with a number of offences, namely street-based anti-social behaviour and enviro-crime, and the warden stance is around the 4 Es (engage, explain,</p>	

	<p>encourage and enforcement). The stance is around changing behaviour, so while tickets and penalties can be given, action plans and information sharing are done to help reduce incidents.</p> <p>From January 2021 to January 2022, wardens carried out over 8,000 actions with begging making up the majority of actions, particularly around Earls Court and the borough's high streets.</p> <p>Brompton and Hans Town, Earls Court and Holland are the top 3 areas for activity, though this changes seasonally.</p> <p>Partnership working is key, including NPTs (neighbourhood policing teams), CBO Panel (criminal behaviour orders) and drug and alcohol services. Wardens can now make referrals to drug and alcohol services, and this is now starting to show an impact with dozens of referrals already made.</p> <p>A meeting takes place every Thursday with different council departments to identify problem areas and where support is needed to decide where to deploy wardens. Warden response was key during Covid with wardens offering advice to premises around changes in restrictions, assisting when people broke into football pitches, and supporting vaccination buses during anti-vax protests.</p> <p>Questions raised and responded to as indicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question from the Chair: there have been a number of comments raised about graffiti on both public and private property. What are wardens duty regarding this? <p>Wardens can report graffiti though removal is the responsibility of the streets enforcement team. It will be removed from council property by a subcontractor. The situation is more complicated on private property where it is the responsibility of the property owner to have it removed though they can ask the council to remove it at a cost. Any offensive graffiti will be removed by the council as a priority.</p> <p>Stuart Priestley confirmed that his updated paper contains a link to the council policy on this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNB Vice Chair Roger Baresel commented that CM is leaving her post and asked if she had chosen to leave or was obliged to do so. <p>CM advised that she has been substantively promoted and will therefore be posted elsewhere in the Met. CM noted that her replacement, CI Elise Gellatley, is more experienced and that she hoped she would be welcomed by all.</p> <p>Roger Baresel noted that the level of churn of top-level police officers in the borough has a negative impact on the community.</p>	
5	Report from the Chair	
	The Chair noted that all presentation slides would be circulated with the minutes and that any questions could be sent via the KCSC SNB email address.	
7	Close	
	Meeting closed 7.35 pm.	