

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Community Engagement Committee** was held on 30th January 2009 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter starting at 2.00pm.

Present:

Chairman Mr B Preston
Members: Mrs L Dunn, Mr M Hodge, Mrs J Owen, Mrs A Malcolm (Vice Chairman), V Pengelly and J Zito.

Officers in Attendance: -

Police Authority Mr N Jarrold (On Secondment to the Police Authority), and Mrs E Zoestbergen.
Constabulary ACC P Netherton, Mrs G Sims (Force Consultation Officer) and Alexis Poole (Head of Performance and Analysis).

PC/293 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sir Simon Day.

PC/294 Declarations of Interests

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

PC/295 Chairman's Announcement

The Chairman announced that Miss A Buisman (Policy Officer) was unable to attend and present agenda item 8 and 9 and it was suggested that the committee defer certain questions on items 8 and 9.

PC/296 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2008 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PC/297 Neighbourhood Policing Website

The Neighbourhood Policing Website is currently up and running. There is a crime mapping system within this site, which provides local crime levels (in comparison to the rest of Devon and Cornwall). This is an effective way for local people to find out about local issues/information/crime etc in their local community.

The government will use it as a tool to measure the Constabulary – e.g. keeping PACT and Pledge promises, hence it is vital to keep the website up to date. The committee then adjourned to look at the website which showed them information on beat officers, how to contact them and they were able to compare figures with the crime mapping tool.

The members highlighted the use of percentages over numbers and whether this was providing a false impression to members of the public especially when the numbers being referred to are very small but the corresponding percentages look extremely high. In addition it was stressed that updating this website was crucial especially with any public meeting dates. It was suggested that it may be a good idea to put dates of Police Authority Liaison Meetings on this website.

Many Forces went with a common provider and a template system was provided in order to ensure that Forces met the Green Paper deadline to have this up and running. This will change in the future and the new system will allow for greater flexibility, which will include national comparisons.

RESOLVED That ACC Netherton would ensure that the PALM meeting dates would be added to the website if this was not already done.

PC/298 Policing Pledge

The Policing Pledge was launched on the 12th of December. Next month there will be more media around this drive by a national campaign. A self assessment was undertaken on the Pledge standard and there was only one that was highlighted as being below standard (i.e. not meeting it) which was Area 6 (the Appointment System). This is currently being looked at by KMPG and the Quest Team.

PC/299 'You Matter We Care' Booklet

The key measures were satisfaction levels. Confidence levels were being measured by whether officers were being seen and how officers were treating victims of crime. In terms of performance last year the constabulary was flat lining and is keen to change this. Officers who deal with crimes were asked to use the booklet. The booklet provides information for victims of crime on crime prevention, how to deal with anti-social behaviour and provides all the contact details they need to contact the police. By giving this booklet out to members of the public the Constabulary hope to increase the level of service they provide to the public and as a result to increase performance and satisfaction figures.

The first indications of this approach are rather good especially coupled with the follow-up visit from PCSOs. (E.g. in case of 'thefts from motor vehicles' members of the public call up the crime number given to them and within 2 weeks PCSOs visit them with the aim of asking questions, and providing crime prevention tips. In addition, this may increase reassurance. The Chairman questioned that these booklets were for victims of crime and the information that was provided to them was preventative. The key indicator is victimisation and it is very important to have information for victims.

PC/300 Public Survey Results

The Head of Performance and Analysis wanted to clarify that the 08/09 telephone surveys were done on a monthly basis. The Autumn 08 Public Survey needed to be at a more local level and that there was an opportunity missed which hopefully can be done for the next survey. The 13.3% response rate should increase by the final report.

The top 3 priorities question referred to the Police in general and may affect outcomes, as the question did not specifically ask about their local area or local police. South Wales Police Authority has a precisely worded questionnaire, which is an example of good practice and should be looked at.

Members are to forward questions to Miss A Buisman via the Chairman and answers are to be distributed to all members of this committee. Discussion about how questions are put together and asked and how that affects outcome is needed.

The Head of Performance and Analysis stated that the Consultation Unit in the Force are putting together telephone surveys and surveys using a twin track approach. The ACC for Territorial Policing emphasised that the focus should be to link in with other partnership organisations and at a local level there should look at combining questionnaires.

PC/301 Joint Consultation and Engagement Strategy

Miss A Buisman and Mrs G Sims have begun to draft this document in response to the recommendations provided by the HMIC Inspection for Citizen Focus. Two options were provided to committee members as to how this strategy should be developed. The first is the traditional approach where the statutory requirements are outlined. The second more dynamic approach involves a more 'public facing' approach whereby it states how the public can get involved in what the Constabulary and Authority do and how both organisations report back to the communities with the results. The committee members agreed that they preferred the second approach.

RESOLVED That Miss A Buisman and Mrs G Sims look at redrafting the strategy using the approach that was agreed by the Committee. A regular item on the agenda will be added to provide an update on the progress of the HMIC recommendations starting on the 19th of March.

PC/302 Strategic Partnership Information

Mr N Jarrold was given the task by the Authority to gather information regarding partnership engagement within the BCUs. This was a similar request to the one sent by the ACC for Territorial Policing earlier that month. The evidence sent back showed that there was clear engagement in all the key strategic partnership agencies and a commitment for most of them either financially or through researching. The self-assessment conducted by partners revealed that partnerships meet the hallmark of effective partnership and there were no real concerns over governance and performance.

The information on Police Authority representation in these partnerships was limited despite an initial email sent out by the Chief Executive to all members. It was requested that this information was provided by Community Engagement members to the Chief Executive before the next committee meeting. In addition to this, it was suggested that the APA booklet on Partnership working should be given to all members as a useful tool for reference.

An audit is currently being undertaken on partnership working across Exeter, Mid and East Devon CDRPs and DAAT by a senior auditor in Devon County Council Audit Services. This report will be available for members once it is completed.

It was suggested that partnership working and funding arrangements are looked at during one of the Police Authority seminars as funding in the future will be given to the Strategic Partnerships and the Authority and Constabulary will need to examine how this is managed.

RESOLVED That the Chief Executive requests information on members' involvement in partnerships at the Authority meeting in February. The APA booklet on Partnership working should be given to all members.