

## Community Briefing

Monday 1 July 2019

7pm - 9pm

Crane Park Primary School

### Present:

- ) 55 residents
- ) 7 staff from Hounslow Council
- ) 5 West Area Borough Command Unit Police Officers
- ) 2 representatives from Richmond Housing Partnership
- ) 2 representatives from London & Quadrant Housing Association
- ) 3 Councillors
- ) 1 Member of Parliament

### The panel consisted of the following:

- ) Peter Matthew Strategic Director – Hounslow, Planning & Communities, Hounslow Council
- ) Superintendent Ricky Kandohla & Chief Inspector Richard Watkinson, West Area BCU
- ) Rachel Heydon Chair of Safer Neighbourhood Board

Peter opened the briefing by introducing the panel. He went onto explain the panel were eager to hold this meeting as soon as possible, to provide a briefing on the fatal shooting and to listen to the resident's concerns.

Richard advised information he can share is very limited, as there is ongoing live investigation taking place, therefore, must be mindful about what is shared. He said a fatal shooting took place on 21<sup>st</sup> June, involving a single shot wound. Three suspects have been arrested for the shooting and a fourth linked to the shooting. The Metropolitan Police Service's Murder Investigation Team are leading on the investigation.

All suspects have been released on strict bail conditions and it could take several months before any results are seen. A police Family Liaison Officer has been allocated to Edward Simpson's family.

Ricky shared he was aware residents use social media to share information when incidents take place, often before the Police can release information. He advised as an organisation (Metropolitan Police Service) we are working to improve how we communicate with our residents. Ricky apologised Paul Martin, West Area Borough Commander, was unable to attend but reassured everyone he is taking the concerns very seriously.

Rachel shared she lives in the west of the borough and as the chair of Safer Neighbourhood Board, will hold the police to account and ensure issues are dealt with.

A resident asked for more information on the circumstances linked to the shooting. Richard apologised as he was unable to share details or speculate on the circumstances.

A resident said she has lived in the area for 25 years and it is a tragedy the shooting happened. Crime takes place all the time. You see cars with blacked out windows and young people linked to them. The resident shared her frustration that she can never get hold of the police; 101 rings forever, and then they tell you to go to the website to report it and 999 say it's not an emergency.

This week has seen a reduction in criminal activities because of the police presence. Otherwise there would be people urinating, smoking cannabis and engaging in other ASB and criminal activities. It seems everyone has gone underground. A resident said even with the additional police presence, drug deals have still taken place.

Richard reassured residents the police presence will continue for a period of time. He encouraged residents to email, as there isn't much intelligence being shared with the police, about the activities described.

A resident spoke about an app called Next Door, which allows you to instant message the police and encouraged everyone to use it.

Ricky said it was vital that information is shared with the police as this helps to build evidence. He went on to say, he can flex resources from within the Borough Command Unit, i.e. from Hillingdon and Ealing to address Hounslow issues and the Police have devised a plan to address the drug dealing.

Caroline (Police) suggested residents use Crimestoppers to report crimes. She checks CRIMINT (police database) each morning and picks up all reports made to Crimestoppers. A resident advised he does report via Crimestoppers but no-over ever gets back to you or feeds back on what is happening. Ricky suggested a single point of contact to view information provided by residents.

A resident asked, why can't you put CCTV on the road? as she is worried the impact crime is having on her family. Peter advised the council are in the process of replacing all the CCTV in the borough and a new CCTV Control Centre will be up and running in the new year. There will be three different set of cameras available: 400 dedicated to council housing, 300 for community safety as well as deployer cameras.

A Richmond Housing Partnership (RHP) tenant raised concerns that cameras are not being used and are only switched on when there is a police request. Peter confirmed all cameras are live unless they are faulty. Robert (RHP) advised cameras are not switched on and off, everything is recorded but they are not monitored, and police can access the footage.

Peter went onto say the entire council CCTV network will be updated and monitored 24/7. He made a commitment to speak to housing associations on how they could work together on CCTV arrangement.

A London and Quadrant (L&Q) resident was frustrated that tenants are advised not to install private CCTV and suggested if everyone had their own CCTV then the problems experienced would go away. Dummy cameras could also be used to act as a deterrent. She went onto say residents are constantly harassed when visiting shops whereby people are asking for money. She said she doesn't visit the shops after dark. She felt the shops (Tesco's, Londis and kebab shop) could assist in getting rid of the individuals that make the area feel unsafe.

Jeremy (L&Q) advised private cameras are regulated by many rules and these cameras mustn't infringe on people's lives and properties. He went on to say, L&Q investigates all complaints

received and prioritise where cameras are needed. A resident raised the question how could dummy cameras infringe people's privacy.

Peter added the council was spending nearly £4.5million on upgrading the CCTV system.

A resident asked if the shooting 6 weeks ago was linked to the fatal one on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2019. Richard advised at this stage there is no suggestion the two were connected.

A resident provided details of a road traffic accident involving his car. He was able to establish who hit his car, but his family were too scared to report it, as the individual is a known drug dealer in the area. He posed the question, why can't we get rid of the individuals causing problems?

Ricky responded by telling everyone the police have a long-term plan, which will address these individuals including problematic families and will be working with the council to take appropriate action. The long-term plan is one of the many tactics being used by the police.

A resident suggested tenants should be given a process for requesting CCTV, which would then be assessed, and a camera installed if the issue warrants it. Peter reiterated that he will work with housing associations to address concerns raised about CCTV.

A resident commented that 300 cameras don't sound a lot. Caroline advised we can also use civil and criminal sanctions to manage the issues but need the evidence. The evidence needs to be recorded on police systems, so action can be taken. She encouraged residents to use Crimestoppers again.

A resident shared her son was robbed at knife point at Sainsbury 2 years ago and there was CCTV evidence of the incident. 999 was called at the time of incident but was advised to call 101. She was provided with a CAD number, but the police have done nothing. Richard said he would look into it the matter.

A resident felt the lack of communication with the community was having a negative impact on the community working with the police and the council. She said the issues have been going on for months and felt the shooting didn't need to happen. Richard said he couldn't comment on whether the shooting could have been prevented but reassured the resident that there have been plain clothes police officers in the area.

Rachel shared details of OWL, which is a communication system that notifies residents of crime issues. Anyone can sign up via an email address. It is run by volunteers and residents can become volunteers. Ricky shared OWL cannot be used as evidence as it is a communication tool. Work is underway to make the system bespoke, so residents receive information specific to their ward/area. It was suggested by a resident the information on OWL could be put onto the Butts Farm website, which means residents didn't have to sign up to the system. It was felt residents were unaware of OWL, so more work needs to be done to promote it.

A resident shared he is signed up to OWL and received a notification in relation to shooting the day after it happened. This resident shared the park is not safe, you never see any enforcement or police officers. Criminal activities take place during daylight and CCTV is required. There are also the added issues of motorbikes.

A resident recalled RHP use to fund a Community worker who engaged with young people in the area and felt the role is needed as they feel unsafe. She went onto ask how much did it cost in overtime to police the area? Is not more effective to spend £30K on a worker? Is there any funding? Another resident added the Methodist Church want to help children in the area.

Robert (RHP) responded by saying it was a tough decision to stop funding the community worker. He said we are looking to work in partnership with other organisations to address issues. He added work is underway to bring back in use the shops, which have been boarded up for a number of years. Peter said he welcomed the idea of activities on estates and gave the example of the boxing club on the Ivy Bridge Estate and was considering a similar activity for Brentford Towers. Peter encouraged residents to email him or Councillor Katherine Dunne with ideas. A resident pointed out the community centre was no longer operational, but the Methodist Church has a hall that can be used for activities.

Caroline provided information on a new project called PEACE, which provides positive and diversionary activities to prevent young people being exploitative.

A suggestion was made there are so many housing associations in the areas, that funding from all of them could help make the area better. She went to say children are too scared to go to the shops and there are vulnerable neighbours that as a community we could check in on. Peter said we would be happy to support the development of safe places.

Concerns regarding the design of the new build were raised, specifically about a round table with chairs. This is often used by young people engaging in anti-social behaviour. There were also concerns regarding motorbikes. Robert (RHP) advised RHP are working with the police to identify hotspots and recently employed a security guard to address issues of anti-social behaviour in the area. He added further he would look into removing the table and chairs but there may be some planning issues linked to the removal. Peter advised any application made to the council for its removal will be looked at favourably.

Concerns were raised about the unhygienic state of the shop and out of date goods being sold, which have been reported to Trading Standards, but no action taken to date. Lorien (LBH) agreed to look into the issue. A suggestion was made that residents need to be consulted on the types of shops that needed and reference was made to the café struggling because of young people hanging around. This was preventing residents from using it. Robert (RHP) made a commitment to consult tenants on ideas for shops wanted by the community.

A resident enquired about his van, which had been taken away by the police for forensics in relation to the shooting but not had it returned. He had been given no warning the van was going to be taken and thought it had been stolen. Richard agreed to discuss further with the resident after the briefing.

The final question asked was *'What is being done to make us feel safe?'*

Ricky said the meeting had taken place, there has been an increase in police patrols and covert and overt surveillance was in operation. There will always be two dedicated police officers in the area. He said if residents don't feel safe then to tell the police.

Rachel shared she understood the fear and frustration felt by residents and would hold Ricky, Peter and the housing associations to account, to ensure concerns raised are addressed. She felt a resident's association was needed but understood there was nowhere for it to meet and offered to support the set up of it. It was suggested the church could offer a room.

Peter reassured residents action will be taken to address the CCTV concerns raised and acknowledged the increase in police presence made a difference to how the community feeling safe. He said considerations needs to be given to how we continue this. He advised again he wants to support residents in delivering their ideas on how to improve the area. He went on to say he is

preparing estate plans and will work with residents to deliver them and supported Rachel, by emphasising the need for a resident's association. He ended by saying he will be feedback on progress.

Councillor Katherine Dunne said she can be contacted via the council website as can the two ward Councillors in attendance; Councillor Candice Atterton and Councillor Saima Chaudhary. She went onto thank the panel including the housing associations and council teams in attendance. She acknowledged Seema Malhotra for attending too and thanked residents for telling us what is needed to make the area better for everyone.

Councillor Katherine Dunne went on to say by working together in partnership we can make some real changes for example removing the table and chairs, looking at how to better use our CCTV provision, residents reporting issues via Crimestoppers so action can be taken against problematic individuals and families.

She reminded everyone the council takes the concerns raised seriously and will continue to work in partnership with Police to address them.

Peter closed the evening by thanking Alison Small for the use of the school hall at such short notice.

**Actions:**

- ) Develop and strengthen communication with the residents
- ) Continue to work in partnership to address drug dealing, ASB and problematic families
- ) Residents to report concerns via Crimestoppers
- ) Explore how CCTV can be improved in the area
- ) Address issues relating to the park and mopeds in the area
- ) Work towards removing the table and chairs
- ) Consult tenants on ideas about what shops would benefit the community
- ) Escalate concerns to Trading Standards regarding the shop
- ) Support residents to set up a Resident's Association