

**ST MARGARET'S & NORTH TWICKENHAM WARD  
POLICE LIAISON GROUP MEETING  
20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 6:30pm  
Winchester Hall, St Margarets**

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES:** Stephen Lloyd (**SHL** Chair); PS Jason. Lawes; PC Katie Payne; Stephen Alexander (NW); Maria Margiotta (NW); Philip Moshi (NW, CPRA); Chris Donnelly (**CD**) (RFU), Jim Ifor (NW), Peter Cole (NW), David Rose (**DR**) (NW), Francis McInerny(**FM**) (NW), Lee Georgs, Jill Haslehurst, Mary McHugh, Michael Howard, Arabella Hower, David Ashley: plus two names not recorded/withheld.

**APOLOGIES:**

Pam McMillan, Monica Bithel, Paul Leonard, Cllr Katie Mansfield,

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**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Stephen Lloyd, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and the apologies received were noted.

SHL did a check on specific attendees:

- Residents of other wards – none
- SMERA - local residents association – none
- NSMRA - local residents association - none

SHL also checked if anyone had come expecting an election on the evening following the false statement in the Heatham Alliance newsletter that one would be held. SHL noted he was pleased that no one had come only as a result of that factually incorrect communication, taking it that the mails sent out to inform the public of the misinformation had worked.

SHL asked FM why the misinformation had been distributed but received no answer.

SHL noted no councillors were present.

**2. Minutes of the last Meeting (22.01.24)**

Agreed as being a true record.

**3. Matters Arising**

The following follow up actions from the minutes were reported:

SNT – the Heathfield North street meeting was held.

SNT – requested by Cllr Ehman to give updates on when street meetings are done. This has been distributed using the new WhatsApp communications as per the second street meeting held since the last PLG.

SHL – schools officer not included in this meeting, but will remain one for the future, depending on PLG structure and management.

SHL – information on instances of crime and patterns were to be communicated quicker. This has been occurring via WhatsApp. SHL noted that even though he had circulated the monthly crime reports and updated the website whilst travelling in Malaysia one recipient did not consider it quick enough.

Franis McInerney (FM) pointed out two errors in the previous meeting minutes:

- The Police Report in section 5 of the minutes had an error in the number of crimes reported for December 2023. The published figure was 47, but the SNT information in the minutes read as 30. This was accepted as an error.
- He stressed that he is the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, appointed by the Richmond Head of Neighbourhood Watch (Carole Atkinson). SHL accepted this and pointed out that whilst FM was coordinator for the Heatham Neighbourhood Watch, the Heatham Alliance entry had been removed by Neighbourhood Watch management from their systems as it was a duplicate. The Our Watch website now fully reflects the accurate position.
- FM was not happy that the removal of the Heatham Alliance was mentioned, stating it was a divulgence of personal information. Philip Moshi asked to move on as the system is open to the public and fact the Heatham Alliance entry is no longer there is open public information.

#### **4. Chair's Update**

SHL made a report on actions he had been involved in since the last meeting:

- He had given his resignation in for the PLG and all related work, this would be his last Meeting as chair, although he will be attending future ones as a NW coordinator for his area.
- The reasons he would go into later in the meeting so as not to interrupt the more important residents' sections.
- Email and websites for all PLGs in Borough – creating a framework for all PLGs to have a website showing crime and contacts in their ward.
- Leading on a go-forward document on PLGs, including their set up, structure and operations. This involved work with SNTs to standardise the reporting presented at PLGs, so the public would know what they can expect from the meeting. An outline of thoughts was put in a PowerPoint presentation at a Safer Neighbourhood Board meeting and is currently with Scotland Yard.
- Producing graphics and branding for both the SNB and PLGs.
- Driving the use of official emails for PLGs and SNB. SHL admitted this is like “herding cats”.
- Production of leaflets in PDF format for contacting the police for all wards, in line with SNTs in this ward.
- Contributing to the Communications plan with Met via the SNB

- One of two active Multi Scheme Administrators for NW in borough to drive the use of Neighbourhood Alert as a tool for communications.
- Covering South Twickenham PLG. SHL stated the limitations of doing so being mainly not knowing the area which makes the chair role less effective.
- Outlining a possible video for sharing on reporting rugby incidents. This was to ensure the public could see the correct guides from the people involved – police and RFU – to remove any third party driven confusion.
- Meeting with the council team working on community engagement in Wandsworth to discuss how they are using Neighbourhood Alert as a communications tool for Neighbourhood Watch. The meeting compared the differing approaches of the two sides of the Richmond and Wandsworth Council to look for synergies and opportunities to improve.

SHL then outlined how the email of a resident had been hacked, the fraud going on behind it, and how to avoid a similar problem. Details can be found in **Appendix 1**.

## **5. Police Report**

PC Katie Payne of the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) talked the audience through the following reports:

### **PLG Crime Figures St Margarets & North Twickenham – Q1 2024**

OFFENCE	JAN 23	FEB 23	MAR 23	TOTAL
Burglary	1	12	6	19
Criminal Damage	1	2	2	5
Robbery	1	0	1	2
Theft from M/V	6	8	5	19
Theft of M/V	1	1	4	6
Theft of Pedal Cycle	3	4	0	7
Offences Against the Person (ABH / GBH)	3	3	9	15
	16	30	21	67

OFFENCE	JAN 24	FEB 24	MAR 24	TOTAL	DIFFERENCE
Burglary	8	4	7	19	±0
Criminal Damage	5	2	1	8	+3
Robbery	3	0	0	3	+1
Theft from M/V	8	3	1	12	-7
Theft of M/V	1	2	2	5	-1
Theft of Pedal Cycle	1	2	2	5	-2
Offences Against the Person (ABH / GBH)	10	6	6	16	+1
	36	19	19	74	+7

**BURGLARIES****January 2024**

02/01/2023	Burglary – Business & Community	Railshead Road	Suspect has damaged victim's door and trespassed soon after before being scared off.
08/01/2024	Burglary – Business & Community	Richmond upon Thames College, Langhorn Drive	Burglary of a workshop at Richmond upon Thames College with laptops stolen.
11/01/2024	Burglary – Business & Community	Ranelagh Drive	Two suspects detained after attempting to break into an outbuilding owned by Thames Water with an ankle grinder.
13/01/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	Heathfield North	Neighbours witnessed a house being burgled and victim's vehicle stolen.
13/01/2024	Attempted Residential Burglary of a Home	Burnside Close	Suspect has smashed a window of a house to burgle but has been scared off by a resident.
15/01/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	Lathan Road	Suspect(s) gained entry via locked first floor window which was forced open and an untidy search was conducted. This resulted in a laptop being stolen.
30/01/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	Burnside Close	Untidy search of the home was conducted and jewellery was taken from the property.

**February 2024**

14/02/2024	Attempted Residential Burglary of a Home	Godstone Road	Suspect has smashed the front door window to allow access to lock inside attempting to gain entry. Investigation closed due to all reasonable lines of enquiry followed resulting in no evidence.
18/02/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	Glebe Side	Rear kitchen window smashed, and jewellery and cash stolen from the property. Investigation ongoing.
18/02/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	Glebe Side	Entry gained via downstairs window, untidy search complete but nothing taken. Investigation closed due to

			victim not supporting police action.
18/02/2024	Burglary – Business & Community	Rugby Road	Five suspects entered storage facility and stole multiple boxes of perfume. Investigation ongoing.

### March 2024

08/03/2024	Attempted Residential Burglary of a Home	Heathfield South	Suspect(s) attempted to gain entry into the property by using a crow bar. Investigation closed due to all reasonable lines of enquiry followed resulting in no evidence.
14/03/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	Grimwood Road	Suspect was seen climbing through the window and found hiding in the address with a baton. Investigation ongoing.
15/03/2024	Burglary – Business & Community	Langhorn Drive	Items were left on a demolition site and when workers returned, these items were missing. Investigation closed due to all reasonable lines of enquiry followed resulting in no evidence.
20/03/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	Whitton Road	Dog walker has come to the address to tend to the family dog; however, he has brought others not permitted to be at the address. They searched the home before being asked to leave by homeowners. Investigation ongoing.
21/03/2024	Attempted Burglary – Business & Community	Crown Road	Suspect broke the front door glass of business but did not gain entry to the property. Investigation closed due to all reasonable lines of enquiry followed resulting in no evidence.
24/03/2024	Residential Burglary of a Home	St Margarets Road	Suspect has entered using their door keys which were in their post box outside of the property block. Investigation closed due to all reasonable lines of

			enquiry followed resulting in no evidence.
27/03/2024	Burglary – Business & Community	Rugby Road	Storage unit has been broken into overnight. Investigation ongoing.

REPORTED CRIME FOR THE MONTH	TOTAL NUMBER
January 2024	52
February 2024	36
March 2024	36
TOTAL 3 MONTH PERIOD	<b>124</b>

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Warnings Handed Out – 3

Community Protection Notices Handed Out – 1 in progress

### **Knife Crime Clarification**

Answering a question about the definition of knife crime, Sgt Lawes explains the terms means a knife was used – or mentioned. E.g. “I have a knife” as a threat would be statistically reported as knife crime even though a knife has not been seen or used.

### **Reporting**

**SHL** asked the Safer Neighbourhood Team about the best way to report crimes. The **SNT** in reply **stressed** the need to report crimes directly to the police using 999 in the crime is serious and happening now, or if not 101/online. Other items for information or queries to the Safer Neighbourhood Team using the published email address and telephone numbers.

### **The following questions were raised:**

- Jim Ifor raised a question about the state of police recruitment. Sgt Lawes answered that the SNT team for this ward is on complement.
- The abstraction rate for the SNT team was stated to be running at 25% - which includes time taken from the team to work in central London for large events such as “Just Stop Oil” and protests about the “Israel-Hamas” conflict, cover of response services and flex to assist other wards.
- SHL quoted the South Twickenham Ward, where two officers on the team were trained and experienced response drivers, leading to a higher abstraction rate there than this ward endured.
- David Rose stated there was an error on the PLG website regarding communicating with the SNT. SHL asked where this was and when it was found. DR replied “recently”. The SNT said their flyers were correct and this would be looked into. **Action: SNT**
- FM spoke to give more detail on the error, unfortunately the detail as lost in the room noise.

- DR questioned the need for the PLG website. No reasons were given for the question. There was no further discussion on the topic.

### **Follow up:**

SHL messaged DR for more detail on the website error and when it was found, concerned that an error might have been online and missed for some time. The current website and handouts were checked for accuracy and no issues found. SHL also wrote to FM for the detail he had given at the meeting. As of 10/4/24 there had been no answer supplied by FM

DR responded with ***“I have checked back on the source of the error I raised at the meeting and found that it was in a recent SNT Newsletter, not your website so my apologies for wrongly attributing it to you.”***

SHL is aware that an error was introduced during the September 2023 website update which was corrected on 18/10/23, according to the HTML change record entries for the site. This was the reason for questioning when any issue was found.

Since DR stated the error was not on the website this issue for the PLG website is now **closed**.

### **The action remains on the SNT to check messaging.**

### **6. RFU 6 Nations Report**

Chris Donnelly (CD) reported on behalf of the RFU about the 6 Nations tournament.

Regarding the Wales game, CD explained that there were issues with rail services going west and also on the motorway connection at M3/M25 which impacted Welsh supporters getting away.

Regarding the Ireland game CD stated:

- Closure times were longer than wanted.
- Thanked the Safer Neighbourhood Team for their support.
- Cited the unlicensed burger van trading and its swift removal as a good example of team working and responsiveness to an issue.

All SNT and RFU recommended reporting methods on event days are in Appendix 2.

### **Pre 6 Nations Briefing**

A briefing was held prior to the 6 names tournament at the RFU on 31/1/24

Attendees included the RFU, the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Cllr Alex Ehmann, Stephen Lloyd, Paul Leonard, Francis McInerney.

The meeting highlighted all the preparations in place for the two 6 nations games to be held in Twickenham. It also highlighted expected road closure times, actions for Hostile Vehicle Mitigation, Zone EX and legal requirements in existence and developing. This latest and up to date information was shared by the PLG in the newsletter dated Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February. SHL stated there is no reason or excuse for publicising any expected road closure times that differ from this document.

### **Army and Navy Briefing**

A similar briefing for the Army and Navy game will be held at the RFU on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 4pm to which the public are invited.



CD explained that reports of issues directly to the RFU remained very low.

SHL asked for the best way to report issues to the RFU on event days or afterward.

CD responded that issues regarding items in the RFUs sphere of responsibility on event should ideally be texted to the published RFU contact number at the time. This number can take calls, but may often be in use so be found as engaged. A text will also reach the number and be dealt with.

For non-urgent or after event days there are two ways to report:

Email to [twickenhamcommunity@rfu.com](mailto:twickenhamcommunity@rfu.com)

Message via Facebook – RFU Home Turf

CD and SHL stressed the need to report issues directly to the RFU and not via third parties.

**NB: Reporting direct to the Police and RFU creates records and statistics that both keep and can work on. Anecdotal reports from third parties do not achieve this.**

**The following questions were raised:**

- DR raised the issue that post event clearance of rubbish was not effective, quoting cases of over two weeks in one case and three days in another.
- DR also questioned why is “street furniture” such as barriers not removed from the streets immediately after events.

CD answered that bins should be emptied the following day (i.e. Sunday after a Saturday event) and he should be informed if this is not the case.

CD will look into why barriers were left at Twickenham railway station. **Action CD**

- FM requested a break down of figures for reports for this and last season to enable a comparison to be made.

CD explained this would not be available until the end of the season. **Action– CD**

- DR raised the issue of match day urination and dealing with it.

CD apologised for the ongoing issues and reiterated advice given at previous PLGs and RFU publications about contacting the RFU for clean up of residue. He outlined the fixability of controls and positioning of toilet facilities which take in consideration reports made to the RFU for previous games. SHL commented this is one good reason to ensure reports go direct to the RFU and nowhere else.

- DR asked what is the difference between urination and exposure.

Sgt Lawes answered that, whilst it would depend on circumstances, generally urination is a bodily function, exposure has an intent to display.

## **7. Questions Submitted by the Public**

Two questions were pre-submitted by the public.

### **Are we able to nominate posts to have neighbourhood watch signs put up on ? Monica Bithel (NW Coordinator)**

FM stated he used a contact, Chris Walden, to provide and service NW signs in his area. He did not know who funded it.

A comment was made (name not recorded) regarding the council and they may have a reluctance in some places to overcrowd lights with “street furniture”

FM outlined his approach to getting Neighbourhood Watch signage for his area, but was not aware how this was funded.

**Action: SHL** to check with NW and Council if there is an agreed process to put up signage.

**Response:** SHL raised the question with the head of Neighbourhood Watch for the Borough.

### **Concerns raised about security in Martineau and Pomeroy Closes following “casing” of the area and burglary. – initial submission from Huw Jenkins (NW Coordinator)**

The residents of the two closes were represented by Lee Georgs and Jill Haslehurst who outlined their concerns about security and crime.

They began outlining the attempted muggings of LG’s son close to the Ailsa Tavern earlier in the year and continued to two recent incidents inside the Martineau Drive and Pomeroy Drive area. These were:

- Break-in at a house on 11<sup>th</sup> March (No crime reference provided)
- Man behaving suspiciously within the grounds, photographing houses and his reactions when spoken to by residents.

SHL explained some of the history of the community, particularly that it is not gated due to conditions put on the developers at the time of planning to maintain public access rights that existed at the Brunel site the estate replaced. The residents stated they were applying for permission to have a gate installed on the open entry.

The SNT stated that the resident should call 999 if the suspicious person is actually on the grounds, particularly if his presence made her feel unsafe.

## **8. Statement by Chair on Resignation**

SHL read out the highlights of the reason for his resignation. The full details are attached in Appendix 1.

## **9. Ward Priorities**

The SNT recommended the priorities remain the same and this was agreed upon by the attendees.

High Harm – Burglary

High Volume – Theft offences - from shops and motor vehicles

ASB – Antisocial Behaviour

## **10. PLG Questions to report to the Safer Neighbourhood Board**

Did the SNT address the concerns raised by the PLG and act on them? **Yes**

Did residents, visitors, and business people feel safe on the streets of the Ward? **Yes**

If a crime or other public safety concern occurred did the local police respond quickly and correctly? **Yes**

## **11. AOB**

SHL stated that complaints had been made to Neighbourhood Watch about the misinformation spread prior to this meeting about the agenda and the chair. He felt these could have been disruptive to the meeting and that the work needed by a volunteer to correct this fake news was unacceptable.

## **12. Date of Next PLG Meetings 2024**

The next meeting is expected to be June (date tbc) at RFU subject to the availability of a chair.

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## **Useful Contacts**

### **Reporting Crime**

#### **Police Emergency**

Call 999

#### **Police Non-Emergency**

Report online: [www.met.police.uk/ro/report](https://www.met.police.uk/ro/report)

Call 101

Visit your nearest 24/7 police station: Twickenham Police Station, 41 London Road, TW1 3SY

### Crimestoppers

Report information about crime 100% anonymously to this independent charity. They do not trace your call or your IP address.

Call: 0800 555 111

Online: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/forms/give-information-anonymously>

### Action Fraud

If you have been a victim of a scam, report it to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040 or reporting online at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

### Advice Lines

**The 24/7 National Domestic Abuse helpline** provided by Refuge offers confidential, nonjudgmental information and expert support for people affected by Domestic violence. Call for free on 0808 2000 247.

**The Respect Phonenumber** provides a confidential and anonymous helpline for anyone concerned about their violence and/or abuse towards a partner or ex-partner. Call for free on 08088 024 040

**The Men's Advice Line** is a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic violence and those supporting them. Call for free on 08088 010 327. Phone lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am – 8pm. Alternatively, visit [www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk).

**Karma Nirvana** supports victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage. Call 0800 5999 247 Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm for confidential advice or visit [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

**Hour Glass** challenges the abuse of older people in all its forms. The Hourglass confidential Helpline provides information and support to anyone concerned about harm, abuse or exploitation of an older person. This might include physical, financial, psychological, sexual abuse or neglect. Call for free on 0808 808 8141 Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm or visit [www.wearehourglass.org](http://www.wearehourglass.org)


**Galop** provides a National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans+ Domestic Abuse Helpline. Call 0800 999 5428 or visit [www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk). Phone lines are open Monday to Friday 10:00am - 5:00pm and Wednesday to Thursday from 10:00am - 8:00pm.

**Childline** is a free, private and confidential service where you can talk about anything. A counsellor is there to listen and support you with anything you'd like to talk about. Or you can have a [1-2-1 counsellor chat](#) online. Call 0800 1111 for free or have 1-2-1 chat on their website between 7.30am and 3.30am every day.

## St Margaret's & North Twickenham Ward

 <https://www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/richmond-upon-thames/st-margarets-and-north-twickenham/>

 [stmargarets&northtwickenham@met.police.uk](mailto:stmargarets&northtwickenham@met.police.uk)

 Twickenham Police Station, 41 London Road, TW1 3SY

 <https://twitter.com/MPSSStMargarets>

 0208247 7142

## **Appendix 1**

### **Email hack of resident (From the PLG meeting)**

#### **Query**

SHL asked the room if they are logged into a system via a web browser, such as Gmail or online shopping, how do they close it? By logging out or hitting the “X” button on the browser. The majority said via the “X” button. SHL agreed we all do it – but it leaves us vulnerable to an attack at times by doing so.

#### **The Hack**

The hackers were particularly nasty. Once they had access to the residents’ email, they changed the password, recovery email and telephone numbers to prevent the resident from getting access to the account. They then created a similar mail address, using a very close simulation of the resident’s name on Hotmail. They then added a divert to the residents real account, sending all incoming mail to the hacker’s new fake account.

#### **The attempted fraud**

Using the residents address book, stored in their online mail, the hackers sent a message to everyone on it. The message said a family member had become stricken with cancer and needed cheering up in hospital. Could people please buy an Amazon or Apple voucher on the residents’ behalf and send it to the residents mail. Of course, anything purchased now would automatically be sent directly to the hackers fake account and they would use the vouchers themselves.

The hackers deleted the residents contact list. There was no reason for them to do so in the fraud, it was simply an act of spite. The resident was alerted by friends who made contact to ask if the resident was well and needed help. After a number of these calls the resident realised something was wrong.

#### **Resolution**

SHL attempted to recover the account using the online password reset facility. This did not work as all verifications were sent to the numbers the hackers and mails created by the hackers. It would also alert them to the discovery of the hack.

SHL then assisted resident in recovering the mail account, by contacting the supplier. In this case it was BT and they use a UK help desk, which was extremely useful. Within a couple of minutes SHL and the resident had been able to create a new password and get verification details changed.

BT support teams were very helpful and they alerted us to the redirect, which we removed after noting the mail address the hackers had added.

*It was interesting to note that some of the mails to the residents' contacts had actually been sent from the fraudulent account, so close in name that no one noticed the difference.*

## Cause

How did the hackers get access to the account? It took a while to work out what had happened as the resident had not shared the email password with anyone. Neither was it stored their PC or in the browser memory.

When a person opens up a link via a browser to a mail or shopping site, there is a session created between the browser and the remote server where the site is contained. This uses the IP address of the home device and the mail server. Also, in use is a "port number" – which users will never see. The session to the mail site connects to a virtual port, opened just for that session.

Another thing the resident will never see are "keepalives" – background polling messages sent between the browser and the mail server, basically saying "are you there" from the server and the response being "yes" from the browser while you are still logged in.

If the resident logs out, a message is sent to the mail server to close the port down, and then the session is ended and the connection to the browser dropped by the mail server. The port is never open to anyone but the resident.

If the resident simply hits X on the browser and closes it, the mail server does not know and the port to the residents' email account is open to the world. The email server will send several more keepalives, and if it gets no response, close the port down. Depending on how the server is set up, this could be a couple of seconds.

Hackers scan for open ports. In this case it appears they found one, got in and caused problems. In reality the odds of this happening to a person are low, and in this case the resident was one of the unlucky ones.

## Lessons to be learned

There are two lessons to be learned from this.

- Residents should **log out** of important sites, like email or shopping, rather than just closing the browser. This reduces risk of hacking.
- If a you receive a mail from a person that looks odd and not like what you would expect the person to write, **check the mail address** it has come from to ensure it is not a fake.

## Appendix 2

### Reporting incidents on event days



**Police Liaison Group**  
St. Margarets & North Twickenham

#### Incident Reporting on event days at the Twickenham RFU Stadium

Report to the RFU via Telephone, Text, Twitter or Facebook

- Urination (including for clean up)
- Anti Social Behaviour

Use the telephone/text service for immediate cleansing. The RFU will send a clean up crew to the affected area. Social/event police will be alerted who will visit the location, being able to issue spot fines. The incident will be recorded.

Report to the Police via SNT mailbox / telephone number

- Anti Social Behaviour / urination (for record only)
- Any other non 999 incidents (for record only)

The incidents will be recorded for review after the event.

If you need the police to attend an incident it is a 999 call which will be communicated to officers in the control room.

The call will be sent immediately to the police team in the control room who will manage the response directly. No RFU staff are involved.

#### Report incidents to the Police - Contact Details

Emergency only - Dial 999

Non emergency incidents (for record only):

Email the Safer Neighbourhood Team on:

[stmargarets&northtwickenham@met.police.uk](mailto:stmargarets&northtwickenham@met.police.uk)

or call 02071759465 leaving a message about the incident.

#### Report to the RFU - Contact Details

Telephone: 07894 814180

Text: 07894 814180

Twitter: @rfuhometurf

Facebook: rfuhomeurf

Please note that the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team and RFU meet post events to discuss all reported issues and incidents to better prepare for future occasions. Your comments are appreciated and valuable. They will help to shape future event day controls.



St Margarets & North Twickenham Police Liaison Group 2023

## **Appendix 3**

### **Chair's Resignation from PLG and other related functions.**

#### **Apologies**

When I tendered by resignation, I felt I was letting a lot of people down. Particularly the Safer Neighbourhood Team and most of my fellow Neighbourhood Watch coordinators with whom I have worked for several years to move the PLG and area police relations forward at a time when the Met Police are working to establish better public relations and confidence. The warm wishes and requests to stay on from residents, police and council members are really appreciated.

Therefore, I feel it important to explain why I am stepping down.

#### **Why I became the Chair**

Before outlining my reasons for resigning, it is necessary to explain why I became the chair in the first place to give the reasons appropriate context. Particularly in light of very inaccurate communications before the meeting that suggested I had got the role days after the last chair stepped down.

I have been Neighbourhood Watch (NW) coordinator for North St Margarets Residents Association since around 2018. I took that role on when it became vacant, having been involved in the association since 2002. As the NW coordinator I was really obliged to attend the Police Liaison Group which I expected to find interesting.

Initially I did, but after a couple of meetings I recognised that there were inherent problems with the meeting. Proceedings were dominated by one individual and reports of urination on RFU event days. I also noticed the victims of this were never in attendance, just the same one person each time saying "I have been told..." but never backed up by an actual victim. Such was the domination of this subject and individual, combined with weak chairing of the meeting which permitted it, I had to fight for space to get a discussion on a knife crime that had occurred within the NSMRA boundaries. I also realised that some of the other coordinators felt the same way.

When we were having premeeting conversations guessing how many times the word "urination" will be said it was clear something was wrong. Attendances were dwindling. It came to a head when a suggestion was made at a meeting that urination be made a priority for the ward. Several coordinators, myself included, rallied against the idea.

I spoke with the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) about it. It was suggested I should consider being the chair if the position became vacant. This was September 2020, a couple of weeks after a street meeting on Moormead Park. I had not considered that previously and did not think I would be appropriate. I am not a politician, which I thought was needed for the role. I am much more a "blunt instrument" – I like to get things done. I recognised the old "put up or shut up" style of motivation, I use it a lot myself, and was very happy with that approach.

During the first lockdown and run up to the second I had a lot of communication with the SNT as there were a number of times NSMRA residents had fears and issues to be resolved. I built a good working relationship with them.

In early 2021 the SNT said the PLG chair was stepping down and asked if I would consider standing for it. After a couple of weeks, I agreed to be considered. The SNT nominated me when the existing chair stepped down. based on their existing interactions with me and it was a vote of confidence which I



appreciated. The March 2021 PLG was chaired by Cllr Khosa as a stand in where it was announced the previous chair had stepped down. A request for anyone to volunteer was given. My nomination was made firm after the end of the meeting.

I then had to meet the chair of the Safer Neighbourhood Board for a discussion. The PLG chair does not just run a meeting, it is a focal point for many activities and does require a time commitment.

With SNB and SNT agreement I was put forward at the next PLG meeting, three months later on June 15<sup>th</sup>, voted in at the meeting and chairing my first meeting on October 12<sup>th</sup>. It was a year from the idea first being suggested to me to actually running a meeting.

I was the only one put forward, no one else offered to do the role. In retrospect I now know why volunteers are thin on the ground and why we have several wards without PLG chairs. Existing chairs have to take on additional wards to cover. I have been covering the South Twickenham Ward as it had no chair and no meetings for a significant period, as well as my own St Margarets and North Twickenham ward.

### **My goals as chair**

My first task was to talk to some of the Neighbourhood Watch coordinators who attended the meeting, to find out what they felt was good, and bad, and how to improve it. From those conversations I set myself some goals.

My goals as chair were:

- Make the meeting relevant to everyone who had concerns, issues or simple interest in police liaison within the ward.
- Ensure attendees would get an answer to queries to make the meeting valuable rather than lip service. "I'll report back at the next meeting in three months" was no longer acceptable. Pre-submitted questions, circulated to police, councillors and anyone else relevant were introduced. Actions were given timescales for response, and if nothing had arrived by the time set, the person with the action was chased.
- Remove the focus on urination and one individual. Whilst it is a problem, it will get proportionately fair meeting time along with everything else going on in the ward and not be allowed to distract attention from more serious crimes.
- Restore attendances.
- Connect with groups – faith groups, schools, traders, that were not represented at the meetings.
- Increase Neighbourhood Watch coverage within the ward. To do this needed an exercise to map out the ward to see where Neighbourhood Watches existed, and where gaps existed.
- Work with the SNT to fill those gaps.
- Introduce guest speakers to meetings, or subject matter experts on a specific topic.
- Improve relationships with the RFU.

Overall, the goals were met. The meeting had a maximum of 48 attendees and a range of topics have received attention including:

- Violence against Woman and Girls (VAWG) presentation by Wendy Kyle-Pope
- A meeting focused on teenage muggings
- A line up of guest speakers on specific topics created – it was frustrating Crimestoppers had to pull out at the last minute.

Likewise, a number of street meetings have been set up via the PLG with residents, police and council members.

Generally, we have great cooperation between Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and the police, fostered by the PLG. One key element was to map out the ward, street by street, to discover which roads had neighbourhood watch coverage and which did not. The aim was to identify “gaps” which would be filled by the SNT and PLG visiting to recruit members. This was successful and ongoing, with several roads added to both NW and Police communications lists.

Only one individual caused any issue, by being either unable or unwilling to define the area their group covered. It hindered the work being done to increase Neighbourhood Watch coverage in the area.

In regards to the RFU, and incidents on event days, there was a lot of noise and reports not reaching either Police or RFU in an acceptable fashion. There was, and still is, a lot of misinformation about event days. I have worked with SNT and RFU to get out proper reporting processes for incidents on event days – which are simply to go direct to the police or RFU, depending on the incident. Not to use third parties who actually dilute the impact of any reporting.

In the same manner we have worked to get out information from the RFU to the residents, setting true expectations for road closure times and giving the reasons why. It is disappointing to see information put out from a 2012 newsletter with claims the expected times in the content are current, particularly when the author attended a meeting where the RFU explained exactly why this was wrong. Hiding facts from residents is not acceptable, making the drive to correctly inform the public a very high by PLG, SNT and RFU.

### **Why Resign?**

Having spent three years in post I had upheld the mantra given to me by the Richmond head of Neighbourhood Watch, that coordinators should really be street based, not a distance away. No one should claim a pan-Twickenham or Richmond group is a single Neighbourhood Watch. A message that Neighbourhood Watch have reiterated in a message to all coordinators on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

However, in November I was made aware that the same individual, who had consistently been unhelpful to the PLG, was given control of a wider neighbourhood Watch area. It was duplicating the existing roads plus additional on a new expanded area. I found it difficult to believe that this would be authorised with no communication, particularly when those doing the authorising were aware of the problems the PLG had been forced to deal with.

I raised the issue and whilst it led to the original duplicate entry being removed, nothing more has yet happened.

It came to a head when we arranged, via the PLG meeting, for the SNT to do a street meeting at Heathfield North. The reception from the residents varied from poor to outright hostile. The PLG was not seen positively, the chair less so. It was an extremely uncomfortable session personally, What I had been concerned about in November became apparent to have happened by the end of January.

I felt at the end of the evening the PLG was damaged. Myself I was not concerned about, but the function and credibility of the PLG I am.

### **In the end**

The decision to empower someone who does not help the PLG and SNB goals is what has caused me to resign. The lack of communication and cause of undermining the PLG and myself was not acceptable. A problem has been caused that I am not prepared to fix.

I believe in the PLG meeting as a concept and as a function. I want it to succeed in each ward and have been working with Richmond and Twickenham to achieve that success. However, the reaction I received in Heathfield left me in no doubt that I was no longer the person to take PLGs forward. When I left the street meeting thinking "they deserve what they get" I knew it was time to go.

My biggest concern is that I feel it may die or drift back to lectures on urination. Now that is a problem for someone else to resolve.