

# High Street Safer Neighbourhoods Ward Panel

Meeting notes: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## Attendees:

- PC Terry Smart
- PC Scott Defreitas
- Andre Henry (Chair)
- Sandra DaCosta
- Philip Herlihy
- Mohammed Yusuf
- Irena Souroup
- Valerie Robertson

## Apologies received:

- Cllr Clare Coghill
- Frances Shoesmith

It was noted that the turnout for this meeting was relatively low – this might have been due to a circulated message which gave the *day* incorrectly – apologies to anyone disadvantaged by this. It was confirmed that the Met's target is that all wards should have ward panel meetings at least twice a year.

## Staffing Updates:

The planned **merger** of Waltham Forest Police with Newham Police to form the North-East "Basic Command Unit" is expected to take place in September 2018. The Waltham Forest Borough Commander (Chief Superintendent Richard Tucker) is already also the Borough Commander of Newham, and restructuring of the Senior Leadership team is underway. Across the combined area, there has been a promise of 30 officers dedicated to dealing with gangs and antisocial behaviour.

The **High Street Team** currently consists of:

- Sgt Stuart Doyle (also responsible for another ward)
- PC Scott Defreitas
- PC Steve Bragg
- PCSO Dennis Morgan

It is hoped that the restructuring will allow a further 3 PCs to be assigned to High Street SNT. The new Council Neighbourhood Officer is Lisa Jones.

## PSPOs, CPNs and CBOs

Street drinkers and others now come under the provisions of a "Public Space Protection Order" (**PSPO**) which, since September 2017, covers the whole Borough south of the North Circular for three years. It prohibits certain persistent and unreasonable behaviour to prevent nuisance or disorder. It specifically restricts:

- public consumption or possession of alcohol
- intimidating or aggressive begging
- public urination, defecation, spitting or littering
- verbal abuse or behaviour to cause harassment, alarm or distress
- parking on school zig-zags
- congregating in a group of two or more to cause crime or nuisance.

Enforcement involves cooperation between the Police and Council enforcement officers, who wear black uniforms, and body-cameras. The PSPO introduces a requirement to supply a name and address in case of a breach. After a verbal and then written warnings, offenders can be issued a "Community Protection Notice" (**CPN**) by Police which imposes appropriate specific restrictions, and breach of these conditions can lead to arrest and prosecution. This can lead to a "Criminal Behaviour Order" (**CBO**) set by a court, with penalties for breach

of up to 5 years imprisonment. These provisions are proving very effective, and have been used against persistent street drinkers, beggars and street dealers.

### News & Updates:

Work on the **drug dealing** problem continues. Operation Teague is giving way to Operation Sceptre, which concentrates on the rise in violence, particularly knife crime with three “buses” allocated to Waltham Forest. Activity has reduced considerably in High Street and St James Street, though it is understood that some activity has been displaced elsewhere. However, a drop in street dealing has been recognised in Grange Road, Markhouse Road and Gosport Road in adjacent Markhouse ward. A number of arrests have been made, and Hardy House has been closed down as a base for dealing. Warrants have been executed at two addresses on the High Street, and two more are in the pipeline. CCTV is working with police to monitor any remaining activity. Inevitably, there have been signs that newcomers have been seeking to fill the space left by the displaced gang members, and there has been some conflict over “turf”. It has been observed that some of the newcomers are younger – ages 14 or 15 – and some have been reported to carry weapons. . A resident asked if CCTV could be provided for Essex Close, and this led to a discussion of the growth in drawing on police experience in designing out crime in urban design.

**Burglaries** are down, and PCSO Dennis has been issuing “Met Trace” (SmartWater) to selected households. **Theft** affecting motor vehicles (theft of, and theft from) has risen, as has theft-from-the-person (often pickpocketing). Distraction theft at cashpoints has reduced.

A drop in **street drinking** has been noted – though reports suggest the new bench in Coppermill Lane may be attracting this activity

Two abandoned **cars** have been removed from Selborne Avenue.

**Violence** against the person is down, also **sexual offences** (which tend to be seasonal).

The team has received complaints about young people riding **motorcycles/mopeds** on the Marshes.

### Ward Priorities

After discussion, the team’s **priorities** were agreed to be:

- Antisocial behaviour
- Drugs/gangs
- Violence to the person

### Ward Panel Officers:

The Ward Panel **Chair**, Andre Henry, has expressed an intention to stand down, due to new family responsibilities (congratulations are due!). This is a great opportunity for another member of the panel to step up to what has always been an interesting, rewarding, and (thankfully) relatively light responsibility in terms of the work involved. Anyone interested is encouraged to talk to any of the team’s officers, or to Philip Herlihy, who was chair for many years – all of these will be glad to offer continuing support as needed. The website (<http://www.walthamsoft.com/high-st-snt>) has a link to a summary of what the role involves. It would also be helpful to have a **deputy chair**, and the same applies. Do get in touch if you’d like an informal discussion, without obligation!

Residents are invited to join the **Facebook** group “High Street E17 Ward Panel”

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1579777132311261>),

and a resident also mentioned the Borough-wide group “Crime Awareness Waltham Forest”

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CrimeAwarenessWalthamForest>). Neither of these is an “official” Met Police group.