



**2015 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
MEETING RESULTS**

District 1 Meeting
Carol Shields Auditorium, Millennium Library
May 25, 2015

A CULTURE OF SAFETY FOR ALL

MEETING ATTENDANCE	
Community Members: 23	
Winnipeg Police Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Scott Gillingham, Board Chair • Councillor Ross Eadie, Board Member • Barry Tuckett, Board Vice Chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenneth Matchett, Board Member • Don Norquay • Mallory Richard • Gwen Kist
Winnipeg Police Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Devon Clunis • Deputy Chief Art Stannard • Superintendent Bill Fogg • Superintendent Bruce Ormiston 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting Superintendent Gord Friesen • Staff Sergeant Andrew Smith • Manager Pat de Jong • Patrol Sergeant Nicole Sabourin-Friesen • Workload Analyst Jeffrey Wyman
Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Kehler • Josh Brandon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karn Gill • Fabian Suárez-Amaya • Erin Arcand (note-taking)

OPEN QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

- Can the Winnipeg Police Service send officers to Meet Me at the Bell Tower events more often?
- How is the Winnipeg Police Service responding to intoxicated persons who frequent the Central Park area and what is it doing to address the root causes of addictions and substance abuse?
- How do I get more details about the Winnipeg Police Service’s plans for preventing gang recruitment?
- What is the Winnipeg Police Service doing to restore the faith and trust of people who have negative experiences with the police?
- Do members of the Winnipeg Police Service receive training on how to assist people with disabilities and recognize the ways they might be particularly vulnerable?

TABLE DISCUSSIONS

The comments below are a compilation of the feedback provided in discussions involving citizens spread across four different tables. The Winnipeg Police Board used table discussions as a way of giving every citizen an opportunity to be heard. Where there is a number in parentheses, it refers to the number of people who expressed a particular idea.

1. During the presentation on the strategic plan, were there any parts where you felt the Board and the Police Service are on the right track?

- Chief Clunis is on the right track, but people who control the purse strings are still pushing a “tough on crime” agenda
- The strategic plan emphasizes helping vulnerable people (2)
- Impressed the strategic plan breaks down barriers between citizens and police
- It is good that the strategic plan sets targets
- Agree with the cadet program and the downtown safety strategy
- Like the strategic plan’s approach of Crime Prevention Through Social Development (CPTSD) (2)
- Agree with the vision of a Culture of Safety *for All* – making safety inclusive and accessible (2)
 - Especially the idea that all communities deserve to be safe, not focusing on “bad neighbourhoods”
- Like the commitment to engaging and involving communities (3)
- Like the focus on improving safety for Indigenous people
- Like the focus on police presence in schools, connecting with youth
- Appreciate the recognition of the mental health component to community safety, getting appropriate care for people with mental illness, substance abuse
- Support the plan for police to take a leadership role in championing crime prevention through social development
- Like the emphasis on restorative justice approach but it is a large change and the resources for the community groups are necessary. The public does need to be educated so they own the practice and philosophy so that if something does go wrong, the process is well understood and not “blamed.” Negative blowback on police could cause risk aversion in trying restorative justice approach. Police do have a role in promoting it, though.

2. Were there any parts where you felt the Board and the Police Service are on the wrong track, or that they are falling short of your expectations?

- Police are limited in their ability to deal with wider policy issues on poverty
- Would like to see more police engagement with community organizations
- Would like to see more police on buses
- Agree that the root causes of crime need to be addressed, but are police in the best position to do this?
- Not proactive enough, would like to see more use of SMART policing
- The strategic plan is very general (3)
- Not sure that community consultations of 80-100 people are big enough
- Would like to see a second, lower level of meetings, where details are worked on and community members have input into the specifics of the strategic plan (2)
- No mention of online harassment, cyber-bullying and texts – is there a role for police involvement in these areas? (2)
- No mention of cybercrime
- Youth need to be involved in the consultation and engaged with police. Often kids’ impressions of police are informed by negative interactions with their parents so we need mechanisms and strategies to address this
- Newcomer parents must not feel disempowered or discouraged from contacting police (some have fears about intervention by Child and Family Services and therefore hesitate when

disciplining children or engaging with police or other resources if their child is going down the wrong path)

- Police must realize the impact that being stopped and questioned has on people from other countries and cultures but also lower socio-economic backgrounds
- Advocacy for better methods/best practices of dealing with crime to other authorities and levels of government
- Education around the role of the board and relationship to the police – who do they answer to?
- The strategic plan should be more clear that the police are trying to prevent gang recruitment, not just suppress gang activity
- Unhappy that the business plan seems a closed process at this point, we would want more community engagement
- More engagement in the North End
- Strategies for reducing fear of the police among citizens, for example in West Broadway
- Relationships with Business Improvement Zones as a way of better engaging the community
- The Winnipeg Police Board could advocate for the police

3. Do you support the vision of the strategic plan, Creating a culture of safety for all?

- Consensus support (12)
- The strategic plan resonates (3)
- The focus on prevention is in the right direction
- Appreciate that the strategic plan is irrespective of neighbourhood (2)
- The strategic plan is clear (2)
- It seems well-thought out
- Happy the WPS and Board are saying these things – but is it rhetoric? Looking forward to seeing the plan implemented
- Do the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba support this vision?

4. Policing costs have increased across the country, including Winnipeg. What are your thoughts in regard to policing costs?

- Concerned that policing costs will keep increasing and eventually hit a wall – this is an issue for other public services, too
- Get more social workers involved
- Reducing crime through poverty reduction
- Closing community offices has not been an effective cost saving measure – should have more community offices
- More volunteer based community safety, e.g. Block Parent program; Daniel McIntyre/St. Matthews community outreach program
- Community surveillance programs
- Partnerships with other agencies can have big dividends in prevention (2)
- Developing the details of the police plan in conjunction with community members/agencies (i.e. those lower level, detail-oriented meetings) is part of that partnership (2)
- The police budget should take up a smaller share of the overall City of Winnipeg budget
- Police, health, education and fire department costs are all rising in Winnipeg
- Crime prevention should be a budget priority
- Cost not the issue, efficiency is

- The public needs to hear that only about 20% of police resources are spent on ‘traditional policing’ and organizations in the health care sector need to be engaged in responses to crime
- Spending 85% of the police budget on salaries and benefits means not enough for resources (technology) that could reducing staffing costs
- Overtime remains an issue: some progress but it is the same old story of police stuck in emergency rooms or more often court for wasted hours so other police have to work over-time to cover
- If social services/community organizations are improved/supported, they can take some of the “overflow” off the WPS’ plate. For example, there are some situations that could instead be handled by mental health workers or social workers that end up being handled by police (2)

5. One of the goals of the strategic plan is “engaged communities.” What would that look like to you?

- Advertise meetings better
- Safety meetings in the community
- Police taking the initiative to organize community safety meetings and events (2)
- People need to feel free to speak up
- Advertise the good things WPS is doing, such as Elder Abuse Awareness day
- None of the uniformed officers present at this meeting are women, and with the exception of Chief Clunis, none of the uniformed officers or staff people of colour – could this be changed for other meetings? (3)
- Can there/will there be events held on a smaller scale? For example, in different Manitoba Housing areas?
- When police engage in social development work, the community agencies who are doing the work are truly consulted and sign off on police initiatives
- Youth who are better engaged with police, even those in gangs already; they can be reached and we can’t give up on them
- Have the Winnipeg Police Service represented at meetings like this one
- School resource officers are a very positive way to engage (program is very successful)
- Police officers serving on community boards
- The Winnipeg Police Service partnering with local business improvement zones
- Police officers working closely and speaking with newcomer families
- Always looking for ways to improve the diversity of the Police Service
- The existence of community watch programs, like the Bear Clan
- Community engagement is qualitative and hard to measure

6. What should the Police Service do to earn greater trust and confidence?

- Need to do more to get in touch with young people
- One participant concerned about being followed by police at night, would prefer they make direct contact “say hello, we are just checking on your safety”
- Police should show more respect for people making complaints, especially Service Centre staff - one participant had a negative experience when making a sexual assault complaint
- Officers walking the beat
- Know the community: what are people’s names? What school do they go to? Who is related to who? Who is likely or unlikely to commit violent acts? Having this kind of knowledge would improve the WPS’ validity in the eyes of the community

- Attend more community events (3)
- More person-to-person contact: direct, but informal and casual conversations; for example, at this meeting, people felt they had the opportunity to ask WPS officers questions and talk to them about policies (3)
- Maintain the School Resource Officer program, have officers participate in activities and get to know the students (2)
- Community engagement that takes place in spaces where community members feel comfortable
- However, if police are spending lots of time integrating into schools and communities, they could face criticism; in order to participate in these trust-earning strategies, WPS will need to do an effective job of selling the idea to the public, who might be critical or think it is a waste of time and money
- Inhabit the areas they are policing: living there is an effective way to become part of the community
- Engage better and more fully with all different cultures, know who the different community leaders are, come to events when invited but is necessary to understand the negative effects of a bad interaction. It effects the whole community's view of all police
- Host community workshops around safety
- Speak out more: like the idea of a professional communications person as long as it does not impede honest dialogue (no spin)
- Educational workshops on crime prevention workshops

7. What are your ideas for making your community safer?

- Stronger sentencing for violent crimes
- More responsibility to social workers
- End homelessness, as homeless are vulnerable to crime; more safe places for homeless to go
- More services for people with addictions/chemical dependencies
- Police role as social worker important
- Mental health crisis and psychiatric services and at health centres need to be open 24 hours
- Children in the care of Child and Family Services should not be put up in hotels
- Need the over-arching strategy with all authorities engaged; political will is fickle so the need to build critical mass and get the public to tell the politicians to get with the program and not play politics with it
- Government agencies can adopt procurement policies that give greater consideration to business/non-profits providing employment opportunities for people with barriers to employment
- More street lights to improve safety and reduce property crime
- Beer vendors should not be allowed to sell single cans of beer in high-crime areas
- A sense of community in neighbourhoods, people using active transportation and spending more time in the community

8. What are the biggest safety challenges in your community?

- Environmental design – tree branches block light, broken lights
- Arson
- Homelessness

- Community trust
- Mental health issues need to be addressed, and not only by WPS (2)
- A lot of people with mental health issues are afraid to report crimes – how can they be made to feel safer about it?
- The beer store on Balmoral is a big problem, even though it is a licensed, legal operation, it is a problem (3)
- Harassment and violence is an ongoing safety challenge
- Murdered, missing and exploited women and children
- Child trafficking
- Addictions and untreated mental illnesses
- Traffic safety, especially at pedestrian crossings like Portage and Queen
- There are not enough supports to assist recent immigrants and refugees transition to life in Canada
- Many newcomers and Indigenous people in our communities have experienced serious trauma. Better supports are needed to decrease their risk of becoming victims of crime or offenders.
- Rude and/or intoxicated people downtown on nights when there are Winnipeg Jets games

9. When we report back on our progress a year from now, what do you want to hear?

- Honest transparency
- Another meeting in one year
- E-mail newsletter
- Updates on the website
- Where does WPS / the Police Board expect to be in a year?
- How far will you get in the business plan/details?
- Will there be a campaign to get this out? How will that campaign work?
- Will the strategic plan continue to receive feedback outside of these consultations? How will they do that? Will there be an online option?
- It would be good to see ongoing updates, instead of waiting for a year
- A reduced demand for police services
- An update that reports both successes and challenges, with data to support it
- It would be nice to hear that demand is down so costs can go down
- An update that compares what was promised to the results
- The Board's own assessment – does it approve of the progress that was made?
- Progress would also be about changing perceptions of Winnipeg, it's important to shed the city's reputation as "Most Racist City" or the "Murder Capital of Canada"