

## Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

### MINUTES

A meeting of the **Community Engagement Committee** was held on 31 January 2008 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter starting at 10.00am.

#### Present:

Chairman.... B Preston

M Bull, L Dunn, M Hicks, A Malcolm, J Owen, W Thomas and C Wallin

#### Officers in Attendance: -

**Police Authority** A Buisman (Policy Officer), G Davey (Chief Executive)[item 7 onwards], R Martin (Policy Officer) and J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive).

**Constabulary** Chief Inspector C Downham (Territorial Policing and Partnerships Department), A Poole (Head of Performance and Analysis) and Chief Superintendent C Terry (Call Handling and Communications Department).

#### PC/249 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr G Hicks

#### PC/250 Declarations of Interests

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

#### PC/251 Chairman's Announcement

There were no Chairman's announcements.

#### PC/252 Minutes

PC/246 – "Dun" should be spelt "Dunn".

#### RESOLVED

Subject to the minor amendment above, the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2007 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record

#### PC/253 Neighbourhood Policing – PACT meetings

Chief Inspector Downham from the Territorial Policing and Partnerships Department provided Members with an update on the progress of Neighbourhood Policing in Devon & Cornwall Constabulary and in particular the Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings. Issues raised during discussion of this item included:

- PACT meetings were one approach that could be adopted. They do not suit all communities or situations and it was accepted different approaches were necessary. PACT meetings were proving popular in some areas.
- Members called for consistency in who was advised or invited to attend PACT meetings. Some County Councillors were not aware of the initiative and this was seen as a lost opportunity. Additionally, some Police Authority Members had not been made aware of recent meetings in their area. Members could not commit to attend all meetings, nor would wish to but preferred to be made aware of when they were taking place.

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) are due to visit the Force to conduct an assessment of Neighbourhood policing in the last week of April 2008. This will also examine progress made since the last

review in April 2007 when the Force was assessed as 'Fair'. Developments since the last review are being addressed under the direction of the Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing and Justice). The Force is satisfied that there are pockets of good practice within the delivery of neighbourhood policing in the Force area. These are also helping to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and assisting in crime prevention.

Members questioned how areas of good or poor practice in neighbourhood policing were identified. This was primarily addressed through the Force's internal Performance Management Review (PMR) process. This work will help the Force towards meeting the Neighbourhood Policing Standard from when the work will become 'business as usual' and performance managed in line with other police activity.

Members were advised that the new Force website was nearing completion. This had undergone a substantial overhaul to improve accessibility and engagement. The site will include the facility to search for local neighbourhood policing and community safety information by entering a postcode.

The Chairman summed up by reiterating the need to involve local Councillors where possible but that PACT meetings and the Police Authority Liaison Meetings (PALMs) may become confused by the public in time. The Chairman thanked the Chief Inspector for the report.

**RESOLVED:** To note the report.

#### **PC/254 Committee delegated powers**

The Policy Officer introduced a report seeking the Committee's preference for delegated powers, if any, to be designated from the Police Authority to this Committee.

It was confirmed that the responsibility of agreeing the policing plan lay with this Committee whilst the Performance Management Committee had the task of agreeing the targets for inclusion in the Plan.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to the Police Authority that the Committee is granted delegated powers to:

- i. Agree Police Authority consultation priorities
- ii. Agree to conduct a full equality impact assessment following a preliminary policy audit.
- iii. Call for the Chief Constable to report on issues relating to community engagement activity and, when appropriate, to consult, comment upon and monitor against action planning.
- iv. To receive, consider and agree action against reports from PALM meetings with onward reporting to the full Police Authority.

#### **PC/255 Police Authority Consultation priorities**

The Assistant Chief Executive presented report proposing topics for Police Authority consultation during 2008/9.

Resourcing implications within the Police Authority office have meant that only 2 consultation priorities can be managed during the coming year. This would fit with the Authority's new proposals for Panel meetings.

It is important that the Force and Authority should work together to ensure consultation activity is co-ordinated and combined where necessary.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to the Police Authority that its consultation priorities for 2008/09 should be "ease and quality of contact" and Neighbourhood Policing with an emphasis on "visibility".

#### **PC/256 Public Survey**

The Assistant Chief Executive presented a report providing the rationale for amending the way the Police Authority's Public Survey is undertaken and giving options for change.

The existing Public Survey methodology provides detailed information but getting the analysed results often takes too long to alter strategy and is not timely enough for performance management needs

The Head of Performance and Analysis advised that now was the correct time to review the Public Survey due to the necessity to gather information to help performance manage the targets for inclusion in the Policing Plan for 2008-2011.

Performance towards current annual targets 1 and 2 (overall victim satisfaction and satisfaction with victims of racist incidents) is partly assessed via telephone surveying. This new approach has seen significant improvement in results due mainly to being able to react to issues quicker and make changes more rapidly.

Members discussed the benefits and limitations of PALMs and PACTs. It was felt that further consultation activity needed to supplement this work to provide a wider understanding of public opinion.

The Authority does not have sufficient resources to carry out a wide-ranging public survey more than once a year. Members considered a joint approach would be the best compromise for the differing needs within the financial resources available. Members favoured Option 1 and asked for further detail to be provided at the next meeting of this Committee.

**RESOLVED** That Option 1, to undertake an annual large-scale public survey, is supported and a detailed proposal is presented to the March meeting of the Community Engagement Committee for endorsement.

#### **PC/257 Police Authority Consultation Update**

The Assistant Chief Executive presented a report updating Members on current consultation activity being conducted by the Authority.

Issues raised during discussion of this item included:

- The Authority's staffing resource for Community Engagement and Consultation activity equates to about 75 days during 2008/ 2009.
- The recent pilot of a Police Authority Panel in Launceston on 18 January 2008 was well received. Further Panels may be considered pending analysis of the format and results to be presented to the March 2008 Committee meeting.
- The range of youth consultation activity undertaken by the Authority including work at Plymouth and Tavistock Colleges. Consideration is also being given to establishing a Youth Independent Advisory Group.

**RESOLVED:** To note the report.

The meeting closed at 11.55am