



HERTSMERE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19 July 2010 at the Civic Offices

Attendees:	Celia Young	Neighbourhood Watch
	Cliff Liles	Neighbourhood Watch
	Christine Liles	Neighbourhood Watch
	Roy Hotchkiss	Bushey and Oxhey Churches Together
	Gerry McCormick	Resident
	Rosamund Gray	Radlett Society and Radlett and Aldenham Good Neighbours
	Jacqueline Townsend	Resident
	Councillor Anthony Spencer	Shenley Parish Council
	Councillor Alan Plancey	Hertfordshire County Council
	Councillor Ann Harrison	Hertsmere Borough Council
	John Godfrey	Chair Potters Bar CSP
	Dennis Sandor	Neighbourhood Watch
	Councillor Estelle Samuelson	Aldenham Parish Council
	Laurence Cohen	Neighbourhood Watch
	Chief Inspector Sue Jameson	Hertfordshire Constabulary
	PCSO Claire Morris	Hertfordshire Constabulary
	Brenda Griffiths	Hertfordshire Police Authority
	Mark Millin	Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)
	Valerie Kane	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Councillor John Donne (Chair)	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Loran Kingston (Minutes)	Hertsmere Borough Council

Apologies for absence:	Hilary Shade	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Trevor Brown	Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
	Peter Hatherley	Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
	Rebecca Handley	Affinity Sutton
	Kerrie Eastman	Hertfordshire Probation
	Katherine Fitzpatrick	Youth Connexions
	Councillor Paul Morris	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Janet Dear	Resident
	Councillor Harvey Cohen	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Leo Nita	Metropolitan Housing Trust
	Councillor Linda Silver	Hertsmere Borough Council

Apologies for absence:	Dennis Evans	Resident
	Ray Edge	Resident
	Councillor Ernie Butler	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Glen Channer	County Community Safety Unit
	Councillor Martin Worster	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Councillor James Ricks	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Councillor Caroline Clapper	Hertfordshire County Council
	Councillor Rosemary Gilligan	Hertsmere Borough Council

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting (26 April 2010) and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. Performance updates

3.1 Hertfordshire Constabulary

Chief Inspector Sue Jameson gave an update to the group. Please see presentation attached.

3.2 Hertfordshire Police Authority update

Brenda Griffiths gave an update to the group.

The Police Authority are focussing heavily on performance and the budget.

On Friday (16 July 2010) the Police Authority reviewed the report from the Chief Constable outlining the options for change to address the inevitable funding gap.

The summary of the 100 page business case comes with three options and Bedfordshire Police Authority also received the paper at the same time.

Both Chief Constables recommended a full and voluntary merger of the two police forces. However, Hertfordshire Police Authority have carefully considered the Chief Constables' offer and have voted to explore further and wider collaboration.

The Police Authority opted to reject the merger at this time, however it is expected that the directly elected individuals who are likely to take over in May 2012, may review this at a later date. This is yet to be confirmed.

The Police Authority have confirmed their preference to maintain an independent policing service for this county.

Bedfordshire Police Authority voted in favour of going out to wider consultation around the merger but have subsequently chosen not to pursue this option once they heard the verdict of Hertfordshire's Police Authority.

Bedfordshire Constabulary will remain the preferred partner for collaboration discussions, for which it is hoped that the Chief Constable will come back with a fuller report towards the end of the year.

The Chairman informed the group that there would not be a presentation from Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

4. **Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) presentation**

Mark Millin gave an overview of how the CPS works. He explained that there are specialist areas that could be presented in more detail at a future meeting by a specialist lawyer if necessary.

Mark Millen joined the CPS in September 2004 as a Senior Crown Prosecutor. This role includes making and assisting the police with charging decisions, including who and what they should be charged with and then bringing that matter to court. How is this done? The police charge the individual for a crime, they then seek legal advice, the individual will attend the first hearing and then give their plea, which will either be guilty or not guilty. If the individual pleads guilty they could be sentenced there and then or they will be given a sentencing date. If they plead not guilty the CPS will put together a full file and a trial date will be set. The trials will be heard at either a Magistrates Court or Crown Court, depending on the severity of the charge. If a trial date is set it will be up to the CPS to conduct the trial, or sometimes an external barrister and or solicitor will assist. The CPS role is to then support the police during the trial and to hopefully get a successful conclusion.

There are many charges that the police can do by themselves, such as drink driving and the easier assault cases. These do not need to be authorised by the CPS. Once the police have charged individuals for an offence(s), it is then passed to the CPS to be brought to court.

When the police do need advice from the CPS they have a Code for Crown Prosecutors, which they follow and is a two fold test.

The first test is: is there sufficient evidence or can we obtain it to offer a realistic prospective conviction? If it is decided that there is a realistic prospective of conviction then we move to the second stage of the test. Is It in the public's interest to prosecute?

Talks are given in schools, explaining the way in which the CPS reach charging decisions.

There are many ways that the CPS can assist members of the public in giving their evidence in court, these include:

- Giving the victim or witness special measures
- Young people, aged 17 and under are automatically eligible for special measures, which include screens in court, pre recorded interviews and giving evidence via a video link.

Special measures are offered when the statement is taken and then the courts can be made aware of the requirements that are needed.

If you become a victim it is important to report the crime to the police, to give them every opportunity to bring the offender to justice and if you become a witness it is important to tell the police exactly what you have witnessed.

5. Link Officers for the Deaf

5.1 What Hertfordshire Constabulary have to offer our residents who are deaf, blind and deaf blind

PCSO Claire Morris gave an update to the group.

There are currently 19 voluntary Link Officers around the country and 13 of these are level 1 in British Sign Language and one is Pre Level 3.

The tutor has a foundation certificate in Deaf Studies and Deaf Community & Culture certification and is also a trustee of the Alban Neve Deaf Association.

All Link Officers have undertaken certificated courses in Deaf Awareness and Communication Tactics, which include assessments on using the Deaf Blind Manual Alphabet and the Block Alphabet.

All certificated courses have been with the Signature Examining Board CACDP (Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf and Deaf Blind People).

Key facts:

- One in every seven people are deaf
- The statistics only refer to those who have registered
- Hertfordshire has between 142,000 and 147,000 people registered as deaf (based on 1 million in Hertfordshire)
- In the UK one in seven people suffer from hearing loss. This used to be mostly due to age but now younger people's hearing is damaged by exposure to loud music.
- Nine million people in the UK are deaf
- 8.3 million people are hard of hearing
- 250,000 people experience some level of dual sensory loss
- 123,000 people are deafened
- 50,000 people are deaf BSL users
- 24,000 people are deaf blind

Claire Morris is the only link officer in Herts mere and is about to start sign language training in September.

If you would like to make contact with Claire Morris please email Claire.morris@herts.pnn.police.uk.

The emergency text number 07786 207091
The non emergency text phone 01707 390 990
Fax number 01707 354 409.

6. Questions and answers

At the invitation of the Chairman, questions and answers were put and responses given as follows:

6.1 Hertfordshire Constabulary performance update

John Godfrey, the Chair of the Potters Bar Community Safety Partnership (CSP) informed the group that he had attended the very interesting police station open day that was held in Borehamwood in June.

He also thanked the police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) that attended the Potters Bar fun day. Officers attendance at local events is welcomed and very much appreciated

Sue Jameson thanked John Godfrey for his feedback and told the group that officers will continue to support events and engage with communities.

Councillor Ann Harrison raised the issues that were occurring in Leeming Road and stated that they had been promised higher levels of policing.

Sue Jameson advised the councillor that the ward officer PC Tanya Bainbridge-Price attends local meetings and has devised a patrol plan.

ACTION: Sue Jameson to review the current situation and make contact with the councillor in due course.

Gerry McCormick asked if the Constabulary could give assurance that neighbourhood policing department will be protected, given the recent budget cut announcements.

Sue Jameson informed the group that she was not privy to such information, however the Chief Constable has said that local policing and teams will be safe guarded during these times where there are financial constraints.

The Chairman added that at a recent executive meeting it was agreed that there was no intension of cutting future PCSO funding.

Dennis Sandor wanted to know what serious acquisitive crime actually was.

Sue Jameson explained that this included burglary dwelling, taking without owners consent, theft from motor vehicle and robbery. These crime types are accounted for separately and are also grouped together.

Jacqueline Townsend raised concerns about a recent incident, which was reported to the police via the emergency number and the ongoing issues that she was experiencing.

Councillor John Donne asked Jacqueline to discuss these personal issues out side of the public meeting.

County Councillor Alan Plancey commended the work that officers do for community groups in their own time. He told the group that he had recently attended a Life project, which is run by Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, which was outstanding. He added that more work is being done, which we are not all aware of and that this is beyond what is expected.

6.2 Hertfordshire Police Authority

Councillor Ann Harrison wanted a comment on the recent decision not to consult on the merger with Bedfordshire Constabulary.

Brenda Griffiths explained that each resolution was voted on independently and the results were extremely close. The Chief Constable felt the merger was the way forward, however it was decided that this was not the only option available.

Brenda Griffiths personally voted against the merger as she felt that the case had not been made robustly enough for the merger of the two constabularies.

She felt there was work to be done with collaborating with partners. Hertfordshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire County Council have already reorganised the Community Safety Unit and this is now under the command of the Constabulary.

The borough councils could also look at services that could be shared, and the Police Authority would like to consider ideas for collaborations, as this would be the ideal way to develop.

6.3 Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) presentation

John Godfrey wanted to know the percentage of successful cases that were brought to court.

Mark Millin informed the group that it was approximately 80% as charges normally result in a conviction at the Magistrates Court, but are less at a Crown Court. This could be because Magistrates are case hard and sit in on more cases, as opposed to jurors.

It is also important that the police and the CPS get the charges right, not below or above what should be given for the offence that has been committed.

Gerry McCormick wanted to know if it was true that there is not enough CSP staff.

Mark Millin explained that there may not be a lot of leeway when it comes to taking holiday etc, but there will always be a prosecution for a case.

Gerry McCormick asked if there would be court closures nationally.

Mark Millin explained that the court closures are nothing to do with the CPS, however the knock on effect on justice remains to be seen. If there were court closures it would mean that cases would be sent to other courts instead.

Dennis Sandor wanted to know if the CPS appeals the decisions in the public's interest.

Mark Millin explained that the Code for Crown Prosecutors would still apply and that they would appeal if it was in the public's interest. However it may be that the Magistrate needs to be educated, if they keep making the wrong decisions.

A resident wanted to know what was meant by 'not in the public's interest'.

Mark Millin explained that it has never been the rule of the country that every criminal offence should automatically be prosecuted. For this reason, in each case, the Crown Prosecutor must consider the public interest in going on with a prosecution and balance factors for and against prosecution carefully and fairly before coming to a decision.

A prosecution will usually take place unless the public interest factors against prosecution clearly outweigh those in favour of prosecution.

The public interest factors that can effect the decision to prosecute will vary from case to case. Broadly speaking, the more serious the alleged offence, the more likely it will be that a prosecution will be needed in the public interest. On the other hand a prosecution is less likely to be needed if, for example a court would be likely to fix a minimal or token penalty or the loss or harm connected with the offence was minor and the result of a single incident.

If you would like more information on the CPS please visit www.cps.gov.uk

6.4 Link officers for the deaf

John Godfrey thanked the officer for the presentation, as it was very good. He wanted to know if an OWL message had been sent out, to inform the residents of what services are available.

Claire Morris told the group that an OWL message was sent in May, to advertise the Deaf Awareness Day at Police Head Quarters. However this suggestion would be passed onto Derrick Sweeney, the Watch Liaison Officer.
Update: Claire Morris has since sent an email on the OWL system, making residents aware of the services that are offered.

Councillor Harrison wanted to know how much the service was used. Claire Morris was unsure of the figures, however everything that she had been involved in was voluntary and within six months she attended six calls where deaf people needed assistance.

Newly recruited police constables are now given deaf awareness training. The residents that have used the service have been very pleased. As a PCSO, Claire added that she could also add that personal touch and check on individuals after an incident has occurred.

Dennis Sandor informed the group that he had received an OWL message in the past and wanted to know if you have to register with the constabulary before using the service.

Claire Morris explained that the service was there for those who needed it. The call will first come to Police Head Quarters and then it will be either dealt with or forwarded to the fire or ambulance service.

7. Any other business

Gerry McCormick told the group that there are several groups of people collecting clothing as part of a cloth collection scam.

He wanted to raise awareness and wanted advice on how to tackle this issue. The Chairman advised the group that all charities operating in Hertsmere must be registered with the council. Residents were asked to report illegal collections to either Phil Andrews, Principle Licensing Officer 020 8207 7533 or Sue Hardy, Licensing Enforcement Officer 020 8207 7552 or email licensing.services@hertsmere.gov.uk

The Chairman informed the group that the borough council will be hosting a World Sight day on 14 October 2010. More details to follow in due course.

The Chairman thanked all those present for attending the meeting.

8. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 25 October 2010 at 6.30pm at the Civic Offices, Borehamwood.