

# Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

## MINUTES

A meeting of the **Planning and Consultation Committee** was held on 15 November 2005 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10.30am

### Present:

Mr M Bull, Mr I Doggett, Mr M Hicks, Mr S Malloni, Mr M Nevitt and Mr W Thomas

### Officers in Attendance: -

**Police Force** Dr T Fensome (Force Consultation Officer), Inspector J Gale (Force Diversity Unit) [items 1 to 7 only], Chief Inspector D Lockley (Territorial Policing and Partnerships Department) [items 1 to 5 only], Sergeant S Mair (Youth Justice Partnerships Officer) [items 1 to 5 only], Chief Inspector J Meakin (Strategic Development Department) and E Townsend (Police Authority Liaison Officer).

**Police Authority** G Davey (Chief Executive) [item 10 only], T Kelland (Consultation Officer), R Martin (Policy Officer), J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive) [items 1 to 6 only] and J Townsend (Administrator) [item 6 only].

### PC/160 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Bulley and Mr G Hicks.

### PC/161 Declarations of Interests

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

### PC/162 Minutes

- PC/149 – The word 'effectively' should be inserted before the word 'policed' in line 7.

### RESOLVED

Subject to the above, the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2005 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### PC/163 Committee overview

The Chairman reminded Members that the Chairman of the Police Authority had asked that each sub-committee develop objectives for the short to medium term. To put this into context, the Assistant Chief Executive provided an overview of the work of the Committee and outlined options for aims and objectives.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Committee provides direction to and monitors community engagement. Consultation is just one strand of this.
- The Committee also has a responsibility to oversee preparation of the Annual Policing Plan, Strategic Plan and Police Authority Annual Report.
- It was considered important to raise the profile of the Police Authority and promote its work wherever and whenever possible. This would help the public to differentiate between the Authority and Constabulary. The Authority was in discussions with a marketing company to assist with this.
- Members felt it important that both the Force and Authority should be seen to be consulting and engaging with the public.

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- The name of the Committee is misleading and could be changed to better reflect its wider involvement with community engagement.
- Work continues on reviewing the Terms of Reference of this and other sub-committees.
- The Authority should recognise the importance of securing the public's support for Devon & Cornwall Constabulary becoming a strategic force.
- A consultation exercise is underway to evaluate public opinion to the 'Meeting the Challenge' agenda.  
A total of 23,000 survey forms have been sent out to households and businesses. A contract has been awarded recently to a consultancy to conduct a further 1,500 interviews with stakeholders and all staff. This will need to be completed prior to the submission deadline of 23 December.
- The urgency of this work, due to the strict timescales imposed by the Home Office, has meant that this Committee was not previously aware of this consultation.

After lengthy debate, Members agreed in principle, that the following four objectives would be the basis for further development. This would be taken forward by the Chairman and the Assistant Chief Executive.

1. Agreement of 2 or 3 topics for the Authority to consult on for 2006-7.
2. Improve accessibility of the Authority by raising its profile through marketing.
3. Review the format of, and deliver, the Annual Policing Plan 2006-7, Strategic Plan 2006-9 and Annual Report 2005-6 by the statutory dates.
4. Oversee and agree the annual targets for inclusion within the Annual Policing Plan 2006-7.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the oral update is noted.
- (b) That the four areas indicated above are developed further as the objectives for the Committee for the forthcoming year.

**PC/164 Force Youth Strategy**

The Chief Inspector Territorial Policing and Partnerships Department, gave a presentation on the Force strategy in respect of the responsibilities of Neighbourhood Beat Managers and Youth Intervention Officers for Youth Engagement.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Members suggested a reference to stop/ stop and search should be made in the strategy. Also, an organisational chart should be provided to make clear the staffing structure.
- The Force is reviewing the use of restorative justice outcomes. The Committee felt it would be useful for the Authority to have sight of this report. At a national level, the Home Office is looking at how restorative justice conclusions could be finalised as sanction detections.
- There is a balance needed between enforcement and engagement with young people. The views of younger people are important in delivering effective policing. This can come as challenging to the Force.
- Members reiterated the importance they place on Neighbourhood Beat Managers maintaining close working relations with schools.

- The Territorial Policing and Partnerships Department had agreed to assist the Police Authority in circulating stop and search leaflets to all school children in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This is possibly to be highlighted by the Home Office as best practice.
- Youth Intervention Officers and Youth Intervention Managers engage regularly with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.

The Chairman thanked the officers for their presentation.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the presentation is noted.

**PC/165 Review of Police Authority Liaison Meetings Pilot Schemes and Recent Innovations**

The Assistant Chief Executive introduced a report, deferred from the last meeting, informing the Committee of recent developments with Police Authority Liaison Meetings.

There has been general agreement within the Authority that Liaison Meetings needed to be improved. Much work has been taken forward but this is an ongoing process.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Police Authority Liaison Meetings had always been seen as a method of consultation. This may be the case but they are primarily a form of community engagement. The use and purpose of Liaison Meetings has been clarified.
- The drop-in meeting held in Paignton was considered successful, particularly with young people, and attracted good local publicity.
- The attendance by the public at sector-based meetings has approximately doubled over the previous format.
- Guides and action lists have been prepared to assist meeting administrators.
- Marketing material has been updated and improved.
- Liaison Meeting chairman will be asked to forward a summary of each meeting to the Police Authority office for inclusion in full Authority papers.
- It was recognised that, whilst this is still an evolving process, chairmen should be able to adapt the format of their meetings to suit local circumstances. The options identified in the report could be seen as a 'toolbox' of different approaches available to the Authority.
- Each BCU now has a marketing officer. These staff should be able to assist in promoting future meetings.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Chief Executive and Administrator for their hard work in the improvements made to date. He stated the Authority had recognised the need for change and real progress had been seen.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the sector level meetings continue across all BCUs;
- (b) that working in partnership with local authorities continues and special Police Authority Liaison Meetings be arranged for specific topics and areas as required;
- (c) that the Authority continues the arrangement with Mid Devon and other district councils for future meetings.
- (d) That further "drop-in" style meetings be arranged.

- (e) that Police Authority Liaison Meeting Chairmen consider arranging appropriate presentations for their meetings;
- (f) that following each Police Authority Liaison Meeting the Chairman reports the main comments and suggestions made at the meeting to the Police Authority office so these can be incorporated into the report for the Police Authority.

### **PC/166 Evaluation of Community Engagement with minority communities in Devon and Cornwall**

The Inspector, Force Diversity Unit, introduced a paper providing an update on the progress of the independent review into community engagement with minority groups.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Difficulties in reaching some minority groups has delayed the report. It is now likely to be published in late December.
- An interim report had been produced and had identified the need for a Race Relations Independent Advisory Group. This had also been recommended by the 2004-2005 Baseline Assessment. This may only need to be an interim measure to help manage consultation and engagement prior to receipt of the full report and pending the outcomes of the 'Meeting the Challenge' review. Initial approval for the establishment of a Race Relations Independent Advisory Group has been given by the Force Equality and Diversity Board.
- Problems had been faced in the past in establishing Independent Advisory Groups which are truly representative. To date, ad hoc engagement has taken place relying on Neighbourhood Beat Managers and community links rather than more formal structures.
- There is a need to produce a strategy for engaging with ethnic minority communities.

The Chairman stated he would write to the Deputy Chief Constable seeking reassurance that there were processes in place to consult and engage with different racial groups and the measures being taken to improve this.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) That the Committee note the progress of the review
- (b) That the Committee acknowledge the need for an intermediate Race Independent Advisory Group to help manage consultation and engagement as an interim measure prior to receipt of the full report and recommendations.
- (c) That the Chairman will write to Deputy Chief Constable seeking reassurance that there are processes in place to consult and engage with different racial groups and the measures being taken to improve this.

### **PC/167 Production of the Police Authority Annual Policing Plan 2006/07 & Strategic Plan 2006/09**

The Chief Inspector, Strategic Development Department, introduced a paper presenting the first draft of the Police Authority Annual Policing Plan 2006/07 & Strategic Plan 2006/09.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Much needs to be included in the Plans but the National Policing Plan has now been reduced in size considerably.
- The Committee recognised that the presentation of the Plans had improved over recent years.

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- Whilst recognising this was an initial first draft, Members felt there was a need for mention of 'Meeting the Challenge', Job Evaluation, the shooting at Lewannick etc and what measures the Force and Authority were taking to correct any mistakes.
- Timescales are short. The National Policing Plan is published on 16 November 2005 and the Authority's approved plans must be with the Home Secretary by 28 February 2006.

### RESOLVED

- (a) The Committee noted the contents of the report and draft template subject to further drafts making mention of 'Meeting the Challenge', Job Evaluation etc and what measures the Force and Authority were taking to correct any mistakes.

### PC/168 March and July 2005 Public Surveys

The Force Consultation Officer introduced a paper outlining the responses to the March and July 2005 public surveys.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Results from these surveys are presented to the Performance Enabling Practitioners Board and forwarded to BCU Commanders.
- The figures indicate that whilst the number of people who know where to get the name of their Neighbourhood Beat Manager has risen, the number of people who actually know the name has dropped.
- The percentage of people who feel that the police are doing a good job has declined.
- The sample is randomly selected and takes no account of demographics.
- There was a small drop in the number of people who were satisfied with the way their call to the police was handled.  
The Chairman raised concerns that there appeared to be a drop in performance in the area of call handling. This had come under close Police Authority scrutiny 18 months ago but perhaps it was time now to re-visit it.
- Members expressed concern at the profile of Neighbourhood Beat Managers. There had been a high profile launch a few years ago but the Committee felt the impetus might now be waning. This appeared to be supported by the consultation findings.  
Each BCU has its own marketing officer to promote Neighbourhood Beat Managers, their roles and responsibilities.

The Chairman summarised by suggesting that the Director of Corporate Communications should be invited to the next meeting of this committee to discuss what has been done to raise the profile of Neighbourhood Beat Managers and to address their apparent decline in recognition.

### RESOLVED

- (a) That the reports be noted
- (b) that the Director of Corporate Communications be invited to the next meeting of this committee to discuss what has been done to raise the profile of Neighbourhood Beat Managers and to address their apparent decline in recognition.

**PC/169 Force Structures Consultation**

The Chief Executive provided an oral update to Members on the consultation arrangements regarding the 'Meeting the Challenge' project.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Developments within the 'Meeting the Challenge' project were necessarily moving very fast.
- There was a need to consult stakeholders, staff and the public to gauge opinion towards future structure options.
- The project team felt it important that any in-Force consultation should be conducted by an organisation independent of the Constabulary and Authority.  
A shortlisting process had been carried out and a company had been selected.  
Consultation will take place with

- 50 key stakeholders through a telephone survey
- 1500 members of the public through a telephone survey
- All Force officers and staff

This survey will be completed by 6 December.

- It was important that, whilst this committee would remain briefed, a degree of separation is needed to ensure the independence of this work.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the oral update be noted
- (b) The Committee recognise that time constraints dictate that, whilst having oversight of this work, it sits outside the remit of this Committee.

The meeting closed at 1335 hours.