

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Community Engagement Committee** was held on Thursday 12th November 2009 in the Conference Room, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10:00hrs.

Present:

Chairman Mr M Hicks

Vice Chairman Mrs J Owen

Members: Mr M Clayton, Mrs L Dunn, Mr M Hodge, Mr D Percival, Mr B Preston,
Mrs L Williams and Mrs J Zito.

Officers in attendance:

Police Authority

Miss J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive), Ms E Macaulay (Policy Officer), Miss G Bishop (Policy Officer), Mrs G Clifton (Administrator).

Constabulary

ACC P Netherton, Ms G Sims (Consultation Manager)

PC/343 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Sir Simon Day.

PC/344 Declarations of Interest

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

PC/345 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed Mr David Percival to his first meeting of the Committee.

The Chairman announced that it had been decided that monitoring of the Policing Pledge would be overseen by this Committee. Where topic areas were to be pertinent to other committees Community Engagement would pass them over but retain oversight. Discussion of the Policing Pledge raised the following points:

- The guidance provided was not felt to be particularly helpful; there were several different ways to monitor the Pledge. This Committee would decide how to monitor it in practice.
- There was to be a meeting on the 13th November to look at targets which would include the Policing Pledge. Results from that meeting would go to the full Police Authority (PA) meeting in February 2010.

The existing draft partnership strategy had been researched and some areas required clarification. The work was continuing and would be discussed with the Force over the next few weeks, as the existing draft was a joint strategy, with a view to presenting it to the next meeting of this Committee. Work with CDRPs would be included, as there was a legal obligation for PA membership of these bodies. Currently there was no formal mechanism for feedback from partnership meetings but as an interim arrangement issues for the Police Authority arising from any partnership meeting could be fed back to either the Assistant Chief Executive or the Policy Officer (Community Engagement) who would disseminate them as appropriate.

PC/346 Minutes

Amendments:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2009 be confirmed as a correct record subject to amending "appoints" in the final bullet point of PC/337 to read "appointments" and amending PC/340 to read "Chairs of Police Authority Liaison Meetings"

Updates on the following items were given:

- PC/336 bullet point seven – the social marketing seminar was due to take place on 25th November feedback would be given to the next meeting.
- PC/340 resolution – the proposal was that members would have the opportunity to give their thoughts about Police Authority Liaison Meetings at members' seminar. A small working group would then be set up to review suggestions and to liaise with other Police Authorities to see what they do. The next round of PALMs was already being organised and would go ahead. It was also important to seek the views of the new Chief Executive.

PC/347 Public Survey Results September 2009

The Consultation Manager introduced the summary report, which gave the key findings from the Constabulary's public surveys conducted between October 2008 and September 2009.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Satisfaction and confidence were still high but the latter seems to be reducing compared to other forces.
- There had been an encouraging increase in people's awareness of their local neighbourhood policing team and personal contact was now a more important factor than local media in influencing opinion.
- High level meetings were taking place within the Force to address the reduction in confidence by encouraging officers to talk to the public and tell them what has been done.
- Anti-social behaviour was ranked lower than speeding as a problem.
- Results from the surveys are fed into the performance management team and the strategic public services group who then task BCU commanders to follow them up.
- There were not big differences between areas; Plymouth residents were less likely to know their neighbourhood team but more likely to say that crime was reducing.
- The action produced from survey results overlaps with the Policing Pledge and is presented to the Performance Management Committee. Future reports to this Committee would include a few bullet points on the actions arising.
- Speeding was being tackled in three main ways:
 - i. Engineering – reducing speed through traffic calming measures in collaboration with the local council;
 - ii. Education – programmes that target young males and work with offenders and the Fire Brigade to use shock tactics;
 - iii. Enforcement – the roads policing units target accident black spot areas.
- Community Speedwatch is operational in most areas now. This either uses adult volunteers trained in the use of a speed gun who take the car details and the Force write to the driver with a warning or, more effectively, uses primary school children. This method (a) teaches the children about speeding, (b) impacts on the person stopped and (c) impacts on the local community as rumours of the programme spread.
- Of the revenue from speeding, fines etc a proportion goes to the enforcer and a proportion goes to Central Government.
- A recent marketing campaign showed the different agencies, including police, working together to improve a local area.

RESOLVED to note the findings of the survey and take them into account when considering future priorities.

PC/348 Confidence Surveying

The Home Office has introduced a mandatory confidence surveying regime for Police forces. This report briefed members on the requirements and the implications for the Force and the Authority.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- All forces have to carry out the survey and the questions asked will provide a lot of information. In each CDRP area 600 people are to be surveyed but there is now an exemption for the Isles of Scilly that can be surveyed in proportion to its population. The government rules about the number of people to be

surveyed do give rise to disparity in this authority area as due to the unitary authority in Cornwall only 1 in 1000 people will be surveyed compared to 1 in 100 in Devon where there is two tier authorities. .

- Results will not be directly comparable as, although Forces are required to ask the 'confidence' question in a particular way, there is no direction regarding other questions.
- Full funding is provided this year but the Home Office will not provide full costs next year for the additional staff and IT required.
- The new format proscribed by the Home Office will include 'Don't know' answers so it is likely that initially confidence levels will drop.
- Presentation of the results is crucial. Guidance is being provided at an event in January on how to publish the results.

RESOLVED to note the report.

PC/349 Joint Police Authority and Constabulary Community Engagement Strategy – Update.

An oral update was provided by the Assistant Chief Executive on the work being done to develop a joint community engagement strategy (which will include a consultation element) with the Force.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

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- Work is underway on updating and amending the draft strategy previously presented to the Committee and it is scheduled to be presented to the Committee in early 2010.
- The Police Authority and Force will work together when appropriate but at times will need to work separately due to their different roles and responsibilities.
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RESOLVED to note the report

PC/350 Consideration of 2010 Meeting Dates

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The need to schedule meetings at sensible intervals whilst still being able to fulfil a guiding role for the various annual publications
- Clarification is required regarding the January 2010 meeting date.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the meeting scheduled for the 21st October 2010 should be cancelled and moved to a date in July 2010
- (ii) The meeting scheduled for 11th November 2010 should be moved due to commitments for Armistice Day.
- (iii) Clarification is provided regarding the date of the meeting scheduled in January 2010.

PC/351 Briefing Sheets

Members agreed that use of briefing sheets to provide information was helpful. It would also be beneficial for members to write details of events they have attended etc. in the Members' Newsletter.

A general discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- The drop in confidence level was of concern to members. The Force had a Strategic Action Plan and a Communications Plan details of which would be presented to the next meeting.
- A newsletter was being sent to every house at local 'beat' level showing the local beat team and including a 'you said –we did' section. Also people were being encouraged to sign up to the Community Messaging System for more information on crime in their area and what has been done about it. A briefing sheet would be provided for members about CMS including how to join to receive messages.

- Partnership working is a challenge. Different agencies had different priorities for example in domestic violence; health prioritised treatment of victims, police in catching the offender and social services in caring for any children involved. An action plan had been devised as follows:
 - i. Safeguarding people – overseen by the Local Criminal Justice Board
 - ii. Children – overseen by the Children's Trust Board
 - iii. Health and wellbeing – there was no overseeing body for this.
- Devon Intelligence Hubs were set up to address the issues that contributed to the Baby P tragedy. This was caused by agencies not talking to each other. There is now a Harm Register that records how many times a particular address has been visited by any of the agencies; whether there is drug or alcohol use, mental health issues, children or domestic violence. From this information a senior social worker will assess the risk and if the house is visited it is by a joint team of police, health and social workers. A presentation on this initiative could be provided to a seminar or full PA meeting if required.

RESOLVED that the list of briefing sheets pertaining to the Community Engagement Committee be noted. .

The meeting closed at 11:35 hours