

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES of a meeting of the **Planning and Consultation Committee** held in the Executive Conference Room, Middlemoor, Exeter on Thursday 2 December 2004.

Present: -

Mr D Money, Chairman
Mr M Bull, Mr M Hicks, Mrs J Owen, Mr W Thomas and Mr C Wallin.

Officers in Attendance: -

Police Force Chief Superintendent B Marsden (Commander, Strategic Development Department), Mr D Walker (Principal Analyst), Miss E Lewis (Police Authority Liaison Officer) and Dr T Lowndes (Force Consultation Officer)

Police Authority Mr G Davey (Chief Executive), Miss T Kelland (Consultation Officer) and Mr R Martin (Policy Officer)

PC/128 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Bulley, Ms N Dendy, Mr T Evans and Deputy Chief Constable N Arnold.

PC/129 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in respect of any item on the Agenda.

PC/130 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2004

PC/122 – Mr Thomas reported that the progress of FM contract negotiations had been delayed by approximately one month due to the threat of legal action.

Members questioned whether this would get relayed back to the Corporate Risk Register. The Principal Analyst stated that these procedures were in development and would be improved once the full roll-out of the register was in place.

PC/125 - The Chairman stated that the paragraph at bullet point one should be reworded to better reflect the issues being progressed relating to community engagement.

RESOLVED the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2004 be confirmed as a correct record subject to amending the paragraph under the first bullet-point at PC/125.

PC/131 NATIONAL POLICING PLAN 2005-2008

The Principal Analyst provided a report on the National Policing Plan 2005-2008 which was published on 24 November. The report highlighted key elements of the Plan that the Authority will need to focus on in particular.

The National Policing Plan has been prepared with significant reference to the ACPO National Strategic Assessment.

The five key priorities are:

- Reduce overall crime - including violent and drug-related crime - in line with the Government's Public Service Agreements.
- Provide a citizen-focused police service which responds to the needs of communities and individuals, especially victims and witnesses, and inspires confidence in the police, particularly among minority ethnic communities.
- Take action with partners to target prolific and priority offenders; and to increase sanction detection rates.
- Reduce people's concerns about crime, and anti-social behaviour and disorder.
- Combat serious and organised crime, within and across force boundaries.

In addition, all forces are expected to contribute to the national counter-terrorism endeavour.

Key points discussed in relation to this item:

- From April 2005, forces, authorities and partners will be able to align strategic plans. Police Authorities should ensure they reflect and support Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) agreed priorities and take account of Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) priorities in local planning. This is a significant extension to current arrangements.

The Government is concerned that some CDRPs are not delivering effectively. As part of the recent White Paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime', the Home Office has commissioned a review of the partnership elements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The aim of this review is to ensure that the framework for partnership working is fit for the purpose of reducing crime.

Members questioned what resources were available to assist in the increased emphasis being placed on CDRPs and to co-ordinate planning commitments. The Commander, Strategic Development Department, reported that there were business analysts in the BCUs and two staff in the Planning Unit at Headquarters. BCU plans will take into account CDRP plans.

- The Authority will need to ensure alignment between CDRP and local Force targets. Members will become arbitrators of targets to make sure they are set sensibly. Some Members suggested they would be uncomfortable with the Authority holding such a veto.
- Devon (excluding Plymouth and Torbay) is a pilot area for the new Local Area Agreements initiative. Local Area Agreements are part of a move towards a more locally driven approach to decision making about how services are delivered. The Government will issue guidance in due course on what contribution will be expected from police authorities. The Chief Executive to the Authority and Commander, Strategic Development Department, will discuss Local Area Agreements at a later date.
- Both the National Policing Plan and the White Paper place considerable emphasis on community engagement and citizen focus. The Chairman stated this Committee should regularly review progress of this. Citizen focus will become the over-arching principle in the delivery of policing services. All programmes and projects will be expected to contribute towards delivering this principle. The Head of Corporate Communications and the Commander, Strategic Development Department, are progressing a work plan to move this initiative forward. The Deputy Chief Constable is the Force champion for citizen focus. Members recognised that the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary is ahead of the game nationally with neighbourhood policing. This is thanks in part to the extra funds the Police Authority have made available.
- Members were disappointed with the Government's proposal to move towards a single-word overall grading for Forces (and, in time, Authorities) following the Baseline Assessment process. It was recognised that this is in line with other public service inspections.
- Certain aspects of police service funding are being reviewed. There is a view to moving towards three-year settlements, possibly in 2006-2007. A multi-year arrangement was proposed by the Authority, as it would assist in the planning process. Full account of this will be taken in the Annual and Strategic Plans and the target setting process.

RESOLVED

- i. That the report of the National Policing Plan 2005-2008 is noted.
- ii. That the Committee is satisfied with the work being progressed to contribute to the achievement of this Plan.

PC/132 DRAFT ANNUAL POLICING PLAN 2005-2006, STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2008 AND ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005

The Commander, Strategic Development Department, provided a update of the work in preparing the Annual Policing Plan 2005-2006, Strategic Plan 2005-2008 and Annual Report 2004-2005

Key points raised during the discussion of this item were:

- Much of the information needed for inclusion in the plan has only just become available.

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- The Head of Corporate Communications is contributing to the design and format of the plans. This added benefit would provide a more professional and consistent style to the documents.
- A meeting between the Chair, Vice Chair and Chief Executive of the Authority and the Head of Corporate Communications will take place on 3 December 2004 to discuss issues around the format of the plans.
- Members are encouraged to comment upon the draft plans whenever they wish. Any comments should be passed to the Police Authority's Policy Officer in the first instance.
- The Force Planning Unit will write the plans with the format put together by the Reprographics Unit.
- Targets for inclusion in the plans will be discussed at the Police Authority Seminar on 28 January 2005. The Full Authority will then formally approve the targets on 18 February 2005.

The Chief Executive reported that the current annual report is not statutorily compliant. It was stressed that this was not the fault of the Planning Unit.

The Commander, Strategic Development Department, stated that there had been very few requests for copies of the current plans. However, it will be necessary to print a small number to have in reserve.

Since the meeting it has been confirmed that the number of hits (from both the Constabulary and Authority website) to the current Policing Plan between April and November 2004 was 105,247. The number of hits for the Strategic Plan was 25,553 for the same period. It is not possible to ascertain from which website the hits originated.

Members discussed the circulation of the plan summary. It was thought that a publication such as 'Devon Talk' could be used to carry the plan summary. However, there appears to be a shortage of equivalent publications elsewhere in the Force area. The Commander, Strategic Development Department, will raise the matter with the Head of Corporate Communications.

RESOLVED

- i. That the report is noted.
- ii. That the Commander, Strategic Development Department, requests that the Head of Corporate Communications looks into the possibility of publishing the plan summary in 'Devon Talk' and other similar local publications.

PC/133 USER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

The Force Consultation Officer presented a report on the new Quality of Service surveys and how the results may be used to improve user satisfaction.

In April 2004, the Home Office expanded the requirement for user satisfaction data to inform the Policing Performance Assessment Framework. Victims of burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime, racist incidents and road traffic collisions are now asked a series of questions about their opinion of the policing process rather than the one question that has been used in the past. Also, a more sensitive seven-point satisfaction scale has been adopted to better categorise the results.

The results of the surveys are provided to BCU Commanders to allow them to address customer satisfaction needs.

Key points raised during the discussion of this item were:

- Devon and Cornwall Constabulary is a lead force in the use and analysis of user satisfaction surveys.
- The Force Consultation Officer is a member of the Home Office Technical Group tasked with progressing the survey methodology and was invited to speak recently at a national Home Office symposium.
- The Force has a high number of police officers and relatively low crime levels but some areas of low public satisfaction. The results from the Quality of Service surveys will be used, along with process maps, to ascertain the levels of engagement victims need to receive at different stages of the process to achieve high satisfaction levels. A police inspector has been drafted in to assist with this work.

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- The Performance Management Review process, led by Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing and Partnerships) is used to hold BCU Commanders to account for their use of the user satisfaction results. This is part of the wider cultural change the Force is promoting to ensure citizen focus is central to service delivery.
- Members raised concerns with training in public engagement. There is a need for greater responsiveness and feedback in training at all levels of the service not just probationers.

Members recognised one key issue from the survey responses was that some victims feel they are not kept informed of the progress of a case. It was reported that the 'No Witness, No Justice' and Accessibility projects will help address these issues. Also, the 10 Commitments to the public or 'Coppers' Contract', set out in the White Paper, will turn the focus of police service delivery further towards the citizen.

RESOLVED

- i. That the report on user satisfaction surveys be noted.
- ii. That the staff within the Consultation Unit are commended for their work.
- iii. That this Committee is provided with a progress report indicating the outcomes from the use of these survey findings in due course.

PC/134 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – POSITION STATEMENT

The Chief Executive provided a report on the progress with community engagement initiatives within the Authority.

Key issues discussed:

- The current plan is to hold two Police Authority Liaison Meetings per year in each BCU with the exception of North and East Devon. Mr Thomas reported that a meeting was held on 22 November 2004 between Authority Members and staff and the North and East Devon BCU Commander to progress the principle of holding liaison meetings at Sector level. The BCU Commander was enthusiastic to the proposals. The plan is to have one meeting in each of the seven policing Sectors per year. The software 'Mosaic' (a market segmentation application allowing targeted response or activity to a certain geographic area) will be used to help identify the topics the local community is likely to want to discuss. The Sector meetings could have agendas based around geographic, local or topic-based themes.
- Mr Bull reported that a meeting was scheduled with CDRP agencies in the mid-Devon area for 20 December 2004. The proposal would be to develop plans for consultation methods with the aim of rolling out the changes in April 2005.
- The Budget consultation is due to be complete by the middle of December 2004. There will be a slight delay in the business survey results.
- The appointment of a Head of Corporate Communications will bring advantages in developing publicity material for future community engagement events.
- Survey results from the Plymouth Respect festival were waiting to be analysed.
- The Authority is engaging well with young people in the Plymouth area. Members recognised the benefits to the Authority instigating consultation activities at Plymouth College of Further Education. It was recognised there is now a need to ensure this is developed in other parts of the region too. Initially this will be through an approach to the Local Education Authority.

RESOLVED to note the report on community engagement.

The meeting closed at 1200 hours