

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and Neighbourhood Watch Conference held Saturday 9 March 2019, 10.00am-2.00pm Small Hall, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8 7NX

**Chaired by: Kim Howell (KH)
Minutes taken by: Alice Lowry (AL)**

| 1 | Word from the Chair, apologies and introductions | ACTION |
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| | Kim Howell (KH) welcomed board members and residents to the meeting. Board members stood up to introduce themselves. KH noted that there are 3 board vacancies available for Ward Panel members on the Safer Neighbourhood Board. Please email alice@kcsc.org.uk for further information. | |
| 2 | Cyber security overview and advice – PC Tom Lee (TL), Organised Crime Command, MET Police | |
| | See PC Tom Lee's slides . Q&A/ Discussion Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents said that they often let their phones go directly to voicemail each time to ensure the number calling them is legitimate – if it isn't a scam the person is likely to leave a voicemail. • A resident asked about the issues surrounding the use of public Wi-Fi. TL explained that you cannot break encryptions on a home router, but public Wi-Fi is easy to hack into. • The use of spoofing was discussed. • TL was asked about the use of phone blocker systems and their benefits. He explained that they all worked differently and offered to speak to anyone with concerns/queries at the break. • It was discussed whether it was safer to use apple products. TL said that was slightly safer, however nothing is ever 100% safe. • There was a discussion over whether any cyber criminals are ever brought to justice. Although they sometimes are, this is unfortunately incredibly rare. TL said that raising awareness is more effective than attempting to arrest people (a lot of cybercrime originates from overseas so is difficult to trace). | |
| 3 | Final BCU organisation and oversight going forward – Chief Superintendent Rob Jones, BCU Commander | |
| | Chief Superintendent and BCU Commander Rob Jones (RJ) explained that the BCU had gone live at the end of February and there was a lot of optimism surrounding the launch. He explained that the BCU is focusing a lot of resources into knife crime – especially in light of the recent stabbing in West Kensington. He said that a section 60 (area-wide stop & search) had been applied to Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Ealing and in other parts of London. The BCU have a large proactive gangs unit based across the 3 boroughs. BCU priorities in the next year include robbery, domestic abuse and looking after their Police Officers. Staff surveys have shown that a lot of officers are unsatisfied and many (particularly emergency response teams) are unhappy with the new system. Kensington & Chelsea was one of the last parts of London to go live with the BCU and RJ felt that the transition had been smooth. | |

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| | <p>Q&A/ Discussion Session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the BCU Command Unit still short of staff? RJ explained that they have 2000 officers – whilst this isn't a bad figure it is still about 5% less than the BCU unit should have to operate. • A community representative asked RJ to elaborate on what is driving gangs at the moment (obviously drugs play a key part in this). He also asked how much of profits confiscated from drug/gang related crimes is fed back into community development. • A resident complained that the Redcliffe Ward had a vacancy for a local PC DWO recently. The officer moved after a few weeks in post. Residents wish for DWOs to spend longer amounts of time in post in order to build rapport with the community. RJ stated that officers often do spend a decent amount of time in a role, but officers were welcome to apply for promotions which would move them away from these posts. This led to a discussion about the lack of police on the street and how residents have had difficulty contacting their local policing teams and DWOs. RJ to look into this issue. CH also informed the meeting that there would be a breakout session after the AGM where she would go through her new communications platform idea and receive any input. • The use of tablets in the BCU Unit was discussed. Data collected shows that these aren't being used very much. • The difficulty of encouraging a more diverse range of residents to attend Neighbourhood Watch meetings was discussed. Residents agreed there are issues such as a lack of communication, older residents who don't use the internet and youth are generally uninterested in attending meetings. SB is looking into this. • The issue of moped related crime in the borough was discussed. SB said that neighbourhood staff are doing a lot of prevention work in the borough. • The structure of the BCU was discussed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are 2000 ward officers ○ 5 teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergency response team ▪ Neighbourhood team – tasking officers, preventative work ▪ Safeguarding team – investigations into rape and sexual assault, child molestation, missing people and domestic violence. ▪ Headquarters – in charge of tasking and performance information and data ▪ CID – deal with complex and serious crime | <p>RJ to look into issue with contacting DWO's</p> |
| <p>4</p> | <p>Community Safety Review – Stuart Priestley (SP), RBKC</p> | |
| | <p>See Stuart Priestley's slides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has undertaken an outcomes-led review of Community Safety Services within the borough as this had not been done since 2012. This includes the Community Safety Team (CST), funded projects and priorities (Violence against women and girls, Youth violence, Hate crime and Anti-Social behaviour), the use of CCTV in the borough and the Community police team. The review included consideration for the changes in the Council, partnership working and community engagement as well as financial challenges. • The review was led by Jonathan Toy, an independent consultant. He met with many stakeholders and community partners, the police, ward panels, residents and the SNB. A full report was produced with 33 recommendations and a fresh look at the outcomes that were needed. • Key challenges to the Council given the reduction in funding from Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) - RBKC lost £300,000 of MOPAC funding in the past few years, can be summarised into 7 clusters of recommendations: | |

1. Strategic Ambitions

- Tackling violence in 2 key areas with a longer-term strategy: Serious Youth Violence and Violence against Women and Girls. These 2 areas have a big effect on residents and communities and we have seen an increase in both in the last couple of year. Even though RBKC's numbers are still amongst the lowest in London, one incident is always one too many so the CST will continue to work closely with the BCU unit tackling gang violence in particular.
- Regarding Serious Youth violence, there will be opportunities to work closely with a new team of police officers to identify youth offenders and those at risk of becoming one. The council will be working with residents and the community and there will be £1M invested over the next 3 years to tackle this issue. One key outcome will be to reach out to those young people not engaging with youth clubs and working with [St Giles Trust](#). CST will also work with the Community Champions model to collect intelligence on those at risk in order to pick up people that are at risk and act preventively. The team will also use the intelligence from the Westminster Council Integrated Gangs unit including health and mental health professionals as well as police and social workers. The team also attended a number of events as part of the **One life, no knife campaign**, the football match between young people and police, a career's fair and health event where 91 people attended as well as events for parents facing challenges with their young teenagers.
- Regarding Violence against Women and Girls, there should be a coordinated community response as it is everybody's responsibility to report issues. All services and all residents should be aware of safeguarding pathways and report any issues they notice. The CST is delivering engagement in schools, housing, youth services and health events amongst other. There is also work to be done to make sure the criminal system is adequate and effective once these issues have been reported.
- The CST will be focusing on these two areas but that doesn't mean they will stop working on ASB or the violence of the night-time economy. The new approach will be broad and will focus on those two areas, thereby aligning with the London Mayor's office.

2. Governance

- Four boards share responsibility for the delivery of the Community Safety in K&C. There needs to be better accountability at senior level.

3. CCTV

- RBKC has 58 CCTV in the public realm as well as 540 CCTV in the Council-run residences. Residents can expect to see some changes around the CCTV management as £140,000 will be spent to update the current cameras and £400,000 will be spent to extend the service. This will not allow for coverage of every street, but definitely more than before. The placement of each new camera will be justified to make the best use of each. There will be engagement with neighbours to ensure civil liberties are being protected and concerns are considered.

4. Policing

- Policing in the borough includes the Council-funded Community Police team (CPT), the Park Police teams and the Neighbourhood police team (DWOs). The Met Patrol Plus agreement with MOPAC meant that when the council paid for one officer they got one free. This will change from next year onwards. The council, with other boroughs, have lobbied to delay the change, but were unsuccessful. The changes mean that the cost to the Council of an addition PC will be £57,000 rather than £35,000. The borough is determined to continue funding extra police teams, but this will have to be reduced and strategy realigned.

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| | <p>5. Community Safety Team (CST)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community safety team has more functions than posts, they manage the Council-funded Community police team, they apply for and manage funding from MOPAC and they work on delivering strategic plans for the borough. SP reminded the board that according to Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, statutory organisations such as the RBKC need to give due regards to Safety and security in all section of the Council. As a result of the findings of the report, they will now endeavour to work more closely with businesses as well as the community. <p>6. Business & community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of recommendations were made to improve engagement with the business community. The report recommended that the council be much more community focussed in matters of safety. <p>7. Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both reduction in funding from MOPAC and the reductions of Met Patrol Plus will put pressure on the Council’s delivery. <p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report was presented to the Scrutiny meeting on 18 February and will be presented to the Leadership team with feedback included on 27 March. It will then be published and accessible to all. Links to the review to be sent to all when released. <p>Q&A session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regarding the use of CCTV, one attendee mentioned the fact that people park their cars next to ramps for disabled and prams access, right under the CCTV and nobody is monitoring footage. SP responded that most residence CCTV are recorded and not monitored. It is the same for Council’s CCTV as there are no resources for monitoring. There should be better communication around what the CCTV can be used for. SP also said that Parking officers are out every day, but that people are still breaking the law. It is always good to report those breaches. Another attendee reported there was a need for better engagement and communication with residents and resident’s associations. There is a good relationship with the police for residents but not with their borough. SP agreed and said their ASB team (3 members of staff) was working closely with Housing but needed to work more closely with residents and resident’s association as well. SP also said he wanted to raise the profile of the team to resident’s associations. He also reminded the room that there were 50 different housing providers not just the Council-owned residences and that his team had limited resources. Another attendee reported they saw something while out and reported it to the terrorist hotline, but that they had no responses. RJ reminded the room of that there were direct number for the Neighbourhood teams for each ward residents can call (find list of number here) but that it takes time for the policing team to get to know the residents and for the residents to learn to trust them. RJ also stated there are 500 terrorist investigations ongoing nationally and that most arrests are due to people reporting what they saw (9 out of 10 times the terrorists are stopped thanks to community intelligence). Because of confidentiality, there may not be any response to a member of the public reporting on the hotline. | <p>SP to send link when ready.</p> |
| <p>5</p> | <p>Review of emergency response for RBKC/BCU– Chief Inspector Simon Brooker (SB), Met Police</p> | |
| | <p>Chief Inspector Simon Brooker (SB) is new to the area but has 25 years’ experience in the police. He talked about his new role within the BCU, the Violent crime task force, the use</p> | |

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| | <p>of Online Watch Link vs Nextdoor for Neighbourhood Watch networking and described the impact the BCU had had so far.</p> <p>Violent Crime Taskforce (VCTF) After the knife epidemic of March 2019, the mayor and the police commissioner set up the VCTF composed of police, Justice, health and social care as well as council representatives. 158 officers were allocated to support this unit.</p> <p>OWL vs Nextdoor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reviewing the case for both platforms to support the link between the residents in Neighbourhood watches and the police in the different boroughs included in the new BCU, the decision was made to go with Nextdoor. • OWL is a great tool but is not being used a lot. There were only 200 messages sent in 2018 and those only outgoing messages with no replies. Nextdoor allows for exchanges both ways. • Nextdoor doesn't allow you to register without informing your home address and that was felt to be a security risk as you could then be located. The exact address can be hidden in Nextdoor with only the street named. More than 7,000 residents have already registered despite this potential issue. • There are a lot of messages already circulating and the week before the AGM there had already been 25 notifications per day including some help in locating a missing person and warnings related to moped crime. <p>BCU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 weeks in at the time of the AGM the impact on staff and officers is minimum. • Our BCU was one of the last one to implement the partnership across boroughs and so was able to use a lot of the lessons learned from the ones that went before. • The BCU started short of Dedicated Ward officers (DWO) but is now at full strength. • The vice-chair asked about the issue of turnover and staff moving out of borough just when they have started to create good relationship. SB responded that although the police would not want to stop their staff from accessing development opportunities it was conscious that developing a trusting relationship took at least 12 months. The vice-chair also made the point that a previous Borough Commander (Chief Superintendent Ellie O'Connor) had promised the board officers staying in post for 2 years which have now been halved to 12 months. <p>SB was happy to share his contact details for any residents to write and ask him questions. Simon.j.brooker@met.pnn.police.uk</p> | |
| 6 | <p>Open discussion on local crime concerns</p> | |
| | <p>In RBKC crime has gone down, with burglary down by 5% this year probably helped by the Smart Water roll out. Domestic Abuse reporting is on the rise but that might be because of higher reporting and not more abuse due to the campaign to improve knowledge around this issue.</p> <p>Other questions and discussions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One resident complained that 12 months was not enough for police officer to stay in post, that residents would like them to stay longer. SB responded they cannot stop staff from applying to other positions but that they would push for at least 12-month minimum for them to stay in post. If the post is rewarding and enjoyable they will be inclined to stay longer. There is also a new initiative to offer 2 years contract to new police officer and offering more flexible working to retain female staff in particular. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another attendee reported on the issue of Nextdoor, stating that the website didn't allow for reporting by ward but that it worked by neighbourhood. There was also a question on cyber protection on the website as a breach had been reported in the past. Finally, there was a suggestion to continue funding OWL for a year and run them both jointly to allow for a smooth transition as it was only £3,000. SB confirmed that the decision had been made and that the contract with OWL had already been discontinued. SB is aware of the concern of OWL users and will engage with them to hear their concerns and will ensure training is available to them on how to use the new platform. • Another attendee raised the possibility of banning sharp pointed knives and instead replacing them with table knives as they are blunter. Rob Jones informed the room that there had been a number of crack downs on the sale of knives, as well as prevention, but a change of behaviour was needed and that until this was achieved offenders would find a way and use any implement and get creative to hurt other people. | |
| 7 | AOB and next meetings | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Neighbourhood Board meeting Monday 13 May 2019, 6pm • SNB public meeting Monday 22 July 2019, 6pm (note this is a change from what was announced at the meeting). | |