

West End and Chinatown Safer Neighbourhood Team

Ward Panel Meeting

Tuesday 19th January 6pm

Minutes

In attendance

Sara Wong	Chinese Community Centre
Carol Wiseman	Vale Royal House
Barney Barnard	Safer Neighbourhood Team
Dave Hart	Safer Neighbourhood
Christian Ardron	Safer Neighbourhood Team
Justin Wallace	Sound/ Storm/ Pubwatch Chair
Diane Fairfoot	Residents
Darren Pickup	Westminster CDRP
John Hall	Global Radio
Sylvia Mak	Notre Dame de France Church
Ralph Tween	China Town Unit
Jules Manock	Safer Neighbourhood Team
Rob Nanasi	Safer Neighbourhood Team
Fadi Saliba	Corniche Restaurant
Richard Walker	Metra
Leslie NG	London China Town Association
David Fereday	Heart of London

Apologies

John Anderson	Novus Leisure
Mike Hyams	McDonalds
Rob Embleton	Novus Leisure
Delaney Gordon	G Casino
Cllr Mitchell	Westminster

1. Welcome and Introductions

We welcomed Justin Wallace, Leslie Ng, Sara Wong and Carol Wiseman to the meeting.

DF also informed the group the Inspector Dave Hart was retiring from the Metropolitan Police in February and that Inspector Malcolm Barnard is to be our new Safer Neighbourhood Inspector.

2. Ward Panel Governance

Dave explained that according to the instructions on managing a Ward Panel, new members should be voted onto the board. Dave said that as the meeting did not have a large membership he believed that we should welcome anyone who wants to join us. There were no objections so the new members were invited onto the panel.

3. Police Update

Facts and figures.

Dave F said that he had sent two updates from our SNT out with the minutes as well as the Ward Information Packs which are produced by Westminster.

He hoped that all members had read the documents before attending the meeting.

Dave Hart said that he thought that the reports were very useful to the group in helping them set our priorities for the coming period. The Ward Panel pack was the result of a collection of facts from police and council resources and from direct consultation with the public by way of a phone survey.

The details should help you when discussing with your colleagues future priorities before attending the meeting.

Dave H said that starting on 18th February would be a policing operation aimed at reducing most serious violent crime by 5%. The operation would be similar to the Safe Night Operations, would run every Thursday, Friday and Saturday until the end of March, covering all areas especially, Soho, Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square. Dave H asked John from Global if there was an opportunity to advertise the operation on the radio.

The Chinese New Year celebrations will take place on 14th February and 21st February. The 14th would be a smaller more localised day and the 21st would be the main event with events in China Town, Leicester Square and Trafalgar Square. A separate policing plan is in place for the celebrations.

DH explained that there had been a focus through Civic Watch to target people urinating in the streets. In two operations in the run up to Christmas 31 people were reported for urinating in a public place. The plan is that they will all attend court on a set date to give maximum impact to the operation and perhaps get some press coverage.

The operation was a partnership between the MPS and Westminster. Also part of the plan is trying to improve the signage toward the toilets in Leicester Square, warning notices in areas most often used as public

toilets warning them of the fine for urinating in a public place and reviewing the locations of portable loss in the area.

There is a joint working party which will continue to meet to discuss resolving the matter.

JH said that the roller shutter entrance to Global in Charing Cross Road remains a area that is used frequently even though there are portable loss further along the road.

Signage for toilets both permanent and temporary was identified as a key issue.

The panel asked if the Area manager, Wayne Stephenson could be invited to our next meeting to discuss the matter.

Action – DF to invite

DH asked if the members of the group would be prepared to write impact statements describing how this issue affects them.

JH and DF said that they would.

RN described briefly the Private Hire enforcement operations that take place in the area. The purpose of the operations is to target vehicles being used as mini cabs and the drivers, educate passengers to use the legal and safe minicabs and taxis operating in the area and to reduce the number of illegal operators in the area.

The operations are multi agency deploying officers from the Police, Westminster City Council, bailiffs.

There then followed a discussion about private hire operators and hackney carriage drivers in the area.

RH said that illegal street traders are still targeted in the area and that the flower sellers that target customers in queues for night clubs were an issue for the area. The police team arrested 4 the previous weekend.

RN said that recent operations targeting illegal street activity had been reduced over the Christmas period due to the other policing operations taking place.

It was identified that a number of premises allow the flower sellers to operate in their premises. The group agreed that the premises should be encouraged to refuse entry.

Action SNT to visit and advise the premises.

LN said that heather sellers were an issue in China Town. There was some discussion about distributing a multi lingual leaflet advising restaurants to refuse entry.

Action DP to look at this option

There was also a discussion about club promoters and their legality which seemed to focus on whether they were providing a service or not.

CA said that with regard to Pedicabs the West End and China Town SNT are leading the way across the borough as far as enforcement is concerned. Westminster and the police are looking to a longer term solution for pedicab control and management. They believe that the current enforcement work has reduced the numbers from about 900 to 300. They have regular meetings with the more legitimate operators in the area. At the peak of the enforcement operations there were over 110 seized pedicabs in the pound.

A voluntary code of practise is being discussed which although not perfect may help manage the pedicabs until suitable legislation can be written.

He also said that they were training other officers across Westminster in the best ways to enforce against the operators to make sure that there is a unified approach to enforcement.

DH said that there had been a Westminster wide operation targeting prostitute carders which had been instigated by Kit Malthouse at the GLA. Pc Jack Rutter had had success in arresting two carders.

The problem of drug users using areas such as Rupert Court was discussed. Working closely with the property owners, Shaftesbury Estates the partnership hope to resolve the issue. This will involve changing the entry system to the bin store in Rupert Court, ensuring that no one uses the area for fly tipping, working with local businesses to ensure that the door is kept shut.

The Group Dispersal Zone was mentioned as an aide to assisting in the enforcement against these individuals.

Impact statements were again discussed. NG discussed several locations where drug users and their paraphernalia were an issue in the China Town area.

NG was asked to advise his members to call the Westminster Action Line on 0207 641 2000 to report discarded needles.

DH said that the SNT were under pressure to improve community confidence and that they would be calling on residents in two streets every day introducing themselves and asking if the residents have any crime or anti social behaviour issue.

Panel issues

LN said that the London China Town Association works in partnership with the authorities especially the Police China Town Unit. Regular meetings and many issues are resolved. He believed that visitors to China Town were very safe.

He ran through the plans for Chinese New Year.

JH and Diane F mentioned the fact that the lighting in Leicester Square Gardens was appalling, the lights in the gardens were not working, nor were the lights on the Hampshire Hotel. The group were very concerned about this as we had been given assurances that this would not happen again.

Action DP to ask whether the Guardians still complete the lighting audits.

The fact that the lights go off early in Charing Cross Road near to Irving Street was also raised.

Policing levels were discussed by the group and the perception that there were not so many officers working in the area late at night. DH outlined the policing system and the work of the Task Force.

The media van that has been used on the Safe Night Operations was praised by the group but there were occasions when it appears to have left Leicester Square well before 3am when it is at its most useful.

RN said that he would discuss this with the officers that deploy the vehicle and DP said that he would see why this may have happened.

4. Priorities for the next period.

DF said that listening to the group he believed that the following issues were being raised as priorities

- **Rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour**
- **Drugs**
- **Illegal Street Trading**

The group agreed to these being our priorities for the forthcoming period.

5. AOB

On behalf of the Panel DF thanked Dave Hart for his hard work for the area and wished him all success for his retirement from the Metropolitan Police.

He also welcomed Inspector Malcolm Barnard to the area.

6. Date of next meeting –

Tuesday 9th March 2010, 6pm
Location to be confirmed.

A REMINDER - THE THREAT LEVEL FROM TERRORISM:

SEVERE

This means that an attack is a "strong possibility" and might occur without warning.

Report noise complaints to the Environmental Action Line:
0207 641 2000

Report low level anti-social behaviour to the Community Intelligence Line:
020 7641 3000

Anti Terrorist Hotline
0800 789 321

In an emergency always dial 999

or in cases which there is no urgency – 0300 123 1212

West End and China Town Safer Neighbourhood Team

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