

Item No. 28	Classification: Open	Date: 9 April 2003	MEETING NAME Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Report title:		Follow-up to the meeting with the Executive Member	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:			

NOTE FOR MEMBERS

Project title: Follow up to meeting with the Executive Member

Original Project brief: To discuss with the Executive member predetermined questions and areas of interest to Sub Committee Members

1. BACKGROUND

The co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested that all the Sub Committees schedule a meeting with their respective Executive Member into their work programmes for 2002/03. The Sub Committee met with the Executive Member for Community Support and Safety, Councillor Richard Porter, on Wednesday 5 February 2003.

The Executive member was offered sight of the questions to be asked in a letter sent to him on 24 January (copy attached) Members of the Sub Committee took ownership of the questions on the night and supplemental questions were asked. The Executive Member was supported by the Chief Executive, Bob Coomber. As requested, the Executive Member subsequently provided a written response to the questions asked and issues discussed on 5 February (copy attached). Outcomes from that meeting are also supported by the minutes of the meeting on 5 February and included in the agenda for the 9 April meeting.

The Sub Committee meeting on Wednesday 9 April will provide an opportunity for members to reflect further on the meeting with the Executive Member, and associated paperwork, to determine any further outcomes. For information, a copy of the original questions asked of the Executive Member is also attached to this briefing note.

24 January 2003

Dear Councillor Porter

Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub Committee:
Meeting with the Executive Member on Wednesday 5 February

The Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub Committee has made time on its work programme to meet with you on Wednesday 5 February, starting at 7pm.

The Sub Committee met on Tuesday 21 January to determine the particular issues they would like to discuss with you. I have been asked by the Sub Committee to write to you with details of the issues and questions likely to arise. There will also be supplemental questions on the night.

The Sub Committee has determined its questions under 6 headings:

1. Recommendations arising from reviews by the Sub Committee to date
2. MORI 2002
3. Performance monitoring (including Southwark's PSA)
4. Corporate Priorities
5. Community Councils
6. Additional issues arising

1. Recommendations arising from reviews by the Sub Committee to date which are:

- The effectiveness of the Council's input to partnership working with the Police on issues of crime and disorder
- Enviro-Crime: Graffiti
- Neighbourhood renewal funding
- Strategic Support for the SRB6 Project Board
- Arrangements for the development of Community Wardens Schemes
- A review of the outbreak of public disorder at the Council's Fireworks event on Peckham Rye Common on November 5, 2002.
- A review of the chapter 'Cutting Crime and Fear of Crime' in the draft Community Strategy.

Members of the Sub Committee would be pleased to receive from you an update on progress on all of the specific recommendations arising in reviews by this Sub Committee, as appropriate, and what mechanisms you have put in place to support the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee more generally.

On individual reviews and recommendations members are particularly interested to hear from you on:

- What action the Council has taken, as a member of the Southwark Alliance (LSP) to influence a speedier distribution of neighbourhood renewal funding to the five priority areas as determined by the Southwark Alliance and what guarantees the Council, as a member of the Southwark Alliance, is trying to bring about so that small, but still vital voluntary organisations, have an equal opportunity to access NRF funding as well as the larger agencies, through the Southwark Alliance.
- Community Wardens – an Officer report going to the Executive in February will outline arrangements for the development of Community Wardens schemes in identified priority areas but members would like to know what Community Wardens schemes are planned for areas which are not deemed a priority currently.

2. MORI 2002

- Crime and the fear of Crime was revealed as being top on a list of resident concerns arising out of the MORI 2002 survey. In particular, the proportion of residents dissatisfied with policing in the borough is twice the national average.
- Could you describe the extent of the action being taken to reverse resident concerns on crime and the fear of crime and what arrangements are in hand to improve public satisfaction with policing in the borough.
- Could you describe what progress is being made with the extension of CCTV across the borough, particularly into wards such as Surrey Docks where it is not extensively used at present. Could you also describe what progress is being made on establishing the main CCTV Control Centre for the borough.
- Could you tell the Committee how many anti social behaviour orders have been issued in the current financial year, to date, and what the success of the use of these orders is deemed to be in progressing the Safer Southwark Partnership's agenda to reduce anti social behaviour. Could you describe how the ongoing Best Value Review of Community Safety will enable better outcomes in dealing with anti social behaviour.

3. Performance Monitoring

- Two local indicators on crime are reported to the Executive as part of the quarterly monitoring performance framework. Under performance in the first two quarters' reports was as follows:

LP1 – To achieve the average and then a below average rate of crime per 1,000 of the population as compared to a family of 11 other comparable boroughs –

Quarter 1 target 47% - actual rate of crime 53.4%

Quarter 2 target 43.7% - actual rate of crime 48%

LP2 – Street crime per 1,000 of the population

Quarter 1 target 11.9% - actual rate of crime 17.3%

Quarter 2 target 13.5% - actual rate of crime 15%

- How do you deal with under achievement and how important do you consider performance indicators to be?
- Could you describe if the department is being realistic in its target setting against indicators generally, how does the department know it is being realistic and what checks and balances exist in the service to ensure that the Council meets and exceeds targets.
- **PSA** - Targets 1, 3 and 4 in Southwark's Public Service Agreement are to do with crime and offending or disturbing behaviour on the part of young people. What are the strategies in place for meeting these targets and how important do you perceive them to be?

4. Corporate Priorities

- Equalities is one of the Council's five corporate priorities. What is your understanding of the Race Relations Act? Could you describe how equalities issues generally are being promoted through the borough with reference to the Council's Race Equality Scheme, action 'on the ground' and, in particular, what measures are in place to combat homophobic behaviour and attitudes.
- Could you describe what action is being taken within the department to progress corporate performance in employing more staff from black and minority ethnic groups and ensuring that a percentage of top earners are women and from black and ethnic minority groups.

5. Community Councils

Full Council has agreed a system of Community Councils to begin work in April 2003. How will the Community Support and Safety Agenda be progressed through the Community Councils. What impact do you expect in year 1 and how will success be measured?

6. Additional Issues

Sub Committee members would be pleased to hear from you about the extent and scope of your involvement in the Community Support and Safety portfolio and what formal mechanisms are in place in the department to enable that involvement.

Please find attached to this letter copies of the correspondence and recommendations generated by the Sub Committee to date to assist you with your responses to the Sub Committee. Members of the Sub Committee will take ownership of individual questions at the meeting. The Chief Officer, Bob Coomber, has been invited to attend the meeting to assist you in answering the questions with additional information, where necessary. This meeting will provide the first opportunity for you and this Sub Committee to meet under the new Overview and

Scrutiny arrangements. Members of the Sub Committee are looking forward to a productive meeting.

If you need any further context please contact Maggie Sullivan on 0207 525 7160 or by email to maggie.sullivan@southwark.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

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

cc: All members of the Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub Committee
Bob Coomber, Chief Executive
All members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Nathalie Hadjifotiou, Head of Social Inclusion
Stan Dubeck, Head of Community Safety
Eleanor Rees, Constitutional Support

Written response to the meeting with the Community Support and Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Wednesday 5 February 2003

1.Recommendations arising from reviews by the sub-committee to date

Graffiti

a.Graffiti Conference - On the 13th February 2003 the Directorate of Environment and Leisure hosted a conference for all local authorities, police and other stakeholders entitled 'Living London'. The conference looked at what works well in other authorities and it shared best practice on addressing graffiti, fly posting and other environmental blights. This was a fantastic opportunity for all local authorities and external partners to share their experiences/solutions to common problems.

b.Database – Officers from waste management have set up a graffiti database that includes data around the name of the tagger, location of tag, date, time and it will also include information as to whether the council has been requested to remove graffiti from the location. The information will eventually be geo-coded. This database will be shared by housing staff and officers will be able to place a picture of the graffiti as part of the information that is collated.

c.Influencing other bodies – retail outlets – The 'Capital Standard' working party on graffiti is developing a code of conduct on the sale of spray paints for London as a whole. Southwark Council are in the process of developing its own code of conduct, however, officers are awaiting the progress of the Capital Standard work before pursuing it's own scheme.

d.Engaging the media – Officers from the Press Office are liaising with officers from Environment and Leisure and are discussing innovative ways in which to publicise the councils approach to combating this form of anti-social behaviour. It is intended that raising awareness of graffiti and the problems it causes is a key strand of next year's cleanliness campaign.

Neighbourhood Renewal Funding

A meeting for all Councillors was held on Monday 27 January, to discuss neighbourhood renewal funding.

Councillors from all of the five priority neighbourhoods will shortly be meeting on a regular basis, to discuss the distribution of the £500,000 allocated to each of the five neighbourhoods.

The small grants fund of £500,000 has been contracted to SELCHF and we expect distribution of these funds to commence around May time.

Strategic Support for SRB6

A meeting has been set for Wednesday 26 February to discuss involvement of Councillors with the board.

Neighbourhood Warden Schemes

I have written to John Denham MP, with regard to environmental enforcement powers being given to all wardens. Despite two reminders, I have yet to receive a reply. Following a recent visit from the MPA, I will also be writing to the Chair, Lord Harris, to advise him of our concerns.

We support an ethnically diverse work-force, and as such, advertisements for the wardens and warden managers have been placed in The Voice newspaper.

The emphasis of wardens will continue to focus on fostering social inclusion and community development.

A report updating the executive on the progress of new wardens schemes, and in particular uniforms, will be presented shortly.

We will continue to work with the police with regard to having a dedicated officer for each scheme, whilst realising that this may not always be possible.

Further schemes are planned. These will be introduced provided agreement of our budget submitted to council assembly, and following further negotiations with interested parties.

Review of the disturbance at Peckham Rye

This report was subsequently brought to the executive, and minor amendments were made.

2. Mori 2002

Resident concerns

A number of actions are being taken to reverse resident concerns about crime and the fear of crime. The establishment of five hot-spots has seen a dramatic fall in crime in these locations. We hope to have all hot-spots covered by warden schemes by the end of the year. I regularly attend local police consultative groups, SPCCG, SSP and other partnership groups to ensure residents concerns are listened to, and addressed.

In the past twelve months, the police have launched Safer Streets, Safer Homes, and shortly, Safer Cars, the first of which saw a substantial decrease in street crime.

CCTV

The CCTV control centre is due to be handed over to the council in April/May, although it will not be immediately operational, as there will need to be several months of testing.

Initially, approximately 100 public realm cameras will be fed into this centre. It is then planned for further cameras to be monitored in the centre, from cashiers offices, sheltered housing and estates.

ASBO's

Currently, no ASBO's have been issued in the current financial year, although 8 are pending. Traditionally, these orders have been difficult to obtain, as they are effectively 'civil' cases being brought in the Magistrates Court.

Following the Police Reform Act 2002, it should be easier to obtain ASBO's. A number of important changes have been introduced. Interim ASBO's can be applied for as part of the criminal process. RSL's can also apply for ASBO's in their own right, although this must be done in conjunction with the local authority and police. As from April next year, we can apply for the orders using civil proceedings in the County Court.

The best value review challenges what our priorities are and ensures we are taking the right approach. It will also look at key issues, which will form the basis of consultation and also compares our performance with other authorities.

3.Performance Monitoring

As mentioned on the evening, the figures shown in the report were not accurate and therefore do not show under-performance.

Targets which are set, need to be achievable but tough. Our targets are set in the context of our crime family. If we consistently failed to meet our targets, it could be argued that we are being unrealistic and vice-versa.

PSA

The strategy in place for meeting PSA 1,3 and 4 is the Southwark Crime and Disorder Strategy – Young People and Crime Targets. There has already been good progress towards meeting these targets and work will continue, to ensure they can be met by the dates set.

4. Corporate Priorities

Race Relations Act

The Race Relations Act 1976 outlaws discrimination on the grounds of goods, facilities, services and premises. The Act breaks discrimination down into two elements: direct and indirect.

The Act has now been reinforced by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 (RRAA). The RRAA was introduced in the light of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry and findings of institutional racism. It gives public authorities a new statutory general duty to promote race equality. This means we must have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

The Equalities Standard is the basis for which we can develop impact assessments to look at the work we are doing/proposing and the impact this will have on communities.

The new equalities agenda is now about:

- i) Whether your actions are doing making a difference?
- ii) Proportionality – this will give more emphasis to departments where there may be underachievement.
- iii) Programmes can then be rolled out to services where they will have the biggest impact

Homophobia

The Council's current harassment policy covers homophobia.

SRB6 – The Hate Crimes board, studies homophobia as part of its work pattern.

There is also a hate crimes sub-group of the SSP and in recent months, we have seen the establishment of the LGBT Network.

5. Community Councils

The formula for allocating community safety budgets to Community Councils will be agreed following the budget meeting of Council Assembly on 24 February.

6. Additional Issues

I have a full time commitment to this portfolio and in the first six months, have built up relationships with all major stakeholders.

I am a member of, and regularly attend meetings of the Safer Southwark Partnership, Local Strategic Partnership, COMPACT group, Community Legal Services Partnership and SRB6 Hate Crimes Board.