

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Community Engagement Committee** was held on Thursday 30th September 2010 in the Conference Room, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10:00hrs.

Present:

Chairman: Mr M Hicks

Members: Mr M Clayton, Sir Simon Day, Mrs L Dunn, Mr M Hodge, Mrs J Owen, Mr D Percival, Mr B Preston and Mrs L Williams.

Officers in attendance:

Police Authority

Miss J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive), Ms E Macaulay (Policy Officer), Mrs G Clifton (Committee & Meeting Services Officer).

Constabulary

Inspector M Backhouse, Ms V Goodwin (Corporate Communications), Inspector Paul Morgan, ACC P Netherton, Ms A Poole (Head of Performance Analysis), Ms S Rollinson, Ms G Sims (Consultation Manager).

PC/407 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs J Zito.

PC/408 Declarations of Interest

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

PC/409 Chairman's Announcements

- The Force Policing Strategy Group had started drawing up performance targets; there would be more information at the next meeting.
- The Local Policing Summary would not be produced this year, saving around £52,000.
- This would be the last committee meeting that Mr Hicks would chair due to increased Council commitments. The Committee thanked him for his Chairmanship and wished him well for the future.

PC/410 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

PC/398 – the Chair of the Professional Standards Committee had discussed incivility complaints with the Force. Under the new committee structure Professional Standards & Complaints would report direct to the full Police Authority meeting.

PC/401 – access to buildings. New buildings were assessed for Disability Discrimination Act compliance but compliance of existing buildings was subject to a cost benefit analysis. The Policy Officer would liaise with the Head of Estates to determine which committee/working group would follow this up.

PC/411 Comparison of Call Handling Performance against Most Similar Forces

The report provided members with some comparative data of police performance in call handling in relation to Devon and Cornwall Police's most similar forces. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Comparison was not straight forward as different emergency services had different targets. The best comparison was with Gloucestershire Police. Devon and Cornwall performed better on 999 and switchboard calls despite having many more calls. However, performance of the call centre was lower

but improving. This was due in part to the introduction of faxed crime reports that helped to flatten peak times.

- The use of police officers in the control room could increase the quality of service and in many cases reduce the demand for a visit.
- HMIC were due to publish Value for Money profiles in a fortnight. These would illustrate the investment in call handling and measure productivity then further work could be done. It was agreed that a sub-group of members of this committee would examine the report with the Force once received.
- Calls about PACT priorities were treated as prompt calls. Currently operators had to manually check the priorities for an area, which took time. Once the new STORM system was implemented this would automatically flag up the PACT priorities and also identify if the caller had called many times before.
- Another indication of improved performance was that in 2008 £300k was spent on overtime and performance was 46.45%, whereas in 2010 only £43k had been spent year to date and performance was 65.49%.

RESOLVED (i) that the report be noted
(ii) that a sub-group be set up to examine the HMIC report.

PC/412 How the Constabulary communicates with local communities

The report provided an overview of the Force's Communications Strategy with a particular focus on communicating with young people. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The next campaign was Halloween. This included information for retailers about the sale of, for example, eggs and flour, tips for children and young people on how to stay safe and printed posters for people to put on their doors if they did not want 'trick or treat'. This would be followed by a campaign on fireworks, which was also on Facebook.
- A magazine (Communicate) had been produced for all neighbourhood staff, which had been circulated to members. This provided a standard set of publications for use by the officers in their area.
- Future campaigns included a Domestic Abuse week based on young people and an alcohol awareness week.
- The Force had recently worked with Flava, a dance group, to get across various messages to young people in workshops. The children learned a dance routine and performed it in front of the school. During the process messages about issues such as body language, peer pressure, alcohol etc were subtly introduced. This targeted the harder to reach young people and had proved very successful. The workshops cost £39 per student but CSPs, local businesses and police teams had contributed to the cost. In comparison with dealing with a young offender the cost was minimal.
- Visits to Middlemoor had been arranged for children with special needs where they had their fingerprints taken, sat in a police car and the helicopter, tried on police uniforms etc.
- Evaluation of the success of the campaigns would include focus groups, partners and an assessment of crime figures.
- Each LPA has a Youth Intervention Officer working with the Youth Offending Teams. Beat officers and PCSOs regularly engaged with schools and young people. Regular seminars were held with Neighbourhood Police Teams about legislation and interpersonal skills.

RESOLVED to note the report

NB Ms Goodwin and Ms Rollinson left the meeting

PC/413 Anti-Social Behaviour Minimum Standards Pledge

The report updated the Committee on progress in joint work with local authorities towards the anti-social behaviour minimum pledge. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- A review had been carried out with partners focusing on identifying vulnerable people in need of support. A matrix had been produced to measure vulnerability against a checklist of risk. A 'script' had been developed for the call centre to enable them to identify those at risk. The new STORM system will aid identification of vulnerable people and action plans will be developed for at risk addresses.

- A recent family intervention project in Torbay that involved taking young people in vulnerable situations back home had worked well. It was estimated that by working closely with seven families around £700k had been saved.
- Cornwall Council had invited the Chief Constable to talk about partnerships. A pilot scheme had been run in Camborne with a curfew for children of 9 p.m. These schemes needed to be backed by evidence from the community and the police would support any such initiatives.
- For addresses that are regularly reported for drugs, domestic violence etc. a problem solving plan is drawn up with partner agencies and a named individual will take ownership of it.

RESOLVED (i) to note that all local authorities in the force area have signed up to the anti-social behaviour 'minimum standards' pledge
(ii) to note that the force has undertaken a review of its handling of anti-social behaviour. This supports the 'pledge' principles of identifying vulnerability and planning a partnership response to combat it.

NB Mr Clayton left the meeting

PC/414 Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing) Update

An oral update was given covering important items that had arisen since the committee papers had been prepared. Issues raised during consideration of this item included:

- Station Enquiry Officer (SEO) Review - there were currently 57 offices with 87 full time and 45 part-time staff. A public consultation had been carried out in each LPA and the results showed that 76% of the public wanted Saturday morning opening and others wanted the stations to open into the evening. There were four main issues.
 - (a) Accessibility - a footfall survey had been undertaken between 22nd and 29th July and the results modelled against the current opening hours. It was intended to increase the range of opening hours.
 - (b) Information – if a station is closed what information is available. E.g. interactive information points, wall phones. For enquiries about lost or found property the call centre has access to the lost property database.
 - (c) Internal supervision – an SEO has a primary role of responding to enquiries and secondary duties such as office work. There was a need for SEO supervisors at bigger sites.
 - (d) Modernisation – there was a need for investment in training, induction into customer care and ongoing personal development. A detailed report on the review would be submitted to COG on 22nd November and then brought back to this committee and the Diversity & Equality Working Group.
- There was a need to inform people that, even though the office is shut to the public, police officers are working 24 hours a day.

NB Insp. Backhouse and Insp. Morgan left the meeting

- Work was ongoing with the Territorial Policing Team around the Government's 'Big Society' announcement and the use of Special Constables.
- The success in Newquay in reducing crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour is considered nationally as Best Practice.
- Blueprint would be presented to the next Police Authority seminar. The Assistant Chief Constables would be operating a functional work model i.e. ACC Taylor - Local Policing, ACC Netherton – Response and Professional Standards and ACC Simpson – Crime.

NB Sir Simon Day, Mr Hodge and Mr Percival left the meeting during the following item.

PC/415 Consultation Update

The report provided an update on current feedback from community consultation events and an explanation of the short-term future plans (including an update on the Police Authority Liaison Meeting trial). Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- There had been a debrief to assess whether the events attended had been appropriate.
- Crime mapping on the Force website would be upgraded to street level in January 2011.
- The first round of strategic PALMs had started and were engaging people in discussion about setting police targets. Results of these would be forwarded to the Target Setting Working Group.
- Although the Policing Pledge will no longer be formally monitored by Government the pledge points would still be followed in principle.

RESOLVED (i) to note the outcome of the 2010 consultation and consider this at appropriate points of future decision-making;
(ii) to implement the survey consultation again in 2011, following a review/update of the questions and evaluation of community events;
(iii) that the Authority facilitate three focus groups in 2011 with diverse communities (such as BME community in Plymouth, deaf community in Exeter and young people in Cornwall).

PC/416 Review of Committee Risks

The item considered the risks allocated to the Community Engagement Committee to allow the Committee to make recommendations to the Risk Review Group of any suggested changes. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The new software once implemented would cover all risks. Members should flag up any new risks identified.
- The redesign of the website was ongoing. This would be updated with the Strategic Plan and the new committee structure.

RESOLVED to note the amendments to the risk register

PC/417 Briefing Sheets

There had been no briefing sheets pertinent to the Community Engagement Committee since the last Committee meeting.

The Chairman relayed thanks to the school and youngsters that had provided a video at the start of the meeting for all the work they had put in.

PC/418 Consideration to Excluding the Press and Public

RESOLVED that the agenda item detailed in the table below be considered as a closed item.

Agenda item no.	Report Title	Relevant Act	Relevant Section
12	HMIC Report into Anti-Social Behaviour.	Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information Act 1985)	Section 12a Part 1 – Any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

PC/419 HMIC Report into Anti-Social Behaviour

This item covered the report of findings from the HMIC following the review of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales. This included asking victims about their experience of reporting anti-social behaviour to the police and inspecting the quality of the processes that forces used in tackling and responding to the problem. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The inspection had taken place six months ago so some of the recommendations have already been put in place. The confidence limits of the results were +/- 10% so the statistics were not that reliable. However, mechanisms had been put in place to ensure that the findings in the report are dealt with. The committee would be updated on the progress.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1340 hours