

## Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

### MINUTES

A meeting of the **Community Engagement Committee** was held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009 in the Conference Room, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10:00hrs.

#### Present:

Chairman Mr M Hicks

Members: Mrs L Dunn, Mr M Hodge, Mrs L Williams, Mrs J Zito.

#### Officers in attendance:

##### Police Authority

Mr R Martin (Acting Chief Executive), Ms E Macaulay (Policy Officer), Mrs G Clifton (Administrator).

##### Constabulary

Inspector R Bartlett, Mr K Perkins, Ms G Sims.

#### PC/332 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Clayton, Sir Simon Day, Mrs J Owen, Mr D Percival, Mr B Preston.

#### PC/333 Declarations of Interest

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

#### PC/334 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that an additional item - the draft Local Policing Summaries had been included on the agenda. This item would be discussed in the closed part of the meeting.

#### PC/335 Minutes

Other than some minor typographical errors, the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

Updates on the following items were given:

- PC/329: the Partnership Strategy work was ongoing. An update would be brought to the November meeting. The strategy was due to be completed by the end of December 2009; the final results would be brought to the meeting in January 2010.

#### PC/336 Partnership Community Engagement in Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Inspector Bartlett gave the presentation. The following issues were discussed:

- Community involvement is closely linked to public confidence. Significant progress had been made in neighbourhood policing.
- The survey results were disappointing; few people felt that they had influence over policing decisions in their area.
- A decision was still awaited on the local government review. Devon County Council had set up a working group looking at the experience of Cornwall. Nineteen community networks had been set up mostly co-terminous with policing sector boundaries. Each area had a Network Manager responsible for engaging and bringing partners together.
- It was generally difficult to get the views of younger people. A recent initiative aimed at engaging pupils at a school in Exmouth had proved very successful; this should be carried out at other schools.
- Police Authority Liaison Meetings (PALMs) were not ideal as they are held in the evenings when younger people are putting children to bed.

- Local newsletters that had been initiated on the Isles of Scilly were now produced by most Neighbourhood Teams across Devon and Cornwall.
- More could be done to engage young people by using interactive websites, chatrooms, Twitter and texting. The Constabulary was looking at developing a Facebook site. The new Policy Officer had experience of this sort of approach. In addition, a Police Authority (PA) member was due to attend a digital marketing seminar and would share any notes or ideas with the Committee.
- The new Government Strategy "Here by right – every child matters" could be used to target young people through peer groups etc.

**RESOLVED** to note the contents of the presentation

### **PC/337 Presentation on the Public Services Strategy**

Mr Perkins introduced this item. The following points were made:

- This was one of three documents that support the 2012 vision. The priority was how to make the strategy real – "Inspiring trust and confidence in us".
- The strategy must address public service throughout all the different departments.
- The key indicators for satisfaction were:
  - i. Visibility on the streets
  - ii. Response in a timely manner
  - iii. Accessibility – knowing who to contact
  - iv. Taking notice
  - v. Providing a professional service.
- We need to decide what we want to achieve as outcomes. This includes breaking down the geographical barriers between policing sectors, training staff to provide good customer service etc.
- The target is to increase public confidence. The satisfaction level for the BME community was 15% lower than for whites. This gap had now reduced to 3%. The heart of the Policing Pledge is to treat people according to their need.
- Response times for 999 calls are good but for non-emergency calls not as good. Now appointments are made with callers so that they know when the officer is coming. This has resulted in a marked increase in satisfaction levels. The appointment system also reduces the number of open logs. Once the appointment is made the log is closed and must be re-opened by the officer to record the outcome. This is not necessary if a crime is recorded. They were looking at a target to identify the number of appointments not kept.

**RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report.

### **PC/338 Implementation of the Policing Pledge**

The following issues were discussed in consideration of this item:

- The inspection report had been received and the PA had an overall grading of 'Fair' for the implementation of the ten pledge points. In several areas the Force had been graded 'Good' for example in engaging with the PA in setting up the work of the Policing Pledge.
- Devon and Cornwall had been one of the earliest inspections and some of the work had been in the initial stages, hence the grading of 'Fair'. If the inspection was done now, six months later, the grade would probably be better as significant progress had been made in several areas. Only eight forces got 'Good' and none achieved 'Excellent'.
- The inspection report had only recently been received. The three strategy managers would liaise to produce an action plan template across all strategies; this would be brought to the Committee. The APA had published guidance on monitoring the improvement plan but the recommendation was that this should not be too bureaucratic.

**RESOLVED** to note the report

### PC/339 Police Oracle Item “Councils, not Police deal with Anti-Social Behaviour”

The following points were discussed in consideration of this item:

- The media had picked up a quote and suggested that anti-social behaviour was the responsibility of the councils rather than the police.
- Examples of anti-social behaviour vary widely from litter and fly tipping to drunken behaviour and children playing football in the street. It is the responsibility of all partners to work together to address these issues.
- Devon and Cornwall is one of the top ten forces in the country for dealing with anti-social behaviour. They have dedicated teams and work with partners and young people
- It was not always easy for a member of the public to know who to ring when reporting anti-social behaviour. Ideally there should be one point of contact to avoid a complainant having to ring several numbers. It was agreed to discuss this with call handlers and partners to try to progress the idea. Different agencies have different busy times so a shared approach might be appropriate. In Torbay there is an anti-social behaviour and graffiti ‘hotline’ that can divert the caller to the appropriate organisation.

**RESOLVED** (i) that the report be noted and the contents endorsed.  
(ii) that the committee promotes the contribution of local agencies and organisations together with the police in the resolution of anti-social behaviour issues identified by local communities.

### PC/340 Chairs of Police Authority Liaison Meetings

The Acting Chief Executive presented this item. The following issues were discussed:

- There was a duty on the PA to engage with the community and this was an opportunity to review how PALMs were working. There were three main issues:
  - i. Should the PA provide a standard presentation for the Chairman to do at each meeting?
  - ii. Should the protocol that new members do not Chair PALMs for the first six months be lifted?
  - iii. Should Chairs be moved around the region rather than stick to one area?
- Members agreed with the first two but there was little support for the third suggestion. It was felt to be environmentally unfriendly to travel unnecessarily and local members were more aware of the local issues.
- There was concern at the low attendance at PALMs compared with PACT meetings and the fact that there was duplication in the issues discussed. There was also concern that PALMs were not value for money. Research was needed into what we learned from the meetings and whether this was worth the costs involved.
- It was decided that all PA members should be consulted before commissioning a full review of PALMs. This could be a suitable item for a future seminar.

**RESOLVED** that the all members should be consulted over a possible review of PALMs.

### PC/341 Consideration to Exclude the Press and Public

**RESOLVED** that the items detailed in the table below be considered as closed items:

Agenda Item	Report Title	Relevant Act	Relevant Section
10	Local Policing Summaries 2009/10	Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information )Act 1985	Schedule 12A, paragraph 3, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

### PC/342 Local Policing Summaries 2009/10

The Acting Chief Executive circulated draft copies of the next Local Policing Summaries. The following comments were made:

- The PA had a statutory duty to produce a Local Policing Summary and deliver it to all households. The purpose was to strengthen accountability.
- In the first year the summaries covered the whole of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; the second year they were published for each local authority area. Last year there was one produced for each BCU and this would be repeated this year (2009/10).

The following amendments were suggested:

- On page 2 (third paragraph) "customer satisfaction" should read "public confidence".
- On page 5 (eighth bullet) add "and council" after "the police".
- There was some overlap between the PA pages (light blue headers) and the Police pages (dark blue headers). The use of "our" and "us" was confusing.
- Performance against targets must be included but this was not the most popular topic. On page 6 it needed clarifying that it was the "police share" of the Council Tax being referred to.
- There was no mention of developments or improvements in the summaries. This was due in part to lack of space.
- The telephone numbers on the back of the leaflet were confusing. The text number for the deaf should be in red to clarify it is an emergency number.
- On page 9 the Street Pastors article is blocked out. This does not accord with the theme throughout the leaflet that uses blocking for key bits of information or headings.
- Last year a "you said – we did" section was included to highlight what had been done.
- It was too expensive to check how successful delivery to all households had been last year.
- There were fewer photographs than last year but sufficient to break up the text. Photographs should have more relevance to the content.

**RESOLVED** that the leaflets will be amended accordingly.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1230 hours