

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Performance Management Committee** was held on Tuesday 24 January 2006 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10.00 am.

Present:

Chairman.....Mrs J Owen
Mr C Bulley, Mr J Currie, Mr M Hicks, Mr D Money and Mr C Wallin

Officers in Attendance: -

Police Force Superintendent I Ansell (Force Performance Manager), R Bullock (Force Performance Analyst), Chief Superintendent R Spencer (Commander, Call Management and Communications Department) and E Townsend (Police Authority Liaison Officer).

Police Authority R Martin (Policy Officer) and E Zoestbergen (Policy Officer).

Guests Liz Cheng (PA Consulting).

PM/378 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Bull, Sir S Day, Mr S Malloni and Mr W Thomas.

PM/379 Declarations of Interests

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

PM/380 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held 9 December 2005 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PM/381 Call Management and Communications Department Update

The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department delivered a presentation on current issues and performance focussing on emergency and non-emergency call handling.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Current performance (1 April to 31 December 2005) for emergency calls is 88.24% answered within 10 seconds. This is just below the target of 90% in 10 seconds. The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department, was confident this target would be met by year-end.
- The Call Management and Communications Department face challenges in the summer months when the population of Devon and Cornwall rises from 1.8 million to 8 million.
- The Department is working with BT to reduce the duration of some calls which could see substantial cost savings.
- The Force Enquiry Centre was 26 staff under strength in the summer of 2005. This led to a drop in performance levels that the Department is still recovering from.
- There are difficulties in attracting staff. This is partly due to the unsociable hours and high levels of employment, particularly in Exeter. There has traditionally been a high level of turnover within the Department. The Management Team is looking to strengthen career progression opportunities and investigating other employment options within the Department in an attempt to retain more staff.

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- There are no plans for growth in staff numbers for 2006/7. The Department will instead focus on reducing demand to free-up capacity. For example, 10% of 999 calls are accidental activations (mainly from mobile 'phones). The number of in-bound lines has doubled from 12 to 24 across the two call centres at Exeter and Plymouth.
- The Department is utilising the QMAX demand management system. This allows a more accurate allocation of resources at busy times. The more historical information that is loaded into the system, the more accurate it will become.
- The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department stressed the importance they put on providing a service that allows the caller to speak to a person. The system does not use 'on hold' music or queue waiting-time information as their research suggests this is not popular.
- The switchboard is answering 91.6% of calls within 30 seconds. Whilst this is good performance, there remains a problem with the huge number of calls (451,760 - 1 April to 31 December 2005) that are then directed to the Force Enquiry Centre.
- The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department, outlined a proposal that would alter the way incident and crime logs are managed by the Force. This would restrict access to OIS (Operational Information System) logs only to officers of a specific rank or role. It has been anticipated this could lead to significant time-savings for officers. However, this will require a change in the culture of the control room environment and will greatly impact on other areas of Force business.
- Existing call handling systems are arranged to best manage emergency calls. 95% of calls are non-emergency therefore the Force needs to look at how it handles the majority of its incoming calls.
BCU Commanders are reported to be keen on the proposal.

Members asked for clarity regarding the way the public can contact individual Neighbourhood Beat Managers. The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department, stated that Neighbourhood Beat Managers' details change regularly and keeping records up-to-date is problematic.

There is a policy decision needed by the Force as to whether Neighbourhood Beat Managers can be contacted by the public via their Airwave handsets.

Members were interested in the Department's response to the HMIC thematic report 'First Contact'. The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department, stated that a response had been forwarded to the Chief Constable for her consideration.

The Chairman asked that the executive summary of 'First Contact' be made available for all Members of this Committee. Additionally, the progress against the issues raised in the report should be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

The Chairman thanked the Commander, Call Management and Communications Department, for his report and called for the same presentation to be made to the full Authority at a suitable time.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Committee notes the report
- b) A similar presentation is provided to the full Police Authority at a suitable time.

PM/382 Continuous Improvement Database

The Force Performance Manager presented a paper on the progress of recommendations held on the Continuous Improvement Database within the Strategic Development Department.

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The format of the report has been amended slightly following a meeting between the Chairman, Policy Officer and Continuous Improvement Database administrator.

The report focused on Best Value Reviews, domestic violence and forensic recommendations.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Crime Issues - The performance indicator regarding victim and witness support has been determined.
- Leadership - The 360-degree appraisal scheme for chief officers has been postponed until the new PDR (Performance and Development Review) is in use.
- Traffic – The target for reducing road collisions has been proposed with supporting performance indicators beneath.
- The implications of the 'Meeting the Challenge' project will impact upon some of the recommendations within the database. Recommendations will need to be assessed for their relevance in contributing to this work.
- The Corporate Risk Register and Continuous Improvement Database are linked through the allocation of reference numbers.

Members agreed it is important for future reports to continue to include updates on progress toward the Baselines Assessment recommendations. The Policy Officer explained that whilst this committee would keep an eye on general progress, each of the Police Authority committees would be provided with the appropriate recommendations for monitoring. Additionally, the full Authority would be updated on progress at its meeting on 5 May 2006.

The Chairman thanked staff for their work in developing the format of the report. Members were invited to suggest themes for future Continuous Improvement Database update reports.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted.

PM/383 Performance against the Annual Policing Plan (Targets)

The Force Performance Analyst delivered a presentation on certain elements of Force performance for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 December 2005.

14 of the 17 targets are forecast to be achieved by year-end. The targets for domestic violence detections and anti-social behaviour will not be met.

Forensics

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Attendance at burglary scenes is improving since the extra focus on forensics performance began in July 2005. BCU Commanders have discretion over the number of domestic burglary scenes that are visited by investigators.
Caution is needed when comparing the Constabulary to others as not all forces use the same definitions for a crime scene or repeat visits. This is why some forces report scene attendance as greater than 100%.
- The conversion rates for fingerprint and DNA identifications into detections were discussed. Clarity is needed from BCU Crime Managers to why some of these are not actioned.

Members recognised the steady improvements in forensics performance over the last 10 months whilst recognising there was much further still to go. The Chairman accepted this whilst reiterating that the Force was still in a poor position and had started improving from a low base. The Force Performance Analyst suggested that further improvement should be seen once the new crime scene managers are in

place. Also the corporate use of data and systems now allows performance management to individual officer/ staff level.

Sanction Detections

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Each BCU is improving in sanction detection performance. South and West Devon BCU's improvement is not significant and it remains at the bottom of its family of similar BCUs.
- The Force issues a greater number cautions than other Forces. The reasons for this are being explored. TICs (taken into consideration) offences generally relate to burglaries although there is some reluctance to accept them in court.
- Sanction detections for violent crime are improving but low. In 80% of cases the offender is known so work is needed to determine why these do not transfer to detections.
- Detection rates should be viewed with regard to the 'green lights' received for crime recording standards.
- Statutory charging tends to have a negative impact on detection rates however this affects all forces.
- The Sanction Detection Working Group adopted the Police Standards Unit best practice model. This focuses on:
 - Processes – ensuring all staff know how the systems work and when to use them
 - People – training staff with the correct skills
 - Partnerships – working efficiency with the Crown Prosecution Service and other partners
 - Policy – Providing clarity for when to use different detection options (cautions, fixed penalty notices)
 - Performance review – at Force and individual level
- Good working practices had been found in Camborne where the use of a 'squad' was being used to detect volume crime. Exeter is using this method now too.
- Other areas of work that will impact on sanction detections are the Professionalising Investigation Process (PIP), enhanced charging and log management as discussed earlier in the committee.

Performance Panel

The Policy Officer provided a brief update on the Performance Panel which met on 20 January 2006.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Members discussed the performance issues affecting Plymouth BCU. The Chairman reminded the committee of the focus the Plymouth CDRP was coming under from the Government Office of the South West as advised to Members at the Police Authority seminar on 14 November 2005. The Chairman of the Police Authority recognised the challenges facing the BCU but suggested they were wider than just policing issues. The relationship between the Plymouth BCU Commander and the Chief Executive of Plymouth City Council was positive and progress was being made.

Operation Endurance had been initiated by Plymouth BCU to focus on specific areas to improve performance. The Chairman suggested that the Plymouth BCU Commander should be invited to the next meeting of this committee to discuss issues in relation to the area including Operation Endurance.

Domestic Violence

The Chairman provided an update on issues relating to domestic violence performance.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The funding of advocates for MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) remains an issue. Whilst some areas of the Force have identified funding for this, there is no corporate view. The Force Performance Manager indicated that the Operational Commanders Board had recently been advised that the Exeter domestic violence model was good practice. The Force Crime Manager supported its roll-out across the Force.

The Chairman stated the evaluation of the Plymouth Domestic Violence Unit model should be brought to this committee at a suitable time.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the reports and updates be noted.
- (b) the Plymouth BCU Commander should be invited to the next meeting of this committee to discuss issues in relation to the area including Operation Endurance.
- (c) the evaluation of the Plymouth Domestic Violence Unit model should be brought to this committee at a suitable time

PM/384 APA Performance Management Policy Group Update

The Policy Officer, presented a paper on behalf of Mr Malloni reporting on issues raised at the APA (Association of Police Authorities) Performance Management Policy Group on 6 December 2005. It is the intention to provide regular feedback to this Committee on points of interest raised at the group.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The APA commissioned the University of Birmingham to research accountability pilots run by five police authorities. Few conclusions could be drawn to date due to the infancy of the projects however it is clear that schemes need to be carefully tailored to suit individual areas and means.
- The Policy Group supported initiatives adopted by some authorities to hold pre-meetings before the performance committees. This allowed greater focus on issues of concern. This Authority has adopted this approach recently.
- Members discussed the move by the Home Office to mandate telephone-based surveys for customer satisfaction assessment by April 2007. The Force Performance Manager indicated that there was little evidence to support that this would lead to an uplift in performance. It is highly likely the Force will have to contract-out this work. The Force Consultation Officer, who sits on the National Advisory Group, has spoken out against telephone-based surveying. However, despite some support from the Group it is unlikely to reverse the Home Office's decision.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report be noted.

PM/385 Policing Performance Assessment Framework - Local Domain

The Policy Officer, presented a paper to update Members on progress with identifying and populating the local domain within PPAF.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The local domain guidance has recently been finally approved by the PPAF Steering Group. Some elements of the guidance are somewhat flexible, for example the number of targets within the

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domain. Other areas are more rigid, particularly around the assessment of target levels and 'scoring' criteria.

- The Force Performance Manager indicated there was a sound case to adopt the local priorities and targets proposed in the report. Consultation with CDRPs and the public is clear that they support these priorities.
- The Police Authority seminar on 23 January 2006 was presented with, and agreed, the draft targets for 2006/ 2007. For the local domain these were:
 - To achieve a minimum of X% of uniformed operational officers time spent on visible policing activity
 - To reduce anti-social behaviour through achieving a minimum reduction of X% of violent crime in a public place
 - To reduce anti-social behaviour through achieving minimum of X% reduction in criminal damage
 - To increase the percentage of the population of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly who are aware of either the names of staff within their local Neighbourhood Beat Team or where they can find out that name to X%

Target levels will be determined once year-end performance for this, and other forces, is known.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Committee supports the methods for determining the Local Domain objectives and targets for 2006/ 2007.

PM/386 Performance Management Reviews

The Force Performance Manager presented a paper outlining the various processes in place to conduct Performance Management Reviews (PMRs) in the Force.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Plymouth Peer Review was a good example of the Force combining resources to support an area that is under-performing. The BCU was found to be the only one not achieving a fall in British Crime Survey comparator crime and had weaker domestic burglary detection performance. Negotiations between Plymouth BCU and other BCUs and Departments has led to increased assistance to raise performance in the area.

The Committee questioned the position of Police Authority Members attending PMRs. The Force Performance Manager indicated that members were always welcome to attend PMRs however sector-based PMRs are now driven by the corresponding BCU.

Members expressed doubt they would be able to attend all PMRs but wished to be made aware of the programme of reviews planned.

The Force Performance Manager stated the programme of work for this year will be presented to Members.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 1240 hours.