Footing the bill
Safer neighbourhood policing in London
February 2007

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The Budget Committee

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The Budget Committee's general terms of reference are to examine at each stage of the consultation process the Mayor's budget proposals for the next financial year and to report to the London Assembly thereon as necessary. It can also examine, monitor and report to the London Assembly from time to time on matters relating to the budgets and performance of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Functional Bodies (Transport for London (TfL), Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) and the London Development Agency (LDA)).

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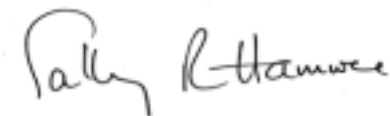# Contents

Chair's Foreword

It is clear that Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) are a popular measure – but that is no reason not to assess their impact and value for money. Indeed, it is perhaps all the more important to keep a critical, but constructive, eye on their progress; it can be all too easy, where there is widespread support, to overlook the scope for improvement or simply, through timidity, to avoid seeming negative.

Our report is written in the spirit of constructive criticism, and it is fair to say that in all our exchanges with both the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) they have made it clear that they are open to comments and are keen themselves to assess the effectiveness of SNTs.

It is also important to understand the objectives of SNTs. They could not in any event be the sole or primary mechanism to reduce crime, and it does the scheme no favours to use it as the basis for exaggerated claims. Indeed, overstating either goals or achievements risks the perception of failure. Safer Neighbourhoods were, as the report reminds us, designed to provide a visible police presence and to reconnect local people with the police.

We wish the MPA, the MPS and their partners, especially the London boroughs, well in their work of helping us all feel good about where we live.

Sally R Hamwee

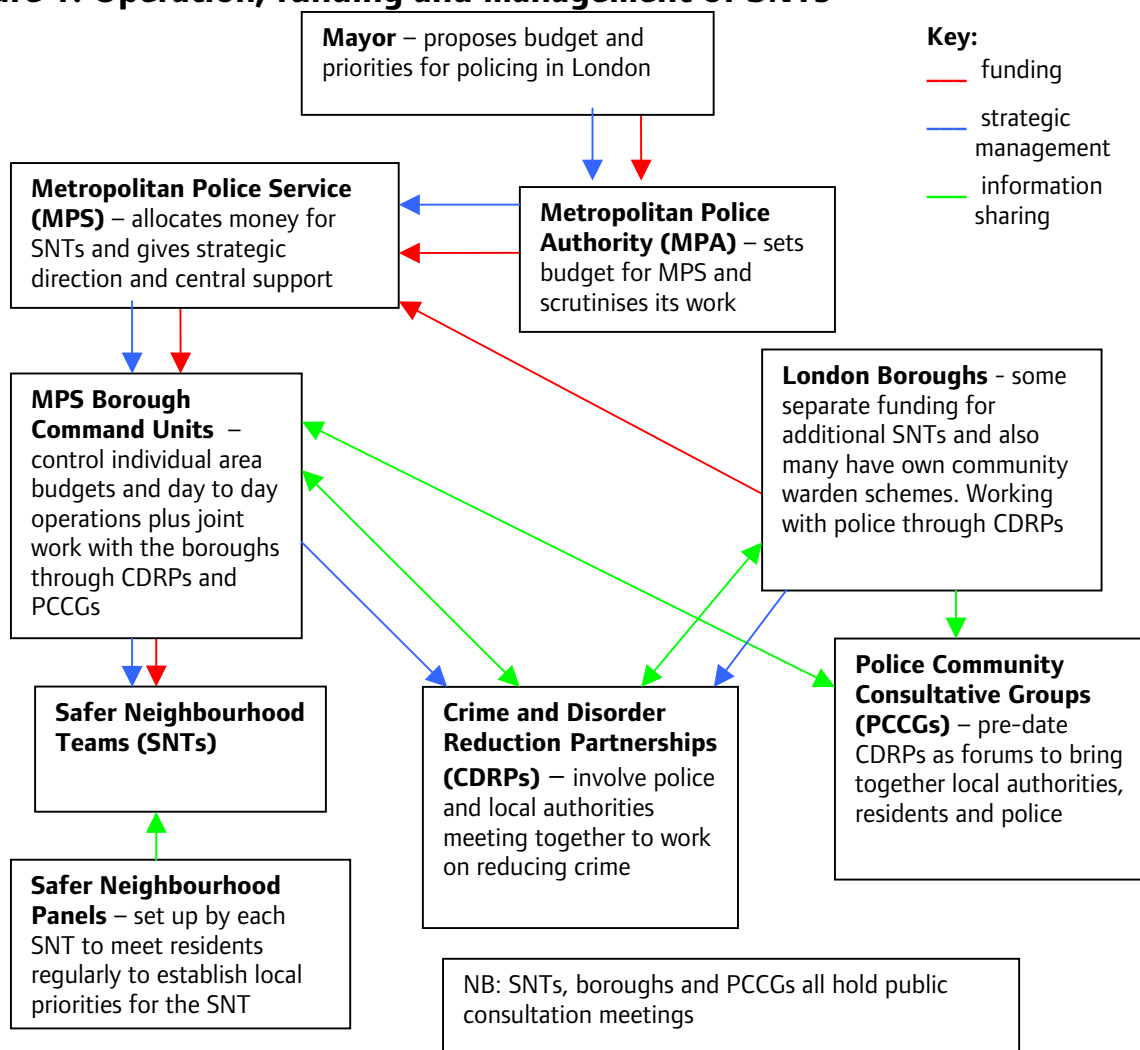Sally Hamwee
Chair of the Budget Committee

February 2007

1. Introduction

1.1   Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs), described as "a revolution in policing", have been a significant priority for the Mayor in his last three budgets. He has used London council taxpayers' money to fund the roll out of an SNT (a unit comprised of 1 police sergeant, 2 police constables and 3 Police Community Support Officers) to every ward in London. These teams are to provide visible policing in the local community and are not to be removed from this role for other policing duties. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) set itself a target of establishing an SNT in each of the wards in London by 31 December 2006.

1.2   In each of his budgets since 2004/05, the Mayor has used money collected from the GLA council tax precept to fund SNTs[1]. In 2006/07, twelve percent of all the money that the Mayor will collect from council taxpayers will fund SNTs[2].

1.3   A considerable amount of money is being spent on SNTs but their impact is not yet clear. It is not only London council taxpayers that are funding SNTs. The Government and the MPS will also provide funding. In 2006/07 SNTs will cost a total of £220 million of which £97.8 million (44%) will be funded by London council taxpayers from the precept and the rest will be funded by Government grant and the redirection of existing resources by the MPS. The total expenditure of £220 million on SNTs in 2006/07 consists of:
- £170 million (77%) for staffing;
- £40 million (18%) for infrastructure costs such as accommodation; and
- £10 million (5%) for capital financing costs.

1.4   It is not widely known what measuring framework and reporting strategy is used to identify the impact of SNTs. The situation is further complicated by the range of different organisations and partners involved in the delivery of Safer Neighbourhood policing. Overleaf the various mechanisms and arrangements in place for the operation of SNTs are set out.

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[1] The initiative was launched in 2004/05 with a £26.6m contribution from the council tax precept. This then increased by £39.4m in 2005-06 and by a further £31.8m in 2006-07 (please see GLA Consolidated budgets for each year referenced). This totals a £97.8m contribution from the 2006/07 council tax precept.
[2] The total raised from the council tax precept in 2006/07 is £832m (please see p25 of the GLA Consolidated budget 2006/07). £97.8m of this is spent on Safer Neighbourhood policing, which is 12% of the total.

Figure 1: Operation, funding and management of SNTs

Mayor – proposes budget and priorities for policing in London

Key:
— funding
— strategic management
— information sharing

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) – allocates money for SNTs and gives strategic direction and central support

Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) – sets budget for MPS and scrutinises its work

London Boroughs - some separate funding for additional SNTs and also many have own community warden schemes. Working with police through CDRPs

MPS Borough Command Units – control individual area budgets and day to day operations plus joint work with the boroughs through CDRPs and PCCGs

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) – involve police and local authorities meeting together to work on reducing crime

Police Community Consultative Groups (PCCGs) – pre-date CDRPs as forums to bring together local authorities, residents and police

Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs)

Safer Neighbourhood Panels – set up by each SNT to meet residents regularly to establish local priorities for the SNT

NB: SNTs, boroughs and PCCGs all hold public consultation meetings

1.5   In light of the considerable amount of money that London council taxpayers are contributing to SNTs, the Budget Committee has sought to identify the impact and value for money of the initiative to date including the performance measures and evaluation mechanisms being used. Often London council taxpayers are not only contributing to SNTs but also to other community warden schemes run by their boroughs. The Budget Committee has also explored the extent to which boroughs have separate local community warden schemes and the relationships between these schemes and SNTs.

1.6   The Budget Committee has identified considerable support and enthusiasm for SNTs. It has also found some issues that could be addressed to ensure SNTs are more effective. This report sets out in detail the Budget Committee's findings and recommendations. In summary they include that there needs to be:
   •   greater clarity about the purpose of SNTs to ensure that their goals are clear
   •   A measuring framework and reporting strategy linked to these goals;
   •   a more complex set of performance measures in order to reflect better the problem solving approach of SNTs;

- more qualitative measures of success to ensure all the benefits of SNTs are identified;
- better joined up working amongst the police, local authorities and other partners to ensure effective community consultation to inform local policing, particularly when engaging young people; and
- more MPS support for partners, such as London Boroughs, in analysing the impact of SNTs.

2. The Purpose of Safer Neighbourhood Teams

2.1   The Safer Neighbourhood policing scheme was created at a time when overall recorded crime had been falling for several years, but at the same time, public confidence in policing was also falling. Safer Neighbourhood teams (SNTs) were designed to bridge this gap: to provide a visible presence and reconnect local people with the police.

2.2   It is vital to remind ourselves of this stated purpose when assessing how effective performance measures are. Performance measures must accurately reflect whether the teams are fulfilling their purpose. The performance measures are assessed in detail in the next chapter, but firstly some issues over the purpose of SNTs need to be dealt with.

2.3   The Budget Committee was previously informed by the MPS that the primary purpose of SNTs is to reduce the fear of crime, and that crime reduction is seen as a secondary benefit that will take some years to materialise. In November 2004 Sir Ian Blair, the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis, said: "I think you will see, over the next two or three years, a growth in recorded crime, and a fall in British Crime Survey (BCS) data. In other words, the police will be recording more crime, because they are going to be there to do it, but the actual levels of crime, as recorded in the BCS will fall."[3] Then in January 2006, Assistant Commissioner Tim Godwin told the Budget Committee that "the key objective of Safer Neighbourhoods was to close … a serious gap in terms of crime falling over the last few years but people not feeling that it was actually getting safer." [4]

2.4   Potentially confusing and conflicting messages appear to have been given out about SNTs recently. A clear example of this is the headline of November's issue of The Londoner: 'Crime rate cut in the capital by local police teams'. The accompanying article attributes a 6.9% decrease in recorded offences between April and August 2006 to the rollout of SNTs across London[5]. This assertion was repeated by the Mayor in his press conference on 12 December 2006[6].

2.5   This statement is difficult to substantiate. Firstly, changes in recorded crime patterns appear to be the result of many different factors, and thus it is very difficult to isolate one variable in this way. Overall levels of crime have been falling steadily for several years, and improvements and advances in other forms of policing have been made.

2.6   As stated by Sir Ian Blair, cited above, it is anticipated that additional local police will mean reported crime levels initially increase, as it is easier to report crimes. This occurred in Chicago. A community policing scheme (Chicago Alternative Policing Scheme or CAPS) started in 1993 after several years of falling crime levels but there was no corresponding decrease in people's fear of crime. For the first couple of years, there was a levelling off of crimes such as assault, vehicle theft

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[3] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 4 November 2004, page 26
[4] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 10 January 2006, page 4
[5] http://www.london.gov.uk/londoner/06nov/p1a.jsp?nav=news
[6] http://www.london.gov.uk/view_press_release.jsp?releaseid=10175

and robbery (robbery in particular is seen as a bellwether of urban crime), before trends began to decline again[7].

2.7   The MPA and MPS commented that they were not the authors of the article in The Londoner when they discussed this issue with the Committee. Tim Godwin of the MPS said 'I am not claiming a 6.9% reduction on the back of Safer Neighbourhoods'[8] and the Chair of the MPA stated that 'We do not write The Londoner or get to see editorial comments'[9]. This also appeared to be echoed in the MPA's written evidence they provided to the Committee. The increases in confidence in policing at a London wide and local level seen in 2005/06 were attributed more to the London bombings on 7 July 2005, rather than the rollout of Safer Neighbourhood Teams[10].

2.8   The crime statistics quoted by The Londoner refer to notifiable, rather than summary, offences[11]. Given that the purpose of SNTs is to deal with neighbourhood issues, which will include mainly summary offences, it seems odd to use only notifiable statistics in a claim that SNTs have reduced crime. Indeed, Tim Godwin told the Committee that summary offences had risen from 130,000 to 193,787 since the introduction of SNTs[12].

2.9   The Committee believes that recent claims of falling crime because of SNTs could be counter-productive. Residents could come to expect rapid decreases in crime from their local SNTs when in fact results will show more crimes being reported. This might put pressure on teams to provide performance information that would appear to indicate decreases in crime. This could impact on SNTs focusing their primary purpose of reducing the fear of crime. **The MPS and MPA need to be robust in asserting the purpose of SNTs when conflicting claims are being made as to their function and role.**

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[7] "Community Policing in Chicago, Years Eight and Nine - An Evaluation of Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy and Information Technology Initiative", The Chicago Community Policing Evaluation Consortium, December 2002, p4

[8] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006, page 5

[9] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006, page 1

[10] MPA written submission to the Budget Committee

[11] Summary offences cover common law offences that are tried at a magistrate's court. Notifiable offences are more serious crimes that are dealt with at a Crown Court before a jury.

[12] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006, page 5

3. How is the performance of Safer Neighbourhood Teams currently assessed?

3.1   The full rollout of SNTs began in April 2006, and the MPS expect it to have been completed by December 2006. At this early stage, it is certainly difficult to assess the current impact of SNTs. The Committee was told that the current performance indicators for SNTs are there for monitoring purposes, rather than as a measurement of success. The MPS wants to avoid target setting (or the appearance of target setting) for SNTs – they are designed to act on local priorities, not centrally defined goals. A significant part of their approach is problem solving – dealing with local issues over the long term, rather than a series of quick wins.

3.2   The MPS have defined the key outcomes of the SNT programme as to:
- Reduce concern about antisocial behaviour
- Increase perceptions of safety in the local area by day and by night
- Increase satisfaction with local policing
- Increase confidence that the police are identifying and dealing with the issues that are the priorities for local people

3.3   The MPS then use a number of measures to assess whether these outcomes are being fulfilled.

MPS Performance Board

3.4   The information collected on SNT performance is monitored quarterly by the MPS Performance Board, and on a monthly basis by the Safer Neighbourhoods Programme Board (SNPB)[13]. Both the Performance Board and the Programme Board focus on the data provided by Public Attitude Surveys, with the Programme Board additionally examining key diagnostic indicators (KDIs). KDIs are designed to give an indication of the likely outcome performance, and are currently being developed by the Programme Board.

3.5   The Programme Board also conduct performance inspections on SNTs, with each Borough Commander Unit being visited once a year. Additional visits can be made if particular issues arise or if there is best practice that should be circulated amongst SNTs.

EPIC

3.6   The EPIC system (Enforcement, Prevention, Intelligence and Communication) is used to track delivery of safer neighbourhood policing. There are seven stages for each SNT. The seven stages are 1) research to build up a ward profile; 2) community engagement (public meetings, street briefings, table-top mapping, surveys and use of a key individual network); 3) establishing public preferences via research with the community; 4) investigation and analysis; 5) selection of local priorities (by a Safer Neighbourhood Panel); 6) planning and acting; and 7) review.[14]

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[13] The Safer Neighbourhoods Programme Board is comprised of representatives from the MPA, MPS, GLA, Safer London Foundation and community representation.
[14] MPA written submission to the Budget Committee

3.7   The type of activities that EPIC tracks include the number of pre-planned meetings, attendance at meetings, number of street briefings, intelligence reports submitted, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) letters issued, the number of crack houses closed and the number of arrests[15].

3.8   The indicators of community engagement that EPIC monitors focus on formal meetings. Though innovation in community consultation is strongly promoted by the MPS, many of the teams on the ground appear to focus on traditional style meetings, where attendees are self-selecting. This can be seen in the data produced by EPIC – 6503 pre-planned meetings were held, compared to 730 street briefings which may capture a wider sample of local people. EPIC does not appear to measure some of the alternative methods of community engagement that the MPS encourages. The Committee believes that one of the strongest aspects of SNTs are the innovative practices that they employ in community consultation but currently, these do not appear to be adequately monitored through EPIC.

3.9   The indicators of performance that EPIC collates seem to be largely based around enforcement. The Committee understands that the number of Anti-Social Behavioural Orders (ASBOs) and Fixed Penalty Notices issues, arrests made and crack houses closed are important, but these do not seem in all neighbourhoods to reflect the local problem solving approach that SNTs are trained to take.

3.10   The use of enforcement measures used by SNTs has increased substantially since the full rollout of the teams. In some cases, there has been a well over 100% increase in the use of various enforcement measures. This increase cannot solely be put down to the increase in the number of teams - there is also evidence that punitive measures have been used more frequently by individual teams. For example, in quarter 4 2005/06 there were 302 teams, with 302 Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) being issued. In quarter 1 2006/07 there were 630 teams, with 862 PNDs issued[16]. This is an increase of approximately 37% per team.

3.11   Enforcement measures have an important role to play in a problem solving approach, but cannot be the only tool. Dr Marian FitzGerald expressed concern about the increasing use of enforcement measures, particularly for young people. She believed such measures could be counter-productive and end up 'alienating the citizens of the future'[17]. Engaging young people in Safer Neighbourhoods is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

3.12   Preventative measures, can take many forms, and those aimed at ending the 'broken window syndrome'[18] are an important part of SNTs work. However, preventative measures do not appear to be included in the monitoring information on SNTs. In discussion with the Committee, representatives of the boroughs were eager for the work done by SNTs on preventing crime to be better reflected by the performance indicators. Success in preventing crime is undoubtedly much more

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[15] MPA written submission to the Budget Committee
[16] Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee on 12 October 2006, Quarter 1 2006/07 GLA Group Monitoring Report, page 18-19
[17] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006, page 30
[18] This is the concept that if a window is broken and left unrepaired, soon all the windows in the building will be broken. If there is a perception that no one cares, previously stable neighbourhoods can quickly degenerate into problem areas.

difficult to assess than punitive measures, but offers constructive long-term solutions.

Recommendation 1:
> **The Committee questions whether the current suite of measures is broad and complex enough to measure the true impact of SNTs. We recommend that the MPA/MPS, ideally within six months of the full rollout of SNTs, begin to examine how it might include a wider spread of performance indicators that better reflect the problem solving approach, including indicators of preventative success.**

Public attitude surveys

3.13   A public attitude survey is conducted every quarter by the MPS. The surveys measure whether the outcomes of SNTs are being achieved, particularly focusing on fear of crime and the public's view of the police. The MPS aggregates the results over 12 months to provide a statistically valid sample, and even out seasonal variations.

3.14   Public attitudes surveys, whilst useful, do not necessarily provide the whole picture when examining fear of crime and local views on policing. People's perceptions of local policing and feelings of safety can be strongly affected at specific times by particular events and personal experiences.

3.15   The Committee requested further information from the MPA on the public attitude survey. This survey involves 250 people from each borough in London being interviewed each year. The number of people in each ward varies depending on the number of addresses in each ward. Between 1 and 15 people from each ward are interviewed each quarter[19].

3.16   The methodology used in public attitude surveys is similar to that used in the British Crime Survey. Random probability sampling is used to select participants, and a weighting system is used to ensure that the final sample is representative of the London population by age, gender and ethnicity.

3.17   The Committee requested information on the breakdown of respondents by age, gender, ethnicity and all three combined (ie the gender and age breakdown within each ethnic group). However, the MPS now analyse the resulting information from the surveys in a different way. Respondents are sorted into four categories which cut through age, gender and ethnic lines, but cluster in particular boroughs:

- The Supporters: nearly one in three of all respondents, they have low levels of police contact, and are most satisfied and confident that the police are doing a good job. The boroughs with the highest proportion of Supporters are Wandsworth, Newham and Harrow.
- The Contents: about a quarter of respondents, they also have low levels of police contact but are less satisfied that the police are doing a good job. Brent, Westminster and Tower Hamlets have the highest proportion of Contents.
- The Needy: around a quarter of respondents, who have high expectations but feel poorly served. Hackney and Barking and Dagenham have the highest proportions.

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[19] MPA written submission to the Budget Committee

- The Undemanding: about a fifth of respondents, who have low expectations of the police, but are as vulnerable as the Needy. They are found in the highest proportions in Hounslow, Waltham Forest and Islington.[20]

3.18   The MPA consider that this information could be used to drive up satisfaction and confidence in neighbourhood policing. By targeting the specific needs and perceptions of the different groups, and formulating a strategy to tackle these, the MPA believe they can improve the work of SNTs more effectively. They also believe that further research needs to be done on identifying group membership in practice, if membership of each group changes over time, and how it changes, and how each group responds to different types of engagement methods.

3.19   The Committee was pleased to note that public attitude surveys interview people from the age of 15 upwards. A major criticism of the British Crime Survey is that it does not include people under the age of 18 who are a group at high risk of becoming victims of crime.

Secondary benefits of SNTs
3.20   Methodology on measuring the secondary benefits of SNTs is being developed. Examples of secondary benefits are reduced stock shrinkage in local shops, increased footfall in town centres and reduced costs to public sector organisations such as the London Fire Brigade and Local Education Authorities. At such an early stage and with such complex methodology, it is not possible to provide results at CDRP or London wide level. However, secondary benefits can be adduced at individual SNT level.

3.21   The Committee welcomes the use of these measures and believes they should be developed further as the programme progresses. Many potential benefits will be derived from information that is already being collected by others bodies (such as reduced costs for the London Fire Brigade) and so will not add unduly to the overall bureaucratic burden.

The performance framework
3.22   Taking a holistic view of the performance framework, the Committee believes that there are gaps both in what is assessed and how the information is shared. There are several different methods of collecting information (EPIC, PAS), and several different reporting bodies (Performance Board, Programme Board) but currently it is not evident how exactly this all ties together to form a coherent framework. The Committee believes there needs to be more clarity about what the goals are, as well as the functions of the various components of the measuring framework and reporting structure.

3.23   The Committee also believes that greater clarity over the performance framework would assist in the public understanding of how the effectiveness of SNTs are measured. It is currently difficult for ordinary Londoners to comprehend how SNTs are assessed. Considering that the Safer Neighbourhoods programme is designed to be community led, the Committee feels that the performance framework is not adequately accessible to communities.

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[20] MPA written submission to the Budget Committee

4. Working in partnership

4.1   For neighbourhood policing to be truly effective, partnership working between local police and other services must be strong. However, the Committee was told by Cllr Benjamin Rawlings, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety for Camden "we are always told explicitly this is a police initiative and not a partnership initiative"[21]. In response to this, the Chair of the MPA robustly stated that it is important not to confuse police leadership with community ownership of the initiative. The Committee accepts that the police understand the importance of local authorities in neighbourhood policing, and has made a number of recommendations to further improve partnership links between the police and other services.

4.2   The Committee received evidence that there appears to be duplication in some community consultation. Westminster were concerned about 'the apparent lack of understanding [by SNTs] of the role and expertise of local authorities in community consultation'[22]. The Committee would see it as entirely sensible for SNTs to make use of meetings that local authorities already hold. There is the possibility that the same people are attending both local authority and SNTs meetings and discussing broadly similar issues. This would be a replication of effort, and possibly cost.

4.3   The London Boroughs felt that there was more scope for joint working on community consultation. Cllr Ben Rawlings of Camden suggested developing a calendar of meet-the-public events and having joint stalls at local community festivals.

4.4   Boroughs also raised concerns over the representativeness of those attending SNT meetings. If meetings are populated by the same few people, it raises concerns that SNTs are not reaching the wider community. Average attendance at each pre-planned Safer Neighbourhood meeting is only 14 people, though some will have many more attending, and others fewer. Cllr David Williams, the Cabinet Member for Communities for the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames told the Committee that 'a lot of people who come to police liaison groups…are not very representative. They are probably too middle class and certainly too old. They make me feel quite young sometimes when I go to them, and I have a Freedom Pass'[23]. It is also possible that Safer Neighbourhood Panels are made up of similarly unrepresentative people. The councillors from Camden and Richmond upon Thames both wished to have some representation on Panels to reflect the wider community, even if they did not have voting powers.

4.5   This point was reinforced by the findings of the London Civic Forum's study of the awareness of SNTs. They found that in communities there was an awareness of increased levels of local policing but little understanding that this was due to the Safer Neighbourhoods programme. Correspondingly, there was little awareness of how local people could contribute. Amongst young people there was a low level of awareness of SNTs apart from the £25k salary for PCSOs. Furthermore, the

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[21] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006, page 17
[22] London Borough of Westminster written submission to the Budget Committee
[23] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006, page 19

London Civic Forum discovered that in Tower Hamlets (the first borough with SNTs) teams had not made any contact with local youth clubs[24].

4.6   These findings raise serious questions about the engagement of young people in neighbourhood policing. Young people are in fact most likely to be victims of crime, and it is therefore vital that they are engaged in this process. The MPS have made good efforts to encourage the participation of young people, such as setting up a youth forum programme to advise the police on how they could be more effective in their working. Young citizens' panels have also been set up in some areas. Generally, borough representatives were encouraged by these initiatives though had concerns that some of them may be too formal.

4.7   The Committee believes that the police have made important efforts towards including young people in the Safer Neighbourhoods scheme. However, where work with young people seems to have been most effective is in joint projects. The Committee was told about several schemes in areas where there had been high levels of youth anti-social behaviour. One such scheme in Richmond upon Thames was initiated by young people, and assisted by the SNT, youth workers and local residents. Youth facilities were redeveloped and revitalised. The key to the success of these projects is the active engagement in and ownership of the schemes by young people. The scheme seems to exemplify the idea of community ownership of SNTs, and as a result, no enforcement measures needed to be used to deal with anti social behaviour. The Committee sees these schemes as excellent examples of youth engagement, joint working and preventative measures.

Recommendation 2:
The Committee recommends that within six months of the full rollout of Safer Neighbourhood Teams, the MPA/MPS start to examine qualitative measures of community interaction to highlight the good practice that takes place, particularly good practice on youth engagement, in addition to the more standard methods such as public meetings.

4.8   A further issue on possible duplication arises with Police Consultative Community Groups (PCCGs), which preceded Safer Neighbourhood Panels, but appear to serve a very similar purpose. The Chair of the MPA, Len Duvall, discussed this issue at an Assembly Plenary session and the possibility of duplication in boroughs was acknowledged, as a problem of 'the old merging with the new'[25]. Len Duvall went on to say that Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships should be overseeing these consultation processes to ensure the arrangements were as effective as possible. In some boroughs, processes had been streamlined, though in others it was felt that the established practices should be kept in place, in addition to Safer Neighbourhood initiatives.

Recommendation 3:
The Committee recommends that the MPA/MPS, in consultation with boroughs, conduct a review of consultation arrangements in place within each borough and share best practice of the most effective arrangements. This should consider how joint working on community consultation between police and boroughs might be better undertaken and how existing structures and arrangements could be better utilised.

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[24] Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006, page 22
[25] Transcript of Assembly Plenary meeting on 8 November 2006, page 16

Supporting SNTs

4.9   Some local authorities have contributed financially to SNTs either by paying for the advanced rollout of teams, or supplementing the analysis and research functions. Camden and Westminster have particularly well developed supporting teams, who they believe add value and ensure joined up working between the police and council services. In order to understand the level of resources needed for SNTs, we asked the MPA what they considered the optimum level of funding needed for the programme. However, they felt unable to provide such a figure until the programme was further advanced[26].

        Camden Partnership Information Unit (PIU)

4.10   The London Borough of Camden funds two full time Safer Neighbourhoods analysts. The PIU is tasked with identifying activities around specific priority crime issues, and accessing council funding to support these actions. For example, if burglary were identified as a particular problem, then Camden's CDRP Burglary Working Group would be approached for funding for additional patrols or activities in affected areas.

4.11   Camden have highlighted the importance of PIU in ensuring that a problem solving approach is carried out. When a problem is highlighted by a Safer Neighbourhoods Panel, existing council services will often be needed to provide funding and support to ensure issues can be tackled effectively.

        Westminster CivicWatch

4.12   Westminster City Council's 'CivicWatch' scheme involves ward based multi-agency teams that include SNTs, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and council departments such as transport and youth services. The scheme is co-ordinated by a dedicated liaison officer and analyst. Westminster City Council says '[We have] invested a total of £1.2 million in this approach for liaison officers, analysts and project support… We believe this approach has created better value for all partners from the SNTs by maximising the co-ordinated resources available for long-term problem solving processes triggered by the SNTs'[27].

4.13   Both these schemes demonstrate how support services can maximise the effectiveness of SNTs. It is this joining up of policing and support services outside of the police that the Committee sees as imperative to the success of SNTs. However, the question arises of who should be paying for these support services. If they are vital to make SNTs work, then should they not be funded by the MPS? The London Borough of Camden reports that the MPS must recognise the need to fully resource the support and analytical functions of the SNTs. They note that they cannot guarantee the future funding of these support functions.

        Recommendation 4:
        The Committee recommends that within six months of the full rollout, the MPA/MPS should begin to review the additional resources being supplied

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[26] MPA additional written submission to the Budget Committee, p3:
'Safer Neighbourhoods is a major change programme and a new style of policing that requires new types of training, new types of support and new types of engagement. All of this requires specialist support in terms of academic research, analytical support and review mechanisms, not to mention the internal cultural changes that are necessary. In short, the MPA and the MPS are constantly reviewing the resources that are necessary to deliver this Programme'.
[27] London Borough of Westminster written submission to the Budget Committee

for SNTs by some boroughs with a view to developing common good practice and provision. This includes analytical functions, and should be done as part of the next stage in the development of SNTs.

Many boroughs operate warden schemes that preceded SNTs. 8 of the 14 London Boroughs and CDRPs that provided information to the Committee reported separate warden schemes. The London Borough of Lambeth, for example, is spending £1.6 million on its street warden team, which includes provision for 44 wardens in 2006/07. The London Borough of Camden is spending £800,000 on its street warden team, which includes 16 wardens.

4.14   Local authorities reported that excellent operational co-ordination on the ground exists between themselves and SNTs. Thus warden schemes funded and operated by the borough complement SNTs effectively, with joint tasking and problem solving being examples of good practice.

4.15   However, whilst good operational co-ordination exists, Camden in particular felt that there needs to be much improved strategic co-ordination. The Borough felt that it had little strategic input into Safer Neighbourhood priorities. Of course, the members of the Safer Neighbourhood Panel should be setting the priorities – this is a key element of the entire scheme. However, Camden have noted that if certain issues of anti-social behaviour are not identified as a priority by the panel, there is a gap in delivery and issues may not be dealt with properly. The council must also be able to plan the activities of its services. Local authorities' expertise and knowledge of local issues must be utilised and they must be able to contribute to the strategic planning of SNTs.

4.16   The Committee sees joint strategic planning as key to implementing a preventative approach to crime – to ensure that the right services are in place to steer people away from committing crimes. For example, the council holds large amounts of information on environmental crime, which could potentially be highly useful to SNTs.

Recommendation 5:
The Committee recommends that the MPA/MPS and the London Boroughs, through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, explore the scope for setting up a framework to share a wider range of performance information to inform the work of Safer Neighbourhood Teams. This also has relevance to Recommendation 1.

The Budget Committee will be following up this scrutiny in autumn 2007.

Appendix 1: List of recommendations

1.   The Committee questions whether the current suite of measures is broad and complex enough to measure the true impact of SNTs. We recommend that the MPA/MPS, ideally within six months of the full rollout of SNTs, begin to examine how it might include a wider spread of performance indicators that better reflect the problem solving approach, including indicators of preventative success.

2.   The Committee recommends that within six months of the full rollout of Safer Neighbourhood Teams, the MPA/MPS start to examine qualitative measures of community interaction to highlight the good practice that takes place, particularly good practice on youth engagement, in addition to the more standard methods such as public meetings.

3.   The Committee recommends that the MPA/MPS, in consultation with boroughs, conduct a review of consultation arrangements in place within each borough and share best practice of the most effective arrangements. This should consider how joint working on community consultation between police and boroughs might be better undertaken and how existing structures and arrangements could be better utilised.

4.   The Committee recommends that within six months of the full rollout, the MPA/MPS should begin to review the additional resources being supplied for SNTs by some boroughs with a view to developing common good practice and provision. This includes analytical functions, and should be done as part of the next stage in the development of SNTs.

5.   The Committee recommends that the MPA/MPS and the London Boroughs, through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, explore the scope for setting up a framework to share a wider range of performance information to inform the work of Safer Neighbourhood Teams. This also has relevance to Recommendation 1.

        The Budget Committee will be following up this scrutiny in autumn 2007.

Appendix 2: List of written evidence submitted to the Committee

In advance of its meeting on 9 November 2006, the Budget Committee wrote to the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), the London Boroughs, and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in London for further information on Safer Neighbourhoods.

Below are all the organisations which provided written responses to the Budget Committee.

MPA
Barnet CDRP
Brent CDRP
London Borough of Camden
Camden CDRP
Croydon CDRP
London Borough of Enfield
Hammersmith & Fulham CDRP
London Borough of Haringey
London Borough of Havering
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Lambeth
Lewisham CDRP
London Borough of Richmond and CDRP
Southwark CDRP
Westminster City Council
Westminster CDRP

The responses can be accessed at:
http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/budgmtgs/2006/budnov9/item03a.pdf

Additional evidence was provided by the MPA after the meeting, which can be accessed here: http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/budget.jsp