

## Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

### MINUTES

A meeting of the **Community Engagement Committee** was held on 06 November 2008 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter starting at 10.00am.

#### Present:

Chairman Mr B Preston  
Members: Mrs L Dunn, Mr M Hodge, Mrs J Owen, Mrs A Malcolm  
Also present: Mrs L Williams (observer).

#### Officers in Attendance: -

**Police Authority** Miss A Buisman (Policy Officer), Mrs E Zoestbergen (Policy Officer) and Mr G Davey (Chief Executive).  
**Constabulary** Mrs G Simms (Force Consultation Officer)

#### PC/283 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Bulley and Sir Simon Day.

#### PC/284 Declarations of Interests

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

#### PC/285 Chairman's Announcement

There were no Chairman's announcements.

#### PC/286 Minutes

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2008 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### PC/287 Consultation Report for 2008

The Policy Officer (Community Engagement) introduced a report to inform Members of the results of all consultation events held this year by the Police Authority (of which a list was included in the report).

The Public Surveys have now been sent out and so far 2,500 have been returned. It is expected that this figure will increase as there is another week left until the deadline of 14 November.

The report included results of the consultation undertaken by the chairs of the Police Authority Liaison Meetings who were asked to seek the public's views on local policing summaries, including whether they had received them, read them and were aware of their relevance. Committee members queried the distribution of the policing summaries and whether there was a way in which the Authority could verify that the policing summaries had in fact been delivered to all households. They mentioned that it would be useful to have a mechanism in place that could check this as this is a resource and time intensive exercise. The Chief Executive said that he would contact Avon & Somerset Police Authority to establish if they are able to assist with this issue.

The Chief Executive pointed out that the statutory duty stipulates that the policing summaries need to be delivered to individual households and that publishing the information on our website only would not be sufficient. Furthermore, recent Ipsos MORI research indicated that 85% of people would prefer to receive information in a hard copy format rather than having to access a website.

The Chief Executive added that feedback received from the Panel Meetings indicate that the way information is presented in the local policing summaries i.e. by way of percentages, is seen as confusing and that there is a request for 'real figures'.

**RESOLVED** That the report be noted.

#### **PC/288 Police Authority Liaison Meetings and Partners and Communities Together**

The Chief Executive introduced a report providing members with factual information regarding the differences between Police Authority Liaison Meetings and Partners and Communities Together. He indicated that there are a wide variety of perceptions around Police Authority Liaison meetings and the way they relate and link into PACT meetings and that a debate with the wider membership would therefore be beneficial. This issue will be discussed at the PA Seminar on 21 November.

Members all agreed that a wider debate on this is needed and that it would be beneficial to exchange views. Members gave examples of the different formats in place in their local areas, for example, Exeter Community Forum, targeted Liaison Meetings and Community Partnerships and how these interact with PACT meetings. All the feedback received from people in our communities indicates that they want to discuss local operational issues rather than strategic ones, but community members are confused what to discuss when and at which meeting.

The vice chairman stated that by chairing the PA Liaison Meetings, the Police Authority is able to underline its independence from the Constabulary, which is an important distinction from PACT meetings. This view was supported by other members present. The Chairman added that HMIC would not view the disbanding of PALMs as a positive development as it is an independent tool in community engagement.

The committee agreed that guidelines regarding these issues would be of benefit, but that these would need to allow chairs of Liaison Meetings to be innovative and creative. The Chief Executive offered to prepare a script around this in time for the seminar on 21 November. The Committee also agreed that it would be of benefit for the Assistant Chief Constable (TP) to be involved in this wider debate.

The Force Consultation Officer informed Members that the Assistant Chief Constable (TP) has commissioned a mystery shopping exercise with regards to PACT meetings with a view to check their accessibility, how easy it is for the public to find out where and when they are being held amongst other issues.

**RESOLVED** That the report be noted.

#### **PC/289 HMIC Inspection of report of Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing**

The Chairman introduced the HMIC Inspection Report of Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing and highlighted in particular page 37 with its list of recommendations and a section on page 28 that urged the Force and DCPA to develop a joint consultation strategy.

The vice Chairman provided a brief overview of the report, summarising that HMIC's view is that there is plenty of good practice in this area of policing but that this is not sufficiently evidenced or publicized. This view was echoed by the Chairman who reiterated that the recommendations are straightforward and focus on improving evaluation, evidencing and promotion / publication.

The vice Chairman underlined the major role that IT will play in this process and queried the delay in the construction of the Constabulary's Neighbourhood Policing website as this will have a major impact on completing the recommendations. As lead member of ICT, the vice Chairman indicated that she would request an update on the progress made with regards to the construction of this website from the Constabulary. This view was endorsed by other members who also mentioned that in addition to IT, communication would be a major factor in this process and urged the Constabulary to adopt a consistent and corporate approach.

Members discussed how the Community Engagement Committee could scrutinise and monitor progress on the HMIC report's recommendations including undertaking the necessary reality checks. The Chairman suggested that he speak to Mr M Bull as Chairman of the Performance Management Committee to prevent any duplication of work and effort.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Assistant Chief Constable (TP) for his on-going involvement and positive contribution to the HMIC Inspection Report.

The Chief Executive mentioned that the Policing Pledge would be discussed at the PA Seminar on 21 November and added that it would be useful to incorporate these recommendations in that discussion, as well as the section on page 28, in order to provide an update to all Police Authority members.

The Policy Officer (Community Engagement) offered to meet with the Force Consultation Officer to develop a joint consultation strategy, which would ensure synchronisation, common standards and avoid duplication, but would still highlight the Authority's separate identity.

**RESOLVED** That the report be noted.

#### **PC/290 Working Relationship**

It was agreed that the working relationship between the relevant COG member, Chairman and Vice Chairman should be enhanced through regular meetings in addition to the Community Engagement Committee meetings and that the Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing recommendations should stay on the agenda of the Community Engagement to ensure regular updates on progress.

#### **PC/291 Planning Working Group**

**RESOLVED** That Mrs L Dunn, Mrs A Malcolm, Mr B Preston and Mr M Hodge be appointed on the Planning Working Group to oversee the production of the Policing Plan, Local Policing Summary and Annual Report. The first meeting will take place on 5 December after the full Police Authority meeting.

#### **PC/292 Date of the Next Meeting**

As several members of the Committee indicated that they would be unable to attend the next meeting on 22 January, the Chairman announced that the next Community Engagement Committee meeting would now take place on 30 January 2009 at 1000.

The meeting closed at 1110 hours.