At a meeting of the Chiswick Area Committee (Monitoring) held on Wednesday, 8 November 2006 at 7:30 pm at The Hogarth Hall, Chiswick Town Hall, Heathfield Terrace, Chiswick W4.

Present:

Councillor Lynch (Chair)
Councillor Oulds (Vice Chair)
Councillors Barwood, Kinghorn, McGregor and Todd.
David Beattie

Apologies for Absence

Councillors Samantha Davies, Lee and Thompson.

27. Apologies for absence, declarations of interest or any other communications from Members

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and made the following announcements:

• The Chiswick Christmas Lights would be switched on on Thursday, 23 November 2006 between 6-6.30 p.m. The event was sponsored by Fullers and would focus on very young children. The Area Committee was grateful to Fullers for their sponsorship and expected a friendly, family event.

• The Chair advised that a successor to David Palmer as Area Co-ordinator had now been identified. He acknowledged the hard work David had undertaken for the Area Committee, not least in the last 4-6 months since he had announced his departure. The Chair welcomed Rebecca Behrendt, who would be known to the Committee for her reports on the tree strategy, and was confident that she would prove a worthy successor.

Brian Boothby, a local resident, called for a vote of thanks to David Palmer, which was seconded by all.

• The Remembrance Day parade would start on Sunday, 12 November at 10.50 a.m. from Chiswick Town Hall and the Chair hoped to see people there.

• The poppy appeal was going well but more support was sought to sell poppies. The main selling point was at Sainsbury’s and along the streets on Saturday, if there were people who wanted to help.

• The Committee had been asked to nominate a representative to the Hounslow Police Consultative Group. Councillor Kinghorn was nominated, seconded and agreed as the Chiswick Area Committee representative.
The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2006 were confirmed, with the following amendments to Item 14, page 3: An Overview of Parks and Open Spaces:

- Councillor McGregor had pointed out the use of hectares, not acres, when the use of acres was the preferred form of measurement.

- Paragraph 2, page 3, line 3 – amend ‘and revenue of around £3M’ to read ‘and with receipts gave a total budget of £3M.’

- Paragraph 2, page 3, line 10 – amend ‘£200m’ to ‘£200k’.

There were the following matters arising:

Item 13, page 2: Minutes of 21 June 2006 – Disused Public Conveniences, Turnham Green
David Palmer, Area Co-ordinator, noted that the Committee had been due a report at this meeting. The Area Committee had made an ‘in-principle’ decision but costs were higher than first identified. The S106 Sub-Group, chaired by Councillor Oulds, would be looking at a range of projects and this was likely to be on the list. Then the Sub-Group would report to the Chiswick Area Committee, so the process would take a few more months to be resolved.

Item 15, page 8: Fromow Corner
A report was expected to come back to the Chiswick Area Planning Committee on 6 December 2006. There had been a good response to the consultation in respect of numbers and quality of comment.

Item 17, page 12: Chiswick Station Access Improvements
A report was expected to come back to the Chiswick Area Planning Committee on 6 December 2006.

Item 18, page 13: Open Forum – Pavement Clutter
David Palmer, Area Co-ordinator, advised that Anna Jackson and Brian Boothby had met with officers. A ‘blitz’ to clear advertising boards was under way for Turnham Green Terrace and Devonshire Road and this would soon be extended to the High Road.

In respect of motorcycles, Parking Attendants were now clear that they should take action if the motorcycles were illegally parked.

There were issues in respect of the disused telephone boxes, following the company going into liquidation. British Telecom might bring the boxes back into use.

In respect of Soho House, the Council was taking a three pronged approach to deal with the problem. The Licensing Officer had visited the site. An application to renew the license would be considered by a Licensing Panel on 22 November. Rebecca Behrendt’s team would take Highway Enforcement action against the obstruction, which would take 4-5 weeks. There were also planning issues to be considered in respect of the structure.
on the side of the building. However, planning enforcement action would take longer. However, a range of action was being pursued and members would be kept informed of progress.

The Chair welcomed the swift response since the concern was raised at the last meeting and believed that officers were taking the right steps to address the issue.

Councillor Todd sought clarification of the policy in respect of advertising boards. Ms Behrendt explained that this was part of the work of the Enforcement Team. On the first visit to premises causing an obstruction, the owners of the premises would be advised of the law and given leaflets to advise them what they should do. If the boards were not removed, a notice would be issued and they would then be removed. The team had visited all premises where boards were outside. The next stage was the issue of notices and this would commence the following week.

29. Community Plan

See the report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate Policy and Regeneration – Agenda Item 3.

Clarissa Corbisiero, Policy Officer, introduced the report. Helen Wilson, Policy and Performance Unit and Howard Simmons, Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate Policy and Regeneration were also present. Members has received an earlier report on the development of the Community Plan.

Clarissa Corbisiero explained that she would provide some context for the Plan and then discuss what it meant for Chiswick and what the priorities for the area should be.

The Plan was a statutory requirement, monitored by the Local Strategic Partnership, and was a mechanism to be in place to provide a vision for the area for all partners. The new Plan would be the third for the borough and would run from 2007-2010. The current Plan had 89% of targets complete or on track for completion.

There were two distinct sections to the Plan. First there was a thematic section in the new Plan with 8 suggested themes:

- A growing community.
- A safer and stronger community.
- A healthier community.
- A cleaner and greener community.
- A creative community.
- An economically active and skilled community.
- A children and young people’s community.
- A caring community.

Of this it might be possible to merge the caring and healthier community themes. The themes were the subject of consultation via questionnaires, HM magazine, on line, via notices in public buildings, focus groups, a members’ session and the opportunity for a bespoke session for the Area Committee if desired.

The second section of the Community Plan consisted of the Area Plans, which focused on each area’s unique needs and aspirations. Document B of the report provided a draft
profile giving an overview of the area through data and case studies. Document C addressed the Area Priorities, both the current priorities and a summary of their progress and suggested future priorities for discussion. It was suggested that about five Area priorities would be appropriate, with a clear rationale as to why they had been selected. The Area Committee would need to consider targets/performance indicators to achieve these priorities and would monitor their progress.

Councillor Kinghorn jokingly welcome the news that males in his own ward of Chiswick Riverside lived longer. On a serious note he questioned the information in Figure 8 for teenage conceptions in Turnham Green. He understood that this was a misnaming, since the high figure related to teenage mothers resident in the area because of the presence of four hostels in Turnham Green for teenage mothers. Clarissa Corbisiero advised that the figures had been based on her understanding of the situation. However, it would be possible to present the information in a different way to draw attention to the fact that the figures were not conceptions.

A member of the public, Mrs Christabel Ames-Lewis, noted one item in the existing Plan on which there had been no progress, namely Chiswick Library. She noted the comment that work had yet to start and asked how this would be progressed, as she had thought work was necessary to secure disabled access.

Howard Simmons, Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate Policy and Regeneration, advised that the Council was keen to see improvement and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance. The report on access had been received and this was a priority for the new Administration. Mr Simmons believed that there were bids in the budget this year to take the DDA work forward.

David Beattie, Co-opted Member, was glad to hear this news, particularly as this had been one of the top priorities in the candidate’s promises at the local elections.

Councillor Oulds commented that improved facilities for the Library were welcome and something he would support. However, he was concerned that the mention in the present Community Plan might be referring to works that the community had been wholly against, in which case it might be good that they had not been progressed. Howard Simmons reassured him that the Community Plan reflected the ambition of the Chiswick Area Committee to address the issue of improvement to Chiswick Library, not any particular development scheme. Councillor Lee, as Executive Lead Member, had made it very clear that he wanted to see these improvements. Costs had been identified and included in the bidding process. If successful, work would start in the new financial year.

Councillor Barwood referred to recent work in Riverside ward and asked if this was to comply with DDA requirements for accessible kerbs. David Palmer, Area Co-ordinator, confirmed that it was. There was a specific government target for roads and pavements. The London Borough of Hounslow was performing well against this target and continued to make roads and pavements safe for disabled people within available budgets. Brian Boothby, a local resident, expressed some concern that the DDA had been introduced in 1995, clearly stated what was necessary with a timetable for changes and yet work was still to be done.

Councillor Barwood noted that the data advised that the number of children living in Chiswick was low. She wondered if this led to the five primary schools taking children from other catchment areas.
Having clarified with the Chair that the Committee were looking to identify future priorities, Mrs Ames-Lewis, a local resident, suggested that she would like to see activities for children and young people as a priority. She had heard through St Nicholas’ Church of other work for children and young people, such as the work by ‘Soul in the City’ to set up a café for teenagers. She felt that there should be a bigger focus on activities for young people out of school and at weekends.

The Chair noted that there was a later item on the agenda for the Director of Children’s Services to discuss the Children and Young People’s Plan. He suggested this might be an issue to take up in respect of that paper.

Mr Bateson, a local resident, raised the issue of Local Studies and Archives. He had not known that the London Borough of Hounslow had an archive. He asked whether there were trained archivists for the borough and whether it would be possible for the borough to join Archives for London. He would provide details of this organisation. Howard Simmons advised that the borough would welcome having a role in such a body. He could arrange for Alec Kennedy, the relevant Director in CIP, to report on the archival arrangements to the Committee, if the Committee wished.

Mr Simmons explained to members that the new Community Plan gave the opportunity for members to continue their existing priorities and add new ones. They had changed from an Area profile to an Area Plan in order to give the opportunity for members to determine what issues they wished to drive forward.

Jill Rustad, a local resident, raised the issue of CCTV. She assumed that the installation of CCTV for the A4 underpasses was something the Committee would wish to achieve. The Chair agreed that this was the case. Mrs Rustad asked who had been approached about funding CCTV in the underpasses. She knew that Fullers had agreed funding but that the BSI had been approached without success. She asked which businesses had been approached. It was frustrating not to know what was happening. The Chair advised that Inspector David Osborne would be speaking later in the meeting and would be able to provide an update to questions then.

Councillor McGregor joined the meeting at this point.

From the discussion, the Chair concluded that it was right for the Area Committee to prioritise CCTV and suggested that within that priority there should be special mention of the underpasses, as a safety issue.

Councillor Todd shared the concern. He had spoken to the Area Co-ordinator about seeking S106 to deal with the issue of the underpasses.

The Chair noted that there did not seem to be a significant number of new priorities to add to the existing. However, he noted that the Plan would remain open so that the Committee could add more.

Anna Jackson, Chair of the Thornton/Mayfield Residents’ Association, asked how many priorities there should be. She suggested endorsing the priorities set out in Document C at page 40 of the report or suggesting the most important from those listed, so that they could move forward.
Clarissa Corbisiero advised that those priorities listed were purely suggestions based on the analysis of the data. The Policy team were advocating around five priorities so that the Committee could focus on their achievement.

Councillor Kinghorn suggested that the first four listed relating to Crime, Heritage, the Elderly and the Street scene should be included. He would then add Parks and Open Spaces as a key area. These five areas were the key in his view. He thought the priority relating to reducing teenage pregnancy was a ‘red herring’.

The Chair asked about the timetable and what happened next. Ms Corbisiero advised that the consultation was ongoing. The first draft of the Plan would be written by Christmas, followed by consultation in January/February. She was happy to receive comments on how to make the priorities more robust and how to deliver the priorities into next year.

Resolved:

1. That members broadly supported a continuing focus on the following existing priorities:
   - Reducing crime, in particular developing further the focus on CCTV installations, with especial focus on the A4 underpasses as a safety issue.
   - Further promotion and funding for Chiswick Heritage Regeneration Area.
   - Services for the elderly residents of Chiswick.
   - Improving the street scene, including graffiti removal.

   Plus one addition:
   - Parks and Open Spaces

2. That it was also suggested that activities for children and young people out of school and at weekends might be a priority.

30. **Children and Young People’s Plan**

See the report of the Director of Children’s Services and Lifelong Learning – Agenda Item 4.

The Chair invited Judith Pettersen, newly appointed Director for Children’s Services and Lifelong Learning to the Chiswick Area Committee. Councillor McGregor supported the welcome to the new Director and congratulated her on her appointment.

Ms Pettersen apologised that her voice was ailing. She explained that Children’s Services were engaged to produce a three year strategic plan for the whole of the London Borough of Hounslow. This involved a great deal of work on consultation and analysis to determine what should be in the Plan.

Paragraph 4 of the report gave the list of emerging priorities within the Every Child Matters agenda. The priority for achieving economic well-being covered the areas of child poverty and childcare.

The Director noted that in paragraph 5 of the report, considering the emerging priorities in
Chiswick, she had repeated the fault identified under the previous item about Teenage Pregnancy. She would check the facts about conception rates but these were high across the borough. Ms Pettersen invited feedback as to whether the emerging priorities seemed sensible for the area and any comments for Chiswick.

Councillor McGregor thanked Ms Pettersen for the presentation, which reflected the key areas. Paragraph 6 of the report commented on the financial stresses of identifying resources. He asked if the Director could clarify, as far as she was aware, whether the bulk of resources would come from Council Tax or Direct Services Grant. As the Lead Member for Finance and the Budget, he welcomed a list of priorities but noted the potential financial strain.

Judith Pettersen advised that she could give a general response. The strategic plan for Children and Young People was a component of the Community Plan, encompassing all activities and all services. Hence there were functions for Children Services and Lifelong Learning, plus also functions for the PCT, the police and other partners, so the resources were wide ranging. She asked whether Councillor McGregor would still like her to pursue the technical question.

Councillor McGregor advised that he would. He understood that the resources were guided by statute but was concerned that the service would be left without funds to meet its aspirations. Paragraph 4 of the report made good sense but he was concerned to know how the priorities would be paid for. He asked the Director to come back on the specific point.

Councillor Kinghorn, the Executive Lead member for Children’s Services, welcomed Judith Pettersen and thanked her for her presentation. He recognised that the Children’s Plan and delivering and integrated Children’s Services was one of the most important things for the Council, but was potentially beset with problems, with a lot of partners to work with. The merger of the Education Department and Children’s Social Services was a major task, involving a major cultural shake up for each department, every Council service and all partners.

Councillor Kinghorn referred to Paragraph 4.2 and the priority to stay safe. He drew attention to the number and range of staff working with young people – for example, the range of school staff from dinner ladies to teachers, nurses, the police and library staff. There needed to be appropriate ways to pass information but preserve confidence. However, all staff needed to be involved to identify children in need and to avoid the tragic situation highlighted in the case of Victoria Climbie.

Councillor Kinghorn thanked officers for the work already done and the work that officers would undertake in conjunction with partners.

Brian Boothby, a local resident, considered this was an excellent and far reaching report. He observed as a University teacher and a governor of Chiswick Community School that it was important to bear in mind the generation gap when working with parents. He believed that young people had a different experience of growing up than in his generation. This was a generation with instant news, where young people were exposed to horrors and broader experiences. He stressed the importance of engaging with young people and including them in, in order to close the gap.

Councillor Oulds noted the comment, but pointed out that the generation growing up in
the 1930s had also been exposed to terrible things happening. Councillor Oulds questioned Paragraph 4.3 and the priority to enjoy and achieve. He noted the point made that all children should achieve their full potential and the discussion of ethnic groups. This omitted the Asian population, who were a key group in the borough and he questioned why this was the case. He felt it would be better to have the priority related to all children, regardless of background.

Judith Pettersen advised that this priority did not relate specifically to Chiswick. The groups listed were those that were underperforming. Asian groups averagely performed above average.

Anna Jackson of the Thornton/Mayfield Residents Association noted that when her daughter was growing up her complaint had been that there was nowhere to go in the evenings that was not a pub. Alcohol use had not been mentioned but was important and the issue of under-age drinking should be pursued. It was a shame that cafes were not open late. She supported the existence of somewhere for young people to go that did not serve alcohol.

Ms Jackson also noted that Christabel Ames-Lewis, in discussing the Community Plan, had raised the topic of places for young people. A lot of good youth work was based at the Methodist Church in Sutton Court Road. There was a move afoot by the ‘Soul in the City’ Trust to draw young people in to help in the local community. They wanted to establish a café, to be piloted in the Methodist Church, to provide young people with somewhere to go. She hoped that any work done towards activities for young people would be joined up with those, such as the ‘Soul in the City’ initiative, already promoted through the voluntary sector.

Councillor McGregor welcomed these comments. The Primary Care Trust and the London Borough of Hounslow had undertaken a joint review of drinking in Hounslow. He thought the points made should be found in this report and was happy to provide a copy.

David Beattie was anxious to counteract the implication that there was nothing going on for young people, when in fact there were likely to be a huge range of activities. He wondered if there was an inclusive list of all organisations such as the scouts and those promoting hobbies. He did not believe that young people could not find out if they took the initiative.

Councillor Kinghorn agreed that there were a wide range of groups for children and young people, such as the scouts and others from the voluntary and private sector. He hoped that all would be involved in developing activities. The programme was about linking things up rather than individual programmes. The aim was to put things together so that young people did not fall between the gaps, as well as providing the opportunity to maximise their potential towards adulthood. The same applied to their families. For example, Extended Schools and Children’s Centres aimed to help parents and lone parents towards better jobs. Councillor Kinghorn agreed that the authority needed to know the available provision in order to avoid gaps. This was an integration exercise, intended to ensure that any gaps were made good.

The Chair noted the contradiction between the wide range of activities he knew to be on offer and the complaint from young people that they had nowhere to go. He agreed that there was a need to get children and young people out of the house, but also that organised activity might not be conducive to all. There were those who were not
amenable to being organised and those who had tried and been excluded because they had not achieved success in an activity. Hence it was important to have somewhere for young people to sit and talk to their peers in safety or to have interaction with adults to answer questions. In respect of places to go when not in school, the Chair commented that there were places. ‘Soul in the City’ had sought to fill a gap for troubled young people who needed somewhere to sit peacefully and talk.

However, Anna Jackson felt the need was not just for children with problems. She suggested that activities should be brought together and marketed, for example the Saturday Music Centre at Chiswick Community School. She suggested that clubs should be encouraged to put up notices and that heavy marketing of activities would help. However, in essence young people needed a safe and stylish place, with sofas and cheap tea/coffee, that was secular and non-aligned, as young people might not necessarily wish to be involved with church activities. Without proper provision, it was difficult to keep meeting places drugs-free and safe.

The Chair noted the underlying theme and stressed the point that places to meet should be non-aligned.

Judith Pettersen fed back to the meeting what she had heard, which related to the following messages:

- Engaging with young people, noting that there were involved young people and consulting extensively with young people in devising the Plan.
- The need for co-ordinated activities, with a range of safe places.
- Joining with the voluntary sector to provide activities.
- Marketing activities.

Members noted the report. The Chair thanked Judith Pettersen for her attendance.

Resolved:

That the report be noted, together with the comments from the Chiswick Area Committee.

31. Community Safety and Crime - police update

See the report of the Chiswick Sector Inspector – Agenda Item 5.

Inspector David Osborne ran through the report. He drew attention to concern about street crime and witness appeal boards. Whilst these might give the impression that there was a huge increase, they in fact reflected the police efforts to combat the crime. There were 7 more offences recorded than the previous year, which was not good, but not as much as the impression that might be created by the boards.

The headline crime figures were encouraging. There had been a 15.1% decrease in motor vehicle theft. There was a lot of effort to decrease burglary. For example, there was an initiative to post forms through the letter boxes of homes where the hedge was high to encourage residents to secure their property. This was working.

There was progress in respect of CCTV. Fullers had signed an agreement to provide
CCTV at the underpass between Chiswick Lane and the Hogarth Roundabout. There was a small amount of funding committed to providing cameras at the junctions of Chiswick High Road with Essex Place and Devonshire Road. It was hoped to provide a further camera at the junction of Turnham Green Terrace and Chiswick High Road.

Inspector Osborne noted that the issue of the underpasses was raised frequently, but there was some difficulty. To secure cash, it was necessary to look at crime figures and the best impact. The crime rate under the A4 in respect of muggings and crime was not high. This might be because residents did not use them, but the crime figures did not justify the cost when weighed with other priorities. Instead cameras had been installed in Chiswick High Road where there was a problem with street crime. For the underpasses, Inspector Osborne had approached a number of businesses for sponsorship but unsuccessfully. He would welcome CCTV for the underpasses as although there were not crimes in huge numbers, there was a fear of crime issue.

Inspector Osborne turned to the problems Chiswick had had with cycle theft. Chiswick was a hotspot in the borough of Hounslow. There had been a few operations recently over four days that had recovered stolen property and these would continue. However, the message to cyclists had to be to make sure that they had a decent lock to secure their cycles.

Environmental Community Clean Up Days had been held, including repainting the Fishers Lane Playground and the alleyway in Prebend Gardens. Councillor Todd had been involved and the initiative was well received and had improved the situation.

Turning to the strength of the police teams, Inspector Osborne advised that all the Safer Neighbourhood Teams would be fully staffed for the first time by Christmas and he believed that this would enable residents to see an improvement from Christmas and beyond.

Councillor Barwood came back to the point about underpasses. People felt very strongly about this issue and would not use at night. She believed that the only way to get statistics was to survey the local people. The reality was that people were walking a long way round to use surface crossings. She felt that a survey would show that people did not like using the underpasses because they did not feel safe. She asked how many underpasses were not used at night.

Councillor Barwood liked the Safer Neighbourhood Team set up but noted that there was no longer a Town Centre Group. This was missed and she wished to know what the Safer Neighbourhood Team was doing in respect of this gap.

Councillor Todd thanked Inspector Osborne and his staff for the community action. He endorsed what Councillor Barwood had said about the underpasses. He was aware of neighbours attacked and a bike stolen. There was fear of the tunnels and it was important to stop fear of crime to avoid totality and brutality. He endorsed the need for more research.

Jill Rustad of the Harvard Hill residents asked who officers had linked with within Transport for London. She understood that engineers had been looking at the possibility of a bridge across at Sutton Court Road. She sought the result of what they had found.

Inspector Osborne advised that Transport for London had been involved with the Fullers
project and this should reach the stage of funding. He would speak to Transport for London.

Mrs Rustad was concerned that there was no linking up to recognise the advantages. Transport for London had been involved with the Metropolitan Police in respect of an assault by the Porsche Garage. If there had been CCTV in this area, the assailant may have been spotted. Similarly, CCTV had picked up the perpetrator of crime along Chiswick High Road at the station when seeking an escape route. It could also be true that the underpasses might be used as an escape route, where the presence of CCTV might have wider value.

Inspector Osborne took the point about an escape route. However, the money secured was a very small amount. Priority was given to Chiswick High Road since of 100 street crimes in Chiswick over six months, most were along the High Road. The crime at the Porsche Garage was along the A4, not near the underpass, but he agreed if funding were available he would support CCTV for the underpasses.

David Palmer, Area Co-ordinator, agreed that it was frustrating as there were a number of organisations involved in discussions about CCTV. However, Rebecca Behrendt would be meeting with Transport for London the following Monday and would raise the issue. Councillor Todd had mentioned S106. The S106 working group was meeting to determine priorities. There had been a clear S106 decision to secure money for safety measures and CCTV was a clear priority, included as a Community Plan priority in both the old and new Plans. So the aim remained to secure funding for what the Chiswick Committee wanted to achieve.

The Chair questioned whether there was a Transport for London initiative for Safe Routes to Stations. These underpasses were potentially major pedestrian arteries if safe, for example Harvard Hill provided a route to Gunnersbury Station. He felt it should be suggested to Transport for London in the strongest terms to look at safe routes to stations. This would be something for Rebecca Behrendt to take to the meeting.

Councillor Kinghorn was concerned by the argument that more happened on the High Road. He believed that people did not use the tunnels because they knew them to be dangerous, with a high chance of attack. It was a circular argument, as for residents getting to the High Road was the only way to access the shops. If people had to use the underpasses, Councillor Kinghorn believed that the number of incidents of crime would rise.

Councillor Kinghorn echoed the point raised by Councillor Barwood on the loss of the Town Centre Committee. There were now three team sergeants. He suggested arranging a rota with one councillor from each ward once a quarter to discuss local issues.

Anna Jackson noted the goodwill gesture of Fullers in supporting CCTV in the underpass and felt that once this funding was confirmed congratulations to Fullers should be recorded. On the issue of the Safer Neighbourhood Team meetings, she reported that she had been involved with the kind of group that Councillor Barwood had referred to and had attended one meeting of the new ward based group.

Inspector Osborne agreed that Fullers had been very generous in funding CCTV for the underpass and the police were grateful to the company for their support. However, other businesses were less willing. He would speak to Rebecca Behrendt about any help with
Inspector Osborne clarified that the Town Centre Group had been replaced by a Steering Group for each ward, meeting quarterly. Councillors were welcome to attend. Inspector Osborne noted that the dates of the inaugural meetings had been circulated by email. He suggested that members should receive the minutes of each meeting, with the date of the next meeting.

Councillor Todd noted that he saw the local ward Sergeant frequently and was aware how hard the teams were working. He also pointed out, in the interest of ‘joined up thinking’ that Inspector Baxter of the Community Safety team was talking to Transport for London.

Brian Boothby recalled that the police had reported previously about officers on bikes and he asked how this was developing. Inspector Osborne advised that there were three more bikes. Officers needed proper training and a fitness test before using them, but residents would see more police on bikes in the area.

Councillor McGregor reminded everyone that on the second Saturday of every month there was a police officer present in Chiswick Library Community Room to note any concerns. The last time an officer had been there, he had stated that a large number of officers based at Chiswick Police Station parked their cars the opposite side of the A4 and walked under the underpass to the High Road. Hence there was informal patrolling of the underpasses at different times because of officers coming to and from work on varying shifts. He felt that it would be helpful if it were known that police officers were regularly using the underpasses.

A local resident spoke of using the underpass at Duke’s Avenue, but experiencing a problem with cyclists coming down the ramp. Police had been around and there was a sign prohibiting cycling but the cyclists had not been stopped. There was also a problem with cyclists using the pavements along the A4 and the resident asked what could be done to address this.

Inspector Osborne agreed that the police did receive complaints about cycling and this was an issue. He advised that Community Support Officers were receiving more training and could issue a fixed penalty notice. He was aware that there was an increase in cyclists along the A4 pavements and they would use the fixed penalty notices to get the message across.

Picking up on the point about cyclists, a resident was sympathetic to the problem raised but noted as a cyclist it was frightening on fast roads. It was suggested that there should be consideration of proper cycle lanes on pavements. It was possible with wide pavements to have areas dedicated to cyclists, including under the underpasses, as for example in Germany. There were benefits to encouraging greater use of bikes, but some present arrangements along the High Road had part cycle lanes with a track between parked cars.

The Chair agreed that the trouble was that the wide pavements were not continuous, for example there had been a loop of the cycle track around phone boxes in the past. He suggested that cycle segregation in underpasses could seem more dangerous. A barrier might contribute to the feeling of safety and encourage people to leave the lane empty.
In contrast, Councillor Oulds understood that the Head of Transport had advised against cycle segregation in most cases on the general street. The local resident raising the issue clarified that the suggestion had been a division on the pavement marked with a green stripe, not a barrier.

Inspector Osborne agreed that the issue of cycling could be double edged. On the one hand, it was something to encourage in the community. On the other reckless riding could be addressed by officers issuing penalty notices when necessary.

Jill Rustad had further comments about the underpasses. She had spoken to the Safety Officer at Fullers and welcomed what they were doing, but they were supporting CCTV for the safety of their staff. There were a number of big companies in the vicinity of Harvard Hill such as Porsche and BSI and Mrs Rustad was happy to pass on contacts to Inspector Osborne. The Chair suggested including Chiswick Business Park. Mrs Rustad also suggested estate agents might have an interest in making the area safer for future clients.

The Chair suggested that there was a problem with the low height of the ceiling in the underpasses. If the tunnels were twice as deep there could be secure lighting, but as the ceilings were not high CCTV could not be put in the underpass as it would be accessible to vandals. Hence CCTV would need to be mounted each end. Inspector Osborne explained that some CCTV would be in the tunnel for the underpass near Fullers. Councillor Todd agreed that this should be possible with very strong casing.

Inspector Osborne responded to an issue raised by Anna Jackson and Peter Eversden at the last meeting about zero tolerance policing. This had been introduced in Hammersmith and Fulham with penalty fines. Inspector Osborne had spoken to the Inspector in Hammersmith and Fulham and discovered that the zero tolerance policy was not involving the police but led by the local authority. He pointed out that zero tolerance raised expectations and did not work unless it was done fully. Local figures from the Metropolitan Police website allowed comparison between Chiswick Homefields and Ravenscourt, as adjacent wards. The figures for Homefields were much more favourable, so Inspector Osborne was not sure that the policy was working.

Concerns had been raised about pavement cafes. A Licensing Officer and a Police constable had visited Fouberts and as a result the half a metre encroachment had been rectified. The issue of High Road House would come up as a matter arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Anna Jackson, Chair of the Thornton/Mayfield Residents Association, advised that what had been brought up was not a zero tolerance policy but the fact that Hammersmith and Fulham had a blitz, which pushed criminals towards the London Borough of Hounslow. This had been brought up at the ward meeting as concern about a sudden increase because of the blitz in Hammersmith and Fulham. The important issue was a joined up approach with information passed between the boroughs so that Hounslow would be aware. Residents believed that blitzes worked well.

Inspector Osborne advised that there were informed and did speak to neighbouring boroughs so that they could be prepared, but sometimes the borough would have its own priorities to pursue so that it was not able to deal with displacement. He noted that the figures for September for Chiswick were better than for Hammersmith and Fulham.
The Chair thanked the Inspector for his report.

As the Chair had been notified of no Open Forum items, he moved on to the next item.

**Resolved:**

1. That members should receive the minutes of the Safer Neighbourhood Team Steering Groups with future dates.

2. That the issue of CCTV in the underpasses should continue to be pursued.

**32. Maintenance Management Plan for Street Trees and Highways Ground Maintenance**

See the report of the Director of Street Management and Public Protection – Agenda Item 6.

Rebecca Behrendt, Community Environment Manager, informed the meeting that this was the final report back on the management of street trees as now agreed by the Executive in June. The Chiswick Area Committee had asked to be kept updated on the progress of the policy. There was a new process and policy with CIP, as the contractors. CIP were approved members of the Arboricultural Association.

All trees had been surveyed to assess priority for works. A list was available and it was aimed to put this on the website. The list was divided up per quarter to show when roads would be visited. There were larger numbers of trees in Chiswick than in other parts of the borough and the aim was to try to increase the number of street trees elsewhere. The survey placed each tree within different categories, but work on all problem trees had been done already. Non urgent/medium risk trees would be looked at and there would be much work in Chiswick over the next six months.

Some trees from the survey were shown as not needing work and were, therefore, not on the list. Trees would not be pruned if they did not need to be. However, if residents and members felt that there was a problem with a tree that was not on the list, they could come back on this for Inspectors to visit and assess.

There was a problem for the limes and planes as large, mature trees. The situation now was for work to be done on them every three years; a vast improvement on the previous 7-8 years. Most of the work on these trees had been done in Chiswick and there would be return works in 2008-2009.

There were resources to undertake the programme, providing the department was careful to keep to it. The programme was the most efficient way of providing the works. The programme would be monitored to see if it was working.

Rebecca Behrendt explained that officers would be meeting with residents on site and working to explain the works on site. Residents would be notified before tree gangs came in and residents were asked to let officers know if this was not happening. All queries should be addressed to CIP initially. The email contact was com.serve@cip.org.uk.

The Community Environment Manager thanked the Chiswick Area Committee for support in the process of adopting the Plan. The Chiswick Area Committee had supported the
appointment of a Contracts Officer to monitor CIP and recruitment for this post was underway.

There would be surveys twice a year for health and safety. The Tree Warden scheme was progressing, with a training day being arranged. There was encouragement to sponsor a tree, with £20k available for tree planting. The Strategy was cementing how important street trees were to the borough and the works should show improvement.

Ms Behrendt invited questions.

The Chair believed that the Contracts Officer needed to be sufficiently sharp and tough to assist CIP and keep the works on track.

Councillor McGregor complemented Rebecca Behrendt on the work and presentation. The Executive had committed to the report in July. Councillor McGregor raised one point. He asked that the areas should be determined in square yards, not square metres, in line with EU directives.

Councillor Barwood raised the issue of new trees and the capital allocation for trees. She believed that there was a need to identify gaps where lime trees had been removed. She also suggested discussion on what type of tree would be planted as there did not seem to be a policy on species.

Anna Jackson, Chair of the Thornton/Mayfield Residents Association thanked Rebecca Behrendt and her team for their hard work. The Residents Association had been impressed with the way in which the team had worked with them and on site. The result was an excellent programme. The Chair acknowledged that this was high praise, given the problems in Ms Jackson's area with street trees.

Brian Boothby referred to a particular tree opposite his house that needed treatment. There was a notice on the tree advising that the tree crew could not do the work because of a car parked underneath. He asked whether officers had the authority to move the car. He also noted that where tree roots had been lifting the paving stones, these were replaced by tarmac, which overlapped onto the paving stones.

Rebecca Behrendt apologised to Councillor McGregor and took on board his point about square yards. Picking up the point about new tree planting, she advised that they would work up the list. There were issues with utility companies that sometimes prevented planting in the same place. The next most appropriate place would be sought and planting would be with an appropriate species for the site. They worked with Environmental Projects, who held budgets for tree planting and would take into account other issues related to the street scene, such as fruiting. Ms Behrendt explained that officers did have authority to move a car. This would be moved elsewhere, not towed away. Officers could get names and addresses of car owners from the DVLA if there was environmental concern about the tree, so that they could ask the resident to move the car. The department was trying to secure additional funding to have a vehicle on call to lift the car. They would not take the car away. Signing would also be used to try to persuade residents to move cars.

On the issue of tarmac, this had been raised with Highways and was done for cleaner edges. There were no other options and residents would appreciate the need for clean lines along the pavement. The other option would be to remove the trees, which they did
Mr Bateson, a local resident, noted a point raised at a meeting for the Chiswick House and Gardens Trust. Trees identified to be removed should have a notice to explain why they were being removed. There could be blossom, fruiting or even birds nesting, especially within the Chiswick House Conservation Area.

Christabel Ames-Lewis, a local resident, asked about the planting of green areas, such as flower beds up the highways. She asked if the reference to grounds maintenance applied only to trees. She suggested that there should be a proper plan for looking after all the beds along the High Road from Youngs Corner and the bed in front of ‘Est, Est, Est’.

Ms Behrendt explained that when a tree was to be removed, they would write to residents and to ward councillors, unless there were immediate health and safety issues, in which case they could not wait to consult. Apart from such exceptional circumstances, there would be communication with the ward councillors so that they had the information and they would try to inform the residents immediately affected.

Mr Bateson queried when the new system had been introduced, as in the last few months three trees had been removed in Lawford Road. Ms Behrendt advised that she would take this up and find out what happened. CIP should inform of works so that residents were contacted. CIP generally did not go near a nesting bird, but this could be a sub-contractor. Mr Bateson explained that this comment had related to a different road. He asked generally if there was a programme, whether tree crews worried about nests. Ms Behrendt explained that they did. They would weigh up the situation and move to the adjacent part of the programme to avoid a nesting bird; going back at a later date.

Ms Behrendt explained that the maintenance of green areas was part of the same contract. This offered an improved specification to the previous arrangements but needed more funding. Environmental Projects next project for the area would be to look for sponsorship of flower beds to improve the environment, with a view to having more flowers in the Town Centre. It was recognised that areas with shrubs could be crime hotspots and these would now be controlled to make them safe, with the aim to improve the look and overall impression of these areas.

Mrs Ames-Lewis commented that in discussion about improving street furniture, there had been reference to the beds along the street. She stressed that these had been let to go and pointed out that it was not simply a matter of planting but also of maintenance, litter and weeding and of careful selection of the type of flowers planted. She asked if these aspects would be covered by the contract. Ms Behrendt confirmed that his was covered. The Contract Officer would have the role to ensure that these aspects were covered. However, she explained that the contract did not equate to gardening and would not include regular weeding of that type. There would be seven visits per bed per year for maintenance. However, litter should be removed daily.

The Chair noted that seven visits per year were a great deal better than the previous arrangements. He confirmed the importance of discussion about upkeep before any area was developed, but recognised that if previously there had been seven maintenance visits per year, the beds would be tidier. The Chair also noted the idea that groups of residents might discuss which trees and species would be appropriate for their area and to be involved with planting and fund raising. He recommended this as a way forward to
encourage a sense of local ownership of the trees.

The Chair also proposed that members would like to meet the Contracts Officer.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That members would like to meet the Contracts Officer.

33. Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document for Local Development Scheme

See the report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate Policy and Regeneration – Agenda Item 7.

Members noted that this item had been withdrawn from this Committee and would be considered at the Chiswick Area Monitoring meeting on Wednesday, 24 January 2007. A memo had been circulated to members explaining the reasons for the withdrawal. This was an unfortunate situation but a statutory timetable needed to be met and to meet this timeframe it was necessary for the consultation on this item to take place in January.

34. Urgent Business

1. Water Mains Replacement
Anna Jackson, on behalf of the Thornton/Mayfield Residents Association, raised one point of urgent business. Referring to the programme of water mains replacement, she drew attention to a problem for residents parking their cars where driveways were blocked by the works. People with permits could park in other zones, but residents who would normally park in driveways did not have a permit.

David Palmer, Area Co-ordinator, was surprised that Thames Water was not able to provide off the road parking. He believed that there should be a temporary plate to enable residents to cross the works to their driveway. Ms Jackson explained that the work was done in sections. Part of a section might accommodate access to driveways where necessary but Thames Water could not guarantee access. She asked whether there was something the Council could do to permit parking as a temporary measure.

Councillor McGregor had taken the issue up with the Parking Management Office in the past. It was possible to buy a tradesman’s permit for £25 per month and he advised contacting Mr Hagan in the Parking Management Office to secure this. David Palmer noted that there was a Street works Officer, Mark Robinson, co-ordinating the work with Thames Water. He would report the problem back to Mr Robinson and get notice to Ms Jackson and members about an appropriate way forward.

2. Flooding and surface water
A local resident identified problems with surface water around the area, particularly on crossings in Sutton Court Road and pools of water opposite the Robert Dyas shop in the High Road. It was agreed to report this back to the relevant officers to investigate.

The meeting finished at 9:40 pm.