

Councillor Richard Porter  
Executive Member for Community Support  
and Safety

Date: 18 November 2002

Dear Councillor Porter,

### **Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

The Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee has been meeting under my Chairmanship since July 2002. Reviews on the work programme for the Sub-Committee to date, are as follows:

- Crime and Disorder: a review of the effectiveness of the Council's input to partnership working arrangements,
- Enviro Crime – Graffiti: a review of the current occurrence of graffiti across the borough and arrangements for dealing with graffiti;
- Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy: A review of the criteria for the distribution of funding to and across the 5 priority neighbourhoods determined by the LSP;
- Community Wardens: an early review of arrangements for the development of Community Warden schemes

This letter is to update you on the current situation regarding each of the reviews and to ask you to take forward the recommendations arising so far. The Sub-Committee has a meeting with you scheduled into their work programme for January 2003 when they will want to discuss progress on the recommendations, amongst other issues arising.

#### **CRIME AND DISORDER:**

a review of the effectiveness of the Council's input into partnership arrangements

#### **Background**

As you know the Council is jointly responsible, with the Police, for taking forward issues of Crime and Disorder through the Safer Southwark Partnership (SSP).

The Sub-Committee undertook this review with reference to the Crime and Disorder Strategy 2002-05 and the Best Value Review of Community Safety. Following initial advice from officers and sight of the relevant documentation, the Sub-Committee invited Rod Jarman, Borough Commander for the Metropolitan Police in Southwark and

Bob Coomber, Chief Executive, as joint chairs of the SSP to attend a meeting and discuss the issues arising.

Following that meeting, the Sub-Committee received a further briefing on the work of the SRB6 Project Board for the Campaign Against Hate Crime on Wednesday 6 November. One of the issues raised was how the Council could assist the Project Board to work in a more co-ordinated and strategic way.

The Sub-Committee acknowledge and support the work of the SRB6 Project Board, particularly in respect of the Targeted Policing Initiative (TPI) and the inroads TPI has made into tackling hate crime in the borough.

### ***Recommendation***

- That those Councillors with representation on the SRB6 Project Board (currently yourself, Cllrs. Friary, Bassom and Banya) discuss with other Project Board members how best the Council could support its strategic working. The Councillors concerned are asked to report back to the Scrutiny Sub-Committee by mid-February 2003 in this respect.

### **ENVIRO-CRIME: GRAFFITI**

a review of the occurrence of graffiti across the borough and arrangements for dealing with graffiti.

#### **Background**

The Sub-Committee noted the importance of tackling graffiti as part of the Council's drive to eliminate enviro crime, particularly in the light of the MORI 2002 Residents' Survey which puts crime at the top of a list of residents' concerns with graffiti and vandalism at number 3.

The Sub-Committee has received two briefings from officers on the issues arising. At the meeting on Wednesday 6 November, officers advised that many of the operational issues in respect of graffiti removal (e.g. the speed of removing graffiti and reporting arrangements) will be dealt with through the Integrated Cleansing Contract now being worked up, and due to be awarded in August 2003.

However, it emerged that there were policy and strategic issues arising outside of the award of the Integrated Cleansing Contract, which the Sub-Committee could have recourse to influence, e.g. education programmes. Members were particularly concerned that there is, currently, no database available to register the occurrence of graffiti and tagging. Amongst its many uses would be the ability to record messages by drug users.

## **Recommendations**

- **Graffiti Conference**

The Sub-Committee ask that you instruct officers to consider the feasibility of convening a conference of all the agencies involved in dealing with graffiti, i.e. the Council, the Police, the Youth Offender Team, Transport for London and others interested to try and determine a better co-ordinated approach to dealing with graffiti. Officers are asked to report back to the Sub-Committee on the feasibility of such a conference by January 7<sup>th</sup> 2003.

- **Database**

The Sub-Committee ask that you request officers to begin setting up and implementing a database to collate all information relating to graffiti tags and occurrences and that this should be geographically coded.

- **Influencing other Bodies: Retail Outlets**

The Sub-Committee ask that you instruct officers to put together an, initially, voluntary Code of Conduct on the sale of such things as spray paints, marker pens and other graffiti paraphernalia. Further, that a letter be sent immediately to the retailers concerned asking them to sign up to the voluntary Code of Conduct (in advance of new laws on the sale of spray paints and indelible marker pens in a bid to tackle graffiti and arising from the Anti Social Behaviour Bill outlined recently in the Queen's Speech) and to utilise the Police to assist in promoting such a scheme, if possible.

- **Engaging the media**

The Sub-Committee ask that you instruct officers to liaise with the local media and through Southwark Life to both publicise and support the efforts being made via the recommendations above.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL:**

a review of the criteria for the distribution of NR funding to the 5 priority neighbourhoods as determined by the LSP.

## **Background**

This review was undertaken following a resolution by Council Assembly on 18<sup>th</sup> September that the Sub-Committee should be asked to review the criteria for the distribution of NR funding to the 5 priority neighbourhoods as determined by the LSP. The minute of the Council resolution did not specify the exact nature of the review or any timing.

At its meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November, members took advice from officers on the current distribution of NR funding by the LSP to the 5 priority neighbourhoods as well as more general information on the work of the LSP, its evolution and its powers.

The Sub-Committee discussed the distribution of NR funding for 2002/03 totalling £360,899, and noted that the 5 priority neighbourhoods will receive £120,000,

approximately 35% while the borough, as a whole, still takes the majority of funding. It was noted that there are plans to allocate a greater proportion of funding to the priority neighbourhoods in future years. However, the Sub-Committee would like the 5 priority neighbourhoods to receive a greater distribution of funding to tackle poverty and social exclusion issues and to maximise impact in those areas with particularly high levels of deprivation as speedily as possible. The Sub-Committee was also concerned that the work of small, but still vital voluntary agencies might be overlooked in bids for funding from larger better resourced agencies. The Sub-Committee did note that a 'Small Grants' scheme is being mooted currently on the LSP agenda.

The Council does have recourse to influence the work of the LSP via its representation on the partnership, namely yourself, Cllr Stanton and Bob Coomber, Chief Executive.

### ***Recommendations***

- The Sub-Committee ask that you exert influence via current Council representation on the LSP to move to a speedier and greater distribution of NR funding to the 5 priority neighbourhoods.
- The Sub-Committee ask that you exert influence, via Council representation on the LSP, to ensure that small voluntary agencies have an equal opportunity to access funds via the LSP.

### **COMMUNITY WARDENS:**

an early review of arrangements for Community Warden Schemes

### **Background**

At its meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November, the Sub-Committee received a briefing from officers in Environment and Leisure and from two Area Managers with responsibility for Community Warden schemes in Peckham and Bermondsey respectively. The briefing was also based on the Director's report 'The Development of Community Warden Schemes', due to be considered by the Executive which will detail proposals for future arrangements for Community Warden Schemes as well as the development of a Southwark standard, e.g. by way of training for Community Wardens, uniforms etc.

The Sub-Committee acknowledge and support the significant work undertaken by Community Wardens to date in promoting better social cohesion and as a visible means of tackling residents' fear of crime.

This review is ongoing. However, the Sub-Committee will be submitting a report to the Executive to accompany the Director's report, with the following recommendations:

### **Recommendations**

- That the Executive fully endorses the recommendation that the Council continues to press the OPDM for environmental enforcement powers to be available to all warden schemes, but that such enforcement powers were they to be forthcoming, should be implemented after consultation with the Police and the local community in Southwark.
- That the Executive endorses the recruitment of wardens from black and ethnic minority groups and women through extending the standard recruitment process.
- That the Executive should continue to ensure that all Community Warden Schemes work towards fostering social inclusion and community development.

In addition, Sub-Committee members will shortly be undertaking tours of Peckham and/or Bermondsey in company with the Wardens in order to gain their perspective on the Schemes and to gain further insight into the way residents view the Community Warden Schemes. Thereafter, members will revisit the issues arising and may make further recommendations.

A letter will shortly go to Councillor Humphreys, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, updating him on the progress of the work of this Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

If you require further context to any of the reviews please call me. Alternatively, Maggie Sullivan, Corporate Strategy Assistant with policy input to the Scrutiny Sub-Committee, will be available to assist you. She can be contacted on 020 7525 7160.

Yours sincerely,

**Councillor Barrie Hargrove**  
**Chair, Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

CC: Councillor Nick Stanton  
Councillor Beverley Bassom  
Bob Coomber, Chief Executive