

SAFER CITY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY BOARD PUBLIC MEETING



Friday 30th May 2025

Minutes of the meeting held at the Guildhall at 14:00

Attendees in Person:

Judith Finlay (Chair)	Executive Director, Community and Children's Services
Simon Cribbens	Asst Director Community and Children's Services
Don Randall	Crime Prevention Association
Valeria Cadena	Community Safety Manager
Clare Saltiel	Community Safety Officer
Patricia Smith	Community and Children's Services Business Support
Charles Smart	Policy Officer Police Authority Board
Diane Dunkley	Destination City

Attendees Online:

Gavin Stedman	Director of Port Health and Public Protection
Helen Isaac	City of London Police
Lorenzo Conigliaro	City of London Police
Ian Hughes	Director of City Operations in Environment
Jack Joslin	Head of Central Funding and Charity Management Team
Richard Riley	Director of City of London Police Authority Team
Zoe Dhami	Strategy Officer Community & Children's Services
Henry Johnstone	Deputising for Paul Hewitt of City BIDS
James Chapman	Fire Commander for City of London Fire Brigade

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Judith Finlay, (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting including the residents and businesses be watching online. She confirmed that the first

part of the meeting is in public and only needs to sit in public once a year. Everyone introduced themselves for the benefit of all in attendance including the attendees joining remotely and on YouTube.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Stephanie Salmon from Probation Services and Paul Hewitt from City BIDs - Primera Group.

4. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The Chair reviewed the minutes of the previous SCP internal meeting to ensure their accuracy. This was agreed as accurate.

5. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Actions Tracker was reviewed in detail. All actions were examined, with status updates noted—some actions have been closed, while others remain ongoing. All updates have been recorded in the Actions Tracker.

6. SCP DRAFT STRATEGY 2025-2029

Valeria Cadena introduced the new Strategy for the Safer City Partnership (SCP), beginning with background information to help the public understand the Partnership's purpose and membership. She explained that the government established this initiative to encourage collaborative working, as no single agency can tackle these issues alone. The Partnership focuses on addressing, responding to, and reducing crime and disorder to ensure our communities remain safe and secure.

The vision is to keep the Square Mile a safe place to live, learn, work, and visit.

There are five statutory members who are responsible for creating this Safer City Partnership Strategy Board:

- City of London Corporation
- City of London Police
- NHS Integrated Care Board
- National Probation Service
- London Fire Brigade

The key achievements of the 2022–2025 strategy included improvements in victim support, addressing major crime issues within the City, and

creating safer spaces. These outcomes were achieved through effective collaboration among the Partners.

The new 2025-2029 Strategy's main focus areas are, violence against women and girls (VAWG), serious violence (SV), antisocial behaviour (ASB), and acquisitive crime (AC). The Strategy includes principles of effective partnerships, evidence-led actions, and prevention-focused interventions. Each focus area will have a delivery group responsible for implementation and monitoring of initiatives.

Simon Cribbens summarised feedback from the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee (CDSC), highlighting the need for stronger partnership emphasis, case studies, and clearer communication of impacts and milestones.

- The issues of cycling and bikes continue to be a problem as they are used in acquisitive crime. This will be brought back to the CDSC committee so they can look at the work currently being done by the partners.
- It seems that some Members, when reading the document, didn't fully grasp that it is fundamentally a partnership strategy. This message didn't come across strongly, so suggestions were made to strengthen the introduction to make that clearer. Clearer communication of impacts and milestones was recommended to show the difference made by actions taken.
- Don Randall and Richard Riley suggested improvements to the strategy document, including a stronger introduction, shrinking the document further and specificity about outcomes and milestones to track progress and provide assurance.
- Richard acknowledged that Simon had accurately captured the previous day's discussion, particularly the Police Authority Board Chair's concern that the partnership aspect of the strategy wasn't clearly conveyed. Richard suggested that he and Charles have a role in addressing this, possibly through clearer documentation. He recommended condensing the strategy, ideally into a single-page summary—to improve clarity and focus, referencing the “elevator pitch” concept. He also emphasised the importance of prioritisation, noting that while the strategy outlines four key areas, it should also clearly define the intended outcomes (ends), the approach (ways), and the resources (means). Finally, he stressed the

need for specific milestones and objectives to help Members track progress and provide assurance.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Zoe Dhami explained that an online survey was distributed via several mailing lists, public postings, and Member briefings. Additionally, four drop-in sessions were held—two for the voluntary and community sector and two for residents—at Golden Lane and Portsoken to ensure geographical coverage.

Despite these efforts, the response rate was low, with only 12 online submissions. Zoe suggested this may be due to a lack of clarity about how individuals could contribute to the Safer City Partnership strategy, as well as general engagement fatigue.

Key concerns raised by residents included visibility, improved lighting, increased CCTV, and better engagement. Business feedback—though limited—highlighted the need for a stronger policing presence, the development of the ABCRP, and improved communication on safety trends. Common themes across all groups were visibility, transparency, and engagement.

Zoe noted that while not all feedback could be addressed directly within the strategy, much of it reflected work already underway. The strategy has been updated to emphasise clearer communication about existing initiatives, such as CCTV expansion.

Next steps will focus on enhancing communication, broadening engagement, and ensuring feedback loops are in place.

Richard noted that community engagement is currently a key topic across various parts of the Corporation. He referenced upcoming discussions at the Police Authority Board's Strategy, Planning and Performance Committee, as well as a recent Corporate Communications Subcommittee meeting where the need for a more joined-up approach was raised—particularly around using “City Belonging” as a unifying theme.

Judith acknowledged the shared agreement on the need for a more joined-up approach to communication, particularly given the City's small resident population and large business community. She noted that while

there is already a well-established communication structure within the business sector, the focus should now be on working with corporate and police colleagues to coordinate and resource a more unified communication strategy that supports the implementation of the Community Safety Strategy in the years ahead.

8. SERIOUS VIOLENCE UPDATE

Charles Smart provided an update on the statutory requirement introduced in 2022 mandating all local areas to develop a multi-agency strategy to reduce serious violence. This responsibility aligns closely with the membership of the current partnership, through which the strategy is being delivered.

The first strategy was published in January last year, focusing on three priorities: reducing violence linked to the night-time economy, tackling domestic violence, and addressing threats from a changing city—based on local evidence. A refreshed version was published in early May this year, maintaining the same priorities but introducing nine new partnership-led actions.

These include reviewing lighting and CCTV in crime hotspots, collaborating with the Destination City programme to design safer pedestrian routes, and improving modelling of footfall impacts. Notably, the City of London Police’s new policing plan now contains all police-led actions, allowing the refreshed strategy to focus solely on partnership efforts.

Charles summarised that the partnership’s serious violence strategy remains focused and accessible, with new policing measures outlined in the 2025 Policing Plan and significant additional resources allocated for visible policing. While the strategy provides a framework for coordinated partnership action, the real operational impact will come from the Home Office-funded Hotspot Policing Programme, which enables targeted, on-the-ground interventions.

Helen Isaac shared that the team is enthusiastic about the Hotspots Programme, which is currently in its final phase of training, focusing on five identified problem areas. Plans are being developed with analysts for rollout from late June into July, with a strong emphasis on targeted, partnership-led responses to specific issues. She also mentioned the intention to secure funding for further partner training later in the year,

potentially in more flexible formats, and encouraged colleagues to participate when invited, to ensure a shared understanding of the approach.

One of the other initiatives being funded this year through the Hotspot Response Programme is the continued expansion of Parkguard community safety patrols. We're planning to introduce a monthly tasking approach to support this.

The group confirmed that they agreed to note and endorse the plan.

9. DELIVERY PLAN AND GROUPS - New Chairs for delivery groups

Valeria outlined the delivery groups for antisocial behaviour (ASB), violence against women and girls (VAWG), serious violence (SV), and acquisitive crime (AC), including the chairs and deputy chairs for each group.

The group acknowledged the importance of including other interested organisations, such as the Crime Prevention Association of the BIDS, which has a strong track record in advancing community safety work. The aim is to bring everyone together to collaborate effectively. For the antisocial behaviour group, there is already a trusted set of actions in place, but the intention is to build on this further, especially in light of recent feedback. A key priority is to use clear, accessible language rather than bureaucratic terms.

The ASB group is chaired by Ian Hughes, Director of Operations at the City of London Corporation, and deputy chair Nikki Gander from the police, reflecting a joint commitment to tackling antisocial behaviour.

Ian described the antisocial behaviour group as an effective forum that brings together key stakeholders from the Police Authority, Environment, Community and Children's Services, and the City of London Police. Having worked through at least two action plans, he feels the group is now in a stronger position to narrow its focus and respond more effectively to the evolving nature of crime and behaviour in the Square Mile. He noted that issues which may have previously been overlooked are now being addressed, thanks to the strength of the group's collaboration and working relationships.

Violence against women and girls' group: the partners discussed plans to strengthen collaboration and focus across two key areas: the night-time economy and local responses to domestic abuse. The upcoming group meeting will be split into two sessions—one addressing safety in leisure and night-time settings, and the other focusing on how services respond to residents, particularly in cases of domestic abuse. The group will be chaired by Rachel Talmage, Head of Children's Social Care, and deputy chaired by Caroline Hay, a City Police Inspector with extensive experience in violence against women and girls, acting as deputy chair.

Concerns were raised about the need to address domestic abuse not only among residents but also within the City's large transient workforce. It was noted that domestic abuse in the workplace has significant economic and social costs, and that employers have a legal responsibility to support affected staff, even when working from home. The group agreed that this issue must be more visible in strategic planning and that businesses should be engaged in training and support initiatives.

The Serious Violence Group will be chaired by Lorenzo Conigliaro, who brings valuable experience and strong knowledge of the City. Although a deputy chair has not yet been appointed, partners—particularly from statutory bodies such as the London Fire Brigade and NHS—are encouraged to express interest in supporting the group's work. The group aims to strengthen multi-agency collaboration on serious violence, and Lorenzo's leadership is seen as a positive step forward.

The Acquisitive Crime Group is the largest crime in the City. There is still significant work to be done to support and complement the police's efforts in tackling acquisitive crime. The group will be chaired by Paul Southam, Chief Inspector at the City of London Police. Although he was not present, discussions have already taken place on shaping the group as a true partnership forum, rather than a police-led initiative, with input from organisations such as the BIDs and other stakeholders.

Helen Isaac added that since Paul already chairs an acquisitive crime group, it made sense to continue under that structure rather than create a new one. The focus now is on identifying and inviting the right partners to ensure broad and effective collaboration.

Don Randall raised the importance of recognising domestic abuse within the business sector, noting that it is a growing issue with significant economic and social costs. Estimates from 2022 suggest workplace-related domestic abuse costs the UK £19 billion annually, rising to £79 billion when including wider social impacts. Reports such as the City Select Committee's and the Workers Protection Act have highlighted this issue, particularly in relation to the City's 600,000-strong transient workforce.

There was emphasis for the need for proactive engagement from businesses and domestic abuse will increasingly be reported through criminal channels. The City's ambition to be the safest destination must include protections for its working population, and the group was encouraged to ensure this is firmly on the agenda.

Judith confirmed that we should be making better use of the capacity within the BIDs to support business engagement, training, and the development of practical opportunities.

10. COMMUNITY SAFETY IN THE CITY

Simon Cribbens provided an update on the review of the Community Safety Team, highlighting the need for increased capacity and the creation of a new Head of Service Role.

The Community Safety Team is central to the City of London Corporation's work and its ambition to be a safe city. A recent review of the team's capacity and structure highlighted the need to adapt to a changing context—shaped by initiatives like Destination City, the growth of the night-time economy, rising antisocial behaviour, and increasing expectations from partners and government.

As a result, the team will be expanded, starting with the creation of a new Head of Service role to strengthen strategic leadership and partner engagement. This role will help balance operational priorities with strategic goals, including improved communication, engagement, and analytical capacity.

While the formal process of creating new roles can be complex, interim support will be introduced to ensure the team can respond with urgency. Updates will be shared with the partnership as the structure evolves, and permanent positions are confirmed.

11. HOME OFFICE GRANT

City has secured £1 million in Home Office funding to support hotspot policing, which will provide the main operational resource for tackling serious violence on the ground. The funding will fund hotspot policing initiatives, targeting specific problem areas such as robbery, serious violence, and sexual offending. See Agenda Item 8 for more information on how the funding will be used.

12. CASTLE BAYNARD - Rough Sleeping & Encampments

Simon provided an update on the work to address rough sleeping encampments, including joint operations with the Police and the development of a risk assessment tool.

Simon highlighted the growing political and public pressure surrounding long-standing rough sleeping encampments, particularly at Castle Baynard and near the Monument. In response, a coordinated policy approach has been developed to address the antisocial behaviour linked to these sites.

This includes a protocol supported by funding for a fixed-term post—soon to be made permanent—to lead a joined-up partnership response. A joint working group, chaired by Nicky Gander, is actively collaborating with the police, cleansing teams, homelessness services, and voluntary sector partners. Recent operations have reduced immediate risks, such as fire hazards from abandoned items, and reinforced the need to protect both vulnerable individuals and the wider community from associated harms, including exploitation and serious violence.

This work is seen as a strong example of effective partnership in action and could serve as a case study within the broader strategy. Engagement with BIDs and businesses has also been positive, particularly around enhancing welfare support for those experiencing homelessness in the City.

The group expressed satisfaction with the progress made and the collaborative approach being taken.

13. PARTNER UPDATES

13.1 Don Randall from Our Safer City provided an update, highlighting ongoing efforts to align reporting timelines with relevant

committees and to use the current report to support both existing and future grant funding applications. Despite earlier funding gaps and staffing challenges, progress is being made. The board now includes 14 members, representing a diverse range of lived experiences, particularly in violence against women and girls and domestic abuse.

The team is actively developing steering and focus groups, as required by grant conditions, and expressed gratitude for the support received from the Corporation and other partners. Don emphasised the importance of partnership, noting recent recognition through two national awards for public-private collaboration.

Training and education remain a key challenge, particularly in ensuring businesses move beyond surface-level commitments. The aim is to create a one-stop shop for awareness and training resources, funded through current grants. Progress has also been made on the Safe Havens initiative, with the first church in the City now fully signed up and more expected to follow. Hospitality venues like The Ned are also being engaged, though their scale presents additional training demands.

An analytical tool is being developed in collaboration with Valeria's team and others, with plans to produce a quarterly newsletter highlighting hospitality trends and peak times. This data will support operational planning for both the Corporation and police, with tailored insights for licensing and enforcement teams.

Judith raised the question about the statistic showing that 50% of Taxi Marshals passengers are female, with a query as to whether this figure had previously been higher. It was clarified that this proportion has remained consistent, with around 44,000–45,000 passengers recorded and approximately 30–33% being lone female passengers. The team is also now collecting data on passengers with disabilities and children.

There was also interest in whether Taxi Marshals track how many people continue their night out at other venues rather than going home. It was confirmed that this data is being explored in

collaboration with Oxford Partners, who are working to improve the quality and usefulness of the information provided. Monitoring people's movement across the city relies on having enough individuals in a specific area for reliable data.

- 13.2** Borough Commander James Chapman provided an overview of current priorities and activities. With the warmer weather, the fire service is monitoring risks such as wildfires—particularly in areas like Epping Forest, which is owned by the City—and localised flooding caused by sudden heavy rainfall on dry ground. A letter has been circulated outlining potential actions and requesting support from local authorities if needed.

The service has been actively involved in partnership exercises, including a recent simulated fire and flood scenario at Guildhall focused on heritage protection. A live fire exercise is planned for July or August, and smaller exercises are ongoing at St Paul's Cathedral to improve coordination between security staff and fire crews.

While there have been no major incidents recently, the team continues to promote home fire safety checks, with online tools available for residents to assess their needs and request support. A key focus is the "Charge Safe" campaign, which raises awareness about the dangers of lithium-ion batteries in e-scooters and bikes. Guidance includes avoiding overnight charging, keeping batteries away from escape routes, and only using certified chargers. Additional resources and posters are available via links in the meeting agenda. James welcomed any questions and remains available for further support.

A request was made to develop a risk assessment tool to help manage fire hazards associated with rough sleeping encampments, particularly where wooden pallets and open flames (e.g. barbecues) are present. The aim is to create a scoring system that enables partners—such as outreach workers, street cleansing teams, or the fire brigade—to respond appropriately based on the level of risk.

Simon to reach out to James by email to seek input from a suitable colleague to ensure the tool is developed effectively.

- 13.3** Helen Isaac provided a verbal update on City of London Police, focusing on two key areas: illegal e-bikes and phone snatching. She highlighted that dangerous cycling and e-bike misuse are among the most common concerns raised during ward panel meetings. The City's dedicated cycle team has seized 326 illegal e-bikes over the past year, processed nearly 3,000 offenders for various cycling offences, and made 105 arrests. Notably, Sergeant Ford has contributed to a parliamentary inquiry on e-bike safety, reflecting the team's growing influence in this area.

She also reported on Operation Swipe, which targets phone snatching—one of the most prevalent crimes in London and the City. A recent intensification day saw collaboration with the Metropolitan Police and strong support from Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), who have invested in permanent phone-marking kits. Thirteen phone-marking events are scheduled for June and July. Encouragingly, phone snatching incidents have dropped significantly, with a 33% decrease in May compared to April, and a 47% drop compared to May last year.

Helen concluded by noting that these initiatives will continue throughout the summer and thanked partners for their ongoing support.

- 13.4** Henry Johnstone provided an update for the BIDs. He confirmed that phone-marking events will continue throughout the summer, with plans to bring them directly into business premises. BIDs ambassadors are also supporting the Brief Frame initiative through public and business engagement. The Aldgate and Eastern City BIDs have agreed to fund the taxi marshal service for another year, now starting at 9pm instead of 10pm.

In support of Safer City communications, the BIDs are maintaining social media activity and business engagement. A formal agreement has been reached to fund two St John Ambulance cycle medics every Thursday year-round, with increased deployment in December. This commitment will run for two years.

The Culture Mile BID recently completed a crime perception survey, which echoed familiar concerns such as the need for greater police visibility and improved lighting. The final report will be shared with partners once published.

On homelessness, discussions are underway with Providence Row to support their resource centre. Additionally, the Aldgate and Eastern City BIDs are working with Ross Morton and Night Time Economy Solutions to launch a welfare bus, expected to be operational by September and deployed around Bishopsgate and Liverpool Street on Thursday to Saturday nights.

Bridgwatch patrol funding is under review, alongside efforts to expand suicide prevention training for businesses. Finally, all BIDs have agreed to fund the Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP), which will include a manager, officer, and analyst. Recruitment is either underway or imminent, with the scope and priorities of the BCRP currently being finalised.

The chair thanked Henry Johnstone for his extensive contributions to the safety and wellbeing of the City's businesses, workers, and residents. Simon then expressed strong support for the continued operation of Providence Row, highlighting its importance as a weekend resource for vulnerable individuals. He noted that both his team and police colleagues often encounter people in need of support, and having a reliable service to refer them to—especially during weekends—provides reassurance and strengthens the City's safeguarding efforts.

- 13.5** Jack Joslin provided a brief funding update, noting the successful transition of Don's organisation to the S106 Neighbourhood Fund. This fund supports projects that benefit both residents and workers in the City of London, particularly those aimed at improving safety.

Jack also mentioned that a funding application from Bridgwatch has been received and will be reviewed through the usual process. He committed to bringing a summary of all funded projects across various programmes to the next meeting; to give the partnership a

clearer picture of the broader work being supported across the City.

Gavin Stedman expressed strong support for continued funding of the Bridgwatch programme, highlighting its vital role in suicide prevention, particularly on the City's bridges. As the Senior Responsible Officer for suicide prevention, he emphasised the value of Bridgwatch's volunteer-led model and its effective engagement with individuals in distress—not only those at immediate risk but also others showing signs of vulnerability. He noted that the programme is still developing, and that sustained funding is essential for its continued operation and growth. Gavin suggested a future committee session to provide a more detailed overview of Bridgwatch and its alignment with the City's suicide prevention strategy.

The Chair welcomed this suggestion and endorsed the importance of the programme, encouraging further updates. Jack Joslin added that he would ensure coordination with the City Bridge Foundation, which owns the five bridges connecting the City to London, to maintain a joined-up approach.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair shared the date of the next SCP meeting – 1st October 2025 at 1.30pm and the 10th December at 1.30pm.

Charles Smart raised a point for reflection based on feedback from members of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee. He suggested that, in light of the new strategy, it may be helpful to review how information is prepared and presented for the Safer City Partnership.

He proposed a simplified format that includes a summary of delivery progress and performance against the framework for each subgroup area. This would ensure that the same materials could be used for both the Partnership Board and the Scrutiny Committee, avoiding duplication of effort. Charles offered to follow up with further thoughts via email and welcomed any comments from colleagues.

Simon Cribbens responded in agreement, noting that he had previously proposed transitioning from a paper-based agenda pack to a presentation-based format. He had even shared a mock-up slide to illustrate the idea. However, he acknowledged that the team had not yet had the capacity to implement this change, though it remains an ambition.

The Chair thanked members of the public for attending and contributing to the meeting, and extended appreciation to all colleagues—both in the room and online.

The meeting concluded at 16.00.

The next SCP meeting is 1st October 2025.