

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Planning and Consultation Committee** was held on 22 March 2007 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10.00am.

Present:

Chairman.... M Nevitt

M Bull, C Bulley, G Hicks, M Hicks, S Hughes and D Money

Officers in Attendance: -

Police Force Superintendent I Ansell (Force Performance Manager)[item 5 only] and Chief Inspector N Jarrold (Citizen Focus Co-ordinator)[item 4 only],

Police Authority T Kelland (Consultation & Community Engagement Officer), R Martin (Policy Officer) and J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive)[item 6 only].

PC/217 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from I Doggett, A Malcolm, S Malloni and W Thomas

PC/218 Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interest were made in respect of any item on the agenda.

PC/219 Minutes

PC/212 – The Chairman asked that the Director of Diversity be asked to attend the next meeting of this Committee.

PC/213 – The Chairman stated he would arrange to meet with the Director of Communications on a monthly basis.

PC/214 – Members expressed some concern at the apparent lack of communication to frontline officers and the public over the reconfiguration of neighbourhood beat teams. What could have been a positive story has been turned by some press and media into negative comment. This was a public relations issue. The Committee thought the Force should be more proactive in telling the public the changes being proposed and implemented locally.

The Chairman of the Police Authority advised Members that a Seminar was planned between some Members and the Chief Constable to identify and agree the distinctive roles of the Police Authority and the Constabulary. The Chairman suggested, and Members agreed, that the appropriate members of the Chief Officer Group should be invited to the next Police Authority Seminar to explain the methods being adopted to market Neighbourhood Policing changes to the public.

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2007 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PC/220 Citizen Focus

Chief Inspector Jarrold delivered a presentation on the work being taken forward by the Force Citizen Focus Unit. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Chief Constable is content to continue with the existing Vision, Mission and Values but intends to review them in 6-9 months time.

- Citizen Focus has always been positioned at the centre of policing strategy but has not been sufficiently and proactively addressed.
- ACC Hollingshead is currently the ACPO lead on Citizen Focus. Certain initiatives are underway in Force to deliver particular standards in service delivery. This included dress standards.
- Members stated that the Force should use complaints as a measure of measuring public confidence and satisfaction in addition to traditional surveying methods. Complaints tended to have a disproportionate impact on public opinion but can bring about constructive change when valued and used to improve understanding of customer needs.
- The Chairman of the Police Authority indicated that the Chief Constable is working on building on the Force's relationship with the press and media.
- The Chief Inspector briefly outlined the FISH philosophy, a management approach to create an engaging customer-focussed environment for workers and customers. The invitation was extended to the Police Authority for the full FISH presentation should it so wish. Members felt this would be too long and detailed for a Police Authority seminar. The Policy Officer was asked to speak with the Chief Executive about the matter.
- Members were presented with the Citizen Focus Action Plan designed to lead the Force towards top quartile performance within its BCU family.
- Members commented that the Action Plan appeared to be comprehensive however the key to its delivery was that it needed to be driven rigorously with proactive follow-up by supervisors and management.
- Members repeated calls for call handling performance to be improved as it remained of concern to some members of the public. Members were advised that the Performance Management Committee would be looking into call handling at its meeting on 27 March.

At this point, the Assistant Chief Executive joined the meeting at the request of the Chairman to speak about activity the Authority is undertaking to promote its work.

- Members were shown a 60-second promotional DVD summarising of the work of the Police Authority. This was produced by a professional film company and was screened as part of a public marketing display in Exeter and Plymouth during January this year. This cost approximately £7000 and whilst the Authority had no specific marketing plan, it was produced as a result of Member comment and lead. Members were reminded that they had been consulted before and during its production. Members praised the quality of the DVD
- The Authority is currently arranging for more promotional material to be prepared for distribution at public meetings and events.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Inspector for the presentation, expressing the importance of this work and of the significance this Committee and the wider Authority, placed upon it. Citizen Focus has a wide-ranging effect on service standards and performance across the organisation. The Chairman stated that the Committee would be seeking an update on the progress made against the Action Plan at a future meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The presentation and report was noted.
- (ii) That an appropriate person be called to attend a future meeting of this Committee to explain the progress made against the Citizen Focus Action Plan.

PC/221 Corporate Planning Process 2007-2008

The Force Performance Manager presented a report outlining planning arrangements for 2007-2008. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Minor changes have been made to the Annual Policing Plan following comments made by Members at the Police Authority meeting in February. An updated version of the Plan was available at the meeting for Members' perusal.

- Following the Authority's approval of the Plan on 16 February, the Plan had been sent to the Home Office by the statutory deadline of 28 February. The Plan will be published on the Authority's and Constabulary's websites on 31 March.
- Work towards this year's Local Policing Summary is well underway. Three Members of the Committee have been involved in its preparation through a Working Group, which will next meet in early April. The Summary will have a Citizen Focus theme. The Force Performance Manager gave his assurances that the Summary will be sent to all households, probably by the end of June.
- The Chairman voiced his concern that the Local Policing Summary for 2006 had not been circulated to all households. Members were reminded that they had been consulted on this decision which came about following discussions with the Deputy Chief Constable. Members thought that the decision had been taken during the Chairman's hiatus from the Authority.
- The Chairman of the Authority expressed his thanks to the Corporate Planning Officer for her work in producing the Annual and Strategic Policing Plans.

RESOLVED

- (i) The report was noted.
- (ii) That the amendments to the Plan following the last meeting were approved.

PC/222 Police Authority Consultation Update

The Police Authority Consultation and Community Engagement Officer provided a report to keep Members informed of current and planned consultations. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The staff survey has been made available to all staff. This will also be sent in paper format to those staff on long-term sick and on maternity leave etc.
There had been several technical difficulties in circulating and receiving back the surveys. These had now been ironed out. To date, approximately 1300 responses have been received. The results will be presented to the Full Authority as soon as possible after the closing date of 12 April.
- The Disability Equality Scheme Steering Group is planning a second wave of consultation, this time with people with mental health issues. This will help inform the Authority's Disability Equality Scheme.
- From 1 April, victim satisfaction surveying will be carried out by telephone rather than by post.
- The Chairman of the Police Authority argued that consultation with young people had been successful throughout the year, particularly in Plymouth.

Members thanked the Consultation and Community Engagement Officer for her hard work, particularly with regard to the staff survey. The Committee stated that the Authority needed to demonstrate how its consultation activity contributed to the actions and work of the Police Authority.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted.

PC/223 Police Authority Consultation Priorities 2007/2008

The Police Authority Consultation and Community Engagement Officer presented a report suggesting Police Authority consultation priorities for 2007/2008. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Members considered whether it would be sensible to await the production of the Police Authority Strategic Plan before setting consultation priorities. After some debate, it was agreed that the consultation priorities recommended in the report, Youth Consultation, Citizen Focus and Neighbourhood Policing and Complaints, would be agreed subject to Police Authority Strategic Plan. If the consultation priorities are out of line with the Plan, they could be reviewed.
- The Police Authority Consultation and Community Engagement Officer would prepare a report on how the three consultation priorities would be addressed for consideration at the next Committee.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted

- (ii) That the consultation priorities for 2007/2008 are (1) Youth Consultation, (2) Citizen Focus and Neighbourhood Policing and (3) Complaints subject to the publication of the Strategic Plan.
- (iii) That every effort is made, on every consultation target, to consult with hard to reach groups
- (iv) That an assessment is undertaken to identify any gaps in the monitoring systems used to identify and track how consultation results can influence and when necessary bring about change within the organisation.

PC/224 Police Authority November 2006 Public Survey

The Police Authority Consultation and Community Engagement Officer presented the key findings from the Police Authority's November 2006 Public Survey. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The results from the November 2006 survey are the most encouraging for some time. Whilst it is too early yet to class these results as a trend, the general upturn is to be welcomed.
- There is positive comments made towards Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and in particular, the rise in public confidence and satisfaction amongst members of the public who have seen or met PCSOs.

Members were heartened by these results as it displayed that the public had warmed to PCSOs and the Authority's commitment and investment in PCSOs was well placed.

- The Committee noticed that the issues selected by the public as the most important largely reflected those prioritised by the Force and Authority. Equally, the issues of most concern to the public aligned to those that PCSOs could have a real impact on.
- Members also commented that the issues raised as of concern generally reflected those raised at Police Authority Liaison Meetings (PALMs). This suggested PALMs might be more representative of public opinion than is sometimes thought.

The Chairman summed up by reflecting the Committee's satisfaction at this set of results after several surveys showing less promising results. These results stress the need to communicate to the public regularly, as the public are largely supportive of policing when they know the pressures faced.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted

PC/225 Diversity Action Plan

The Policy Officer introduced an Action Plan outlining activity to address in recommendations raised in the 2006 HMIC Baseline Assessment regarding Diversity issues. No one from the Force Diversity Unit was available to attend the Committee to present the report. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Members voiced their disapproval of no one being able to present the Plan from the Force. The Committee declined to accept the report. The report was also received very late within the Police Authority offices.
- The Chairman stated he would write to the Deputy Chief Constable to express his frustration that no one was available to attend the Committee.

The meeting closed at 12.40pm