

Minutes of the meeting of the Ealing Safer Neighbourhood Board

Date: 4 August 2020
Time: 19:00
Venue: Virtual

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Members present including the newest Community Member, Annemarie Braganza.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

- Don Tanswell, Acton Ward Representative
- Mohamed Ali, Community Member
- Peter Gardner, West Area BCU Commander
- Councillor Joanna Camadoo-Rothwell, Portfolio Holder Community Safety and Inclusion

3. Urgent matters

There were no urgent matters.

4. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Minutes

Resolved that: the minutes of the meeting on 16th March 2020 were a true and accurate record of proceedings.

6. Board membership issues and roles

The Chair informed the board that she asked Anu Khela, Community Member to take on the role of Social Media Manager. There were no objectors and Anu Khela accepted this role.

John Martin, Community Member expressed interest in fulfilling the role of Vice Chair and sharing the role of Projects Co-Ordinator. There were no objections and John Martin will now fulfil both roles.

Resolved that: Anu Khela is the Social Media Manager for ESNB and John Martin is the Vice Chair and Projects Co-Ordinator for ESNB.

7. Project Update

The Chair referred to the email of Don Tanswell, Acton Ward Panel Representative which was received on 3 August 2020 and circulated to the board and police representatives on the same day. The email contained the Project Update Report by Suzanne Tanswell, OWL Ealing Community Coordinator.

The Chair explained that the deadline for new projects has passed. She will not submit any new project proposals until the next financial year. She further explained that all projects for this year have been submitted late and some were submitted as late as last week. She is attempting to convince MOPAC to consider the four lately submitted projects but as they are under time constraints and financial strain, it may not be feasible for them to accept these projects. At the next meeting the Chair will inform the group if MOPAC agreed or refused to put any of the projects forward.

The Chair has asked that board members inform her if they want to submit any projects for the next financial year.

Resolved that: the Chair will inform the board at the next meeting if the four lately submitted projects have been accepted by MOPAC.

8. Stop and Search

Vlod Barchuk, Stop and Search Officer provided a verbal update.

He explained that there is a new liaison officer since last autumn who he has not met locally yet. He explained that he has met with other outer borough representatives at City Hall through video conferencing to discuss the stop and search statistics.

Vlod Barchuk reported that the stop and search numbers increased in London and Ealing. The number of stop and search incidents were: 720 in February 2020; 1700 in May 2020; and 1200 in June 2020.

Vlod Barchuk stated that a reason for the large increase in numbers was that, due to lockdown, police found it easier to identify the people on the street who were suspicious. Jill Horsfall, West Area BCU Superintendent agreed with this comment and added that stops relating to the Misuse of Drugs Act increased considerably. Jill Horsfall added that there has been an increase in violence suppression units and the West Area have received extra resources from Central Resourcing due to the crime issues experienced in this area. This has contributed to the increase in stop and search figures.

Vlod Barchuk explained that until last Autumn, the Police were permitted to view footage recorded by body-worn cameras to see how the stop and searches were

conducted. This practise was stopped due to legal advice which resolved around privacy and data protection legislation. However, he explained that the practice may be resumed as there has been more legal advice in this area.

Vlod Barchuk stated that after the death of George Floyd there were multiple questions about officer restraint techniques. He commented that the knee-on-neck restraint is not taught to police officers in the UK and police officers are discouraged from using this technique. Jill Horsfall added that although it is not a taught technique, police officers are taught they are able to use any force as long as they can justify it. Officers can therefore in theory use any force they feel is reasonably to apply, although they are taught about the dangers of using force on certain areas of the body.

Jill Horsfall also mentioned that there is disparity in race, gender and age in the stop and search data. Young, black males being stopped more often than young white males. She explained that there were complex reasons for the disparity. For example, it is important to look at the proportion of people out on the street at the same time which is not always the same as the resident race in the area. She commented that there are also other factors that contribute to the disproportion.

Resolved that: the board noted the update.

9. Police Update

Jill Horsfall explained there has been leadership changes, with Fiona Martin, now the lead for Safeguarding temporarily replacing Helen Flanagan. Alex Bingley, now the HQ lead, replacing Claire Clark. Both replacements are very experience in their fields and will be working in their role until January 2021.

Jill Horsfall explained that a BSU has been set up and every BSU has a violence suppression unit which is currently running. Some were set up in March 2020 and the violence hotspots are not as active, possibly due to the lockdown.

New recruits have started to join as a result of policing uplift with the first batch starting in April 2020. There will be 30-40 new police officers every month. Jill Horsfall commented that as there will be high ratio of new police officer, the team will need to work hard to support, mentor and develop them which will be challenging but it means there will be greater visibility in the: town centres; night-time economy; and transport hubs.

The volume of calls, crime and number of people on the street are similar to the levels seen prior to lockdown.

In response to questions by the board, Jill Horsfall answered:

- There are some concerns as the budgets may change due to Covid-19 therefore the final number of new officers may be lower.
- Around 200 to 250 officers should be delivered over the next year as arrangements have already been made for them. This is not in excess

as new officers join, other officers leave for other roles. However, there should certainly be a visible increase.

Leigh Ballard, Inspector and Community Officer communicated the crime statistics to the board.

Since March 2020, crime has generally been at lower levels across the whole of the Metropolitan Police Service areas and this was also seen across Ealing. He further explained that according to the statistics for the rolling year, Ealing has experienced:

- Fewer burglaries by 9.2%
- Fewer robberies by 15.8%
- Greater theft of motor vehicles by 9.4%
- Fewer knife crimes by 9.4%
- Fewer gun crimes by 11.6%
- Fewer violence with injuries by 9.1%
- Greater domestic violence with injury which is attributed to lockdown
- Greater antisocial behaviour by 31% which can be attributed to the numerous additional rules set in place by government due to Covid-19.

Leigh Ballard went on to provide the statistics for the quarter performance, April to June, for Ealing. There were:

- Fewer robberies by 59.2% - there are various units to combat robbery and lots of work has been done in this area.
- Fewer burglaries by 39.1%
- Greater domestic abuse by 4.2%
- Greater hate crime by 13.3%
- Fewer knife crimes by 50%
- Fewer knife crimes with injury by 25.7%
- Fewer knife crimes where victim is not domestically abused by 33.3%
- Fewer theft from motor vehicles by 22.3%
- Greater antisocial behaviour by 102.5% - the police are working hard to resolve these issues.
- 3326 additional phone calls to the police which means in total there were 6570 calls.

In response to questions by the board, Leigh Ballard, Jill Horsfall and Jess Murray, Ealing Council Safer Communities responded:

- Leigh Ballard and Jill Horsfall confirmed it would be helpful if the board took part in projects that address hate crime to build confidence and open pathways for communication.
- Domestic violence numbers increased. Police are expecting the numbers to increase even more as lockdown restrictions ease so there will be more historic reporting as police make contact with more people. Officers have been having safeguarding conversations with

people rather than enforcement conversation because people may feel safer outside than inside their home. Jill Horsfall further commented that they are trying to get the message across to people that the police can help and support them and a victimless prosecution is an option to safeguard them and their family. The police require more third party referrals to deal with the higher domestic abuse numbers. Jess Murray added that the higher numbers were expected during lockdown as people spend more time with their abuser, there were more opportunities for abuse to be perpetrated. He added that it was difficult to report domestic abuse when people did not have a support network of friends and family. The Officer also added that locally there was an increased awareness by professionals, for example social workers were contacting the Council and asking more questions about domestic abuse and this had an impact on the number of referrals.

- Jill Horsfall stated that she did not have any data relating to online crime numbers at hand. However, she can find this data later and to her knowledge she is not aware of any spike on online crime. She added that online crime is usually dealt with by specialist units and not handled locally.
- It will be difficult to foresee if there will be a surge in crime. She commented that if the economy struggles and people experience significant financial problems then the crime rate may rise as seen historically. There are plans to place more police officers, especially in the common areas of concern. Police will keep a close eye on parks and there are volunteers from the Council and street pastors to patrol very busy parks. There are unlicensed music events taking place across London, Jill Horsfall said that they will speak with London to tackle this.
- There will be monthly meetings with local police to develop tactics to deal with enforcing an outreach, homelessness, activities for young people.
- Jill Horsfall stated that she is confident the rise in antisocial behaviour is due to Covid-19 and the way crime has to be reported. For example, if someone calls the police as they believe someone is breaching guidelines relating to lockdown then the call is recorded as antisocial behaviour. Jess Murray commented that police officers work well with his team to combat antisocial behaviour and some antisocial behaviour is related to the closure of schools buildings therefore this is expected to decrease when pupils go back to school in September. Jill Horsfall added that they have an antisocial behaviour early intervention scheme. The police officers and local authority staff will give warnings to people displaying antisocial behaviour which can lead to a more formal sanction later. The aim is to encourage engagement in the first instance as opposed to automatically ticketing people as they do not want to criminalise anyone for poor reasons or give them a bad interaction with the police. Displaying PSPO signs were stopped in March due to the lockdown restrictions but these are being displayed

again from June 2020. The borough wide PSPO signs are another method to tackle antisocial behaviour.

- Jill Horsfall explained that the estate strategy is being reviewed due to the increase in police numbers and due to Covid-19 the Met are sharing desk spaces. More buildings may be required.
- Jill Horsfall commented that social distancing guidelines is not legislation therefore they cannot enforce it. When pupils go back to school, school officers and neighbourhood officers will be outside schools and transport hubs to encourage social distancing. She added that school staff have a responsibility to assist in this matter on school routes and it is not entirely police responsibility. Jess Murray added that the council have widened pavements and are trying to encourage more cycling to reduce the number of people on the pavements.
- The neighbourhood officers are on extended patrol times in the first two weeks when schools open in September 2020. After the two weeks the statistics on different crimes will be analysed to decide on the next steps.

Jess Murray informed the board that there were 600,000 faulty masks which were made cheap and did not comply with regulation but they were stamped to suggest compliance. Trading standards did a lot of work around masks and hand sanitisers. There were people knocking on the door pretending to be NHS workers. Although there were high profile crimes which got a lot of coverage, it was not prevalent.

Resolved that: the board noted the update.

10. Date of the next meeting

The chair informed the group that the next meeting will be in October 2020. She stated that the exact date will be circulated within a few days.

This meeting concluded at 8:00pm.