

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Performance Management Committee** was held on Wednesday 28 January 2009 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter starting at 10.00am.

Present:

Chairman Mr M Bull
Mrs L Dunn, Mr M Hicks, Mr G Hicks and Mr J Rowe

Officers in Attendance: -

Police Force

Deputy Chief Constable T Melville and Ms A Poole (Head of Performance and Analysis).

Police Authority

Mr R Martin (Acting Assistant Chief Executive)

PM/540 Chairman's announcement

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those viewers watching the meeting via the WebCast.

PM/541 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms J Norton.

PM/542 Declarations of Interests

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

PM/543 Minutes

Issues raised during this item included:

PM/ 531/ The Chairman informed the Committee that it had originally been the intention to hold this Committee via a video-conference link. However, there had been a question over the legality of any decisions taken or the status of a quorum in such an approach. Therefore it had been decided not to go ahead with the video-conference on this occasion.

Members agreed that it may be possible to utilise video-conferencing for Task & Finish Groups, Working Groups or other such meetings where formal decisions were not taken.

The Acting Assistant Chief Executive advised that the Government has indicated it will seek to pass legislation to allow local authorities to use video-conferencing and the like for formal decision-making meetings. This could in time provide similar opportunities for police authorities.

PM/534 – Fourth bullet point should read '*Serious acquisitive crime has reduced while serious violent crime has increased*'.

Fifth bullet point should read '*Satisfaction levels for victims of vehicle crime are low and the Force is focusing on this.*'

Fifth bullet point should read '*This process will be piloted and at the end of December an assessment of its effectiveness will be commenced*'.

Also, '*It is expected that the Force will recontact all victims of crime.....*'

Also, "BCU analysts can pick this up and Sector Inspectors also have access to reports generated by this software".

The Deputy Chief Constable stated that the TIC working group was progressing well and that a positive approach was being taken to TICs across the Force.

PM/ 539 Should read "This is formally an operational process however it was felt that the Authority should be sighted on this as it can influence the target setting process".

RESOLVED that, subject to the above amendments, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 November 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

PM/544 Performance towards the Annual Policing Plan (Targets)

This report provided details of the Force's performance against the Annual Policing Plan Targets for the period April to December 2008/ January 2009. The report was presented by the Head of Performance and Analysis.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Across the Force serious acquisitive crime has dropped by 7.7% from April 2008. Cornwall and Isles of Scilly BCU has seen a small rise but it is anticipated the target will be achieved across all BCUs by year-end.

It is predicted that the economic downturn will have an impact on this reduction target although causal links are hard to prove. There has been a rise in domestic burglary since the spring of 2008, a trend that has been reflected elsewhere in the country. The Deputy Chief Constable stated that this area is kept under constant review through his fortnightly Performance Improvement and Tasking meetings. The National Intelligence Model is used to move resources as necessary to tackle sources of threat, harm and risk facing communities.

Operation QUEST is also contributing to performance enhancements through streamlining working processes.

Members asked how the police were working with partners to tackle the links between acquisitive crime and drug dependence. The Deputy Chief Constable stated that close partnership activity is underway, particularly focused through Drug Action Teams.

- Serious violent crime has seen a 26.2% increase since April 2008 against a 6% reduction target. It is considered unlikely that the reduction target will be met. This is in part exacerbated by Home Office clarification of how to record certain types of violent crime. The Chairman stated that this matter had seen a huge amount of national media coverage recently but the matter had been discussed and clearly understood by this Committee at an earlier meeting.
- The sanction detection target of 30% was being met by Plymouth BCU, with the other two BCUs close to achieving target. The Chairman expressed his delight that Plymouth BCU had achieved the target. He stressed the importance of holding offenders to account and putting them through the criminal justice system as key to improving public confidence in the police. Members were presented with information illustrating the breakdown of sanction detections by disposal type. Variations across the Local Policing Areas are expected due to differences in the nature of offending. However, these would always be examined to ensure the split is appropriate.
- Sanction detections for domestic abuse have been above last year's level for the last few weeks of 2008. Offences are increasing slightly but remain within tolerance levels.

Plymouth BCU is recording the lowest domestic abuse sanction detection rate but has the best improving trend.

The Chairman congratulated the Force for its efforts in improving performance in this area and asked the Deputy Chief Constable to pass on the Committee's thanks via the Performance Improvement and Tasking Group.

- Sanction detections for sexual offences is at 28.5% against a target of 30%. It is unclear whether the target will be met by year-end. The Force awaits clarity from the Home Office regarding the way some sexual offences are recorded. It was emphasised that the nature of these offences does not lend itself well to statistical presentation.
- Overall user satisfaction is at 82.7% against a target of 86%. Performance has slipped in recent months but does tend to fluctuate due to the small percentages involved. The Force's position can only be known once national figures have been released. Also, the satisfaction figures referred to here reflect the police interventions from the last few weeks of 2008. Changes to the satisfaction levels now will not be reflected in survey outcomes for a few more weeks yet.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that only a few years ago this target stood at 82%. The sustained improvement in performance was welcomed.

- It is predicted that the User satisfaction (ease of contact) target will not be met by year-end. Current performance is 92.1% against a target of 94%. Again, it was recognised that small increases or decreases in performance would move the Force's national position up or down considerably.
- The small number of victims of racist offences in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly make the racist incident satisfaction target difficult to performance manage. The target of 86% is being exceeded in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly BCU.

A significant amount of work is being carried out to understand better the gaps between satisfaction levels of white and black and minority ethnic victims.

Members recognised the percentages were low but asked for the actual numbers to be provided.

The Chairman reflected the Committee's concerns about this variation in performance but recognised the small numbers involved.

RESOLVED To note the report.

PM/545 Target setting 2009/10 – 2009/12

For the benefit of the Members not present at the Police Authority Seminar on 23 January and the WebCast viewers, the Chairman outlined the approach that has been taken to date to establish draft performance targets for the Constabulary for the year ahead.

The Chairman thanked the Performance Analysis Working Group, chaired by Lynne Dunn, for the progress made in exploring the options available for targets and putting forward proposals. He spoke on behalf of the Committee by applauding the presentation given at the Seminar and was encouraged by the detailed and high level of debate and understanding shown by the Members.

The Seminar gave a good steer to the direction it favoured with individual targets and asked the Performance Analysis Working Group to further develop its proposals for presentation to this Committee and for onward recommendation to the full Police Authority on 13 February 2009.

The Chairman emphasised that the Committee today would not be formally setting the targets nor the percentages for attainment but would be agreeing what to recommend to the Police Authority for adoption.

The Chair of the Performance Analysis Working Group reminded the Committee that the Group had been tasked with identifying the means by which the Police Authority could assess whether the Force was achieving Top 10 performance in England and Wales. This had been complicated by there being only one nationally required top-down target set by the Home Office.

The Head of Performance and Analysis stated that following initial agreement at the Police Authority Seminar on 23 January 2009, Force analysts had prepared indicative target attainment levels. These were discussed individually by the Committee

Proposed target: To be one of the 10 Forces nationally with the lowest levels of Serious Acquisitive Crime
Proposed target level: 2% reduction (compared to 2008/9), to be achieved by 31 March 2010

This continues the current target of a 2% reduction. However the implications from the recession will make this more challenging for 2009.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

Proposed target: To be one of the 10 Forces nationally with the lowest levels of Serious Violent Crime

Proposed target level: 15% reduction (compared to 2008/9) to be achieved by 31 March 2010.

Recent Home Office reclassification of serious violent crime meant that there would be a large volume of crimes in this category. It was recognised that this target would be very challenging but this level of attainment would be needed to attain Top 10 status. The Committee was comfortable with this target level given the aspiration to be a top performing force.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

Proposed target: To deliver a positive outcome in at least 33% of all offences with an expectation that of this 30% of offences are brought to Justice.

The Chairman recapped that Members had discussed this target in particular at some length during the Police Authority Seminar on 23 January. There was reluctance by some to move away from a sanction detection target as it may be seen as backing down from prioritising crime investigation. The Police Authority was keen to ensure crime detection remained a focus for the Force. The Chairman stressed that an offences brought to justice target was not a soft option and in fact focused more on the victim by pushing for a satisfactory justice outcome. There had been some calls for a complete move away from any kind of detections target. The Committee agreed with the Working Group and rejected this idea as too far too soon. Whilst it may be a favourable position in the future the recommendation of a positive outcome/OBTJ target was seen a prudent and pragmatic move at this time..

It was agreed that the criteria for selecting a positive outcome/ offence brought to justice target needed full explanation to the full Authority and the wider community to ensure the message was presented clearly.

Members recognised that it was not always in the victim's best interests to follow a sanction detection outcome. Some victims may prefer an alternative conclusion such as restorative justice. This approach would allow a certain amount of discretion by officers and staff whilst recognising that there would remain certain offences or offence patterns where discretion would not be permitted.

The Deputy Chief Constable supported this target indicating that it would encourage closer working between the police and Crown Prosecution Service to achieve shared aims. An OBTJ target would promote the need for high quality evidence gathering and file preparation which could only be in the best interests of the victim.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

Proposed target: To exceed 84% of respondents to the public survey who agree that 'The police and local council are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area'

The single top-down target had received plenty of discussion during the Working Group and the Police Authority Seminar. The Police Authority considered this to be a flawed way of measuring public confidence in the police. The Police Authority had written to the Home Office to express its feelings and it is understood many other Authorities and Forces had done likewise.

The indicative target for Devon and Cornwall Constabulary is 65%, meaning a 12% increase in British Crime Survey performance by March 2011. In line with other forces, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary's own survey shows better performance towards this measure, and so a target of 84% based upon the Force's local survey would be considered appropriate and provide a positive contribution to the British Crime Survey measurement. The national BCS measure is too infrequent and not local enough for the Force to use for managing performance effectively. The Home Office expects individual forces to contribute their own survey methodology in support of the national measure.

The Committee recognised that it would be necessary to make clear the local survey in question was the Constabulary's survey and not the Police Authority's.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

Proposed target: To exceed an 86% level of victims who are satisfied with the overall service provided by the police.

This is a measure of the satisfaction level of victims of burglary, vehicle crime, violent crime and those involved in road traffic collisions and it is proposed to retain the same level as the current target. A continued push would be needed to attain Top 10 performance.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

Proposed target: To exceed an 86% level of Victims of Racist Incidents Satisfied with the Overall Service provided by the Police.

Recent improvements by other forces requires the current target of 86% to be maintained in order to achieve top 10 performance.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

Proposed target: To exceed an 80% level of Victims of Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents Satisfied with the Overall Service provided by the Police

There is no national data available for this measure and so a target level has to be based on previous performance in this Force only. The Force has been surveying victims of anti-social behaviour in order to enable improvement in this area. This target also directly contributes to the single top-down target.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

Proposed target: To exceed a 94% level of Victims Satisfied with the Ease of Contacting someone who could assist.

It was confirmed that this referred to victims of burglary, vehicle crime, violent crime and those involved in road traffic collisions.

The Force has not been comparing well against this measure during the second half of 2008/9 and is currently placed 30th. Improvements by other forces will require Devon and Cornwall's target to remain at 94% in order to see the improvement necessary to attain top 10 performance by 2010/11. Again this target supports working towards the Policing Pledge.

Committee decision: Accepted to recommend to the Police Authority.

The Chairman repeated his thanks to Lynne Dunn, Alexis Poole and the Working Group for their work in developing and refining the proposed targets and levels.

The targets as agreed by this Committee would be recommended to the Police Authority on 13 February 2009 seeking approval for adoption for 2009.

PM/546 Police Authority Performance Priorities

The Chairman introduced a report which suggested performance priorities for the Police Authority for the year ahead. The priorities had not been reviewed for some time and it was felt timely to reconsider them given current circumstances.

The existing priorities were considered in turn.

Communications – This area had been selected primarily due to a concern that senior management in the Corporate Communications Department had been given insufficient time to allow new strategies to develop before being moved on.

The Deputy Chief Constable stated that the Force had invested in leadership and introduced an internal and external communications strategy and an information cascade system. A structural review of the Corporate Communications Department, including a realignment of its desired outcomes had been undertaken to support the 2012 vision.

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Police Authority to drop communications as a performance priority area for 2009/10.

Neighbourhood Policing – The Committee recognised that the Force had worked hard to embed neighbourhood policing principles across the Force. Last year, like all other forces, Devon and Cornwall was subject to an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for the way it had engaged with neighbourhood policing. The Force was assessed as 'meets the standard'.

The Committee recognised the need to maintain the focus on neighbourhood policing as it develops further and contributes to improving public confidence and satisfaction. It was noted by the Chairman that this area of policing lies within the remit of the Community Engagement Committee and asked that this be clearly recognised in that Committee's terms of reference.

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Police Authority to retain neighbourhood policing as a performance priority area for 2009/10 with this being monitored by the Community Engagement Committee.

Detections including forensics – the Police Authority has become closely engaged with the work of the Scientific Support Unit in recent months with the establishment of the Forensics Task and Finish Group. The clear message coming from this work was that the impetus should be maintained in order to drive through the improvements that still needed to be seen. Performance improvement had been seen during 2008 but there was more still to do.

The Chairman stated that the SOCRATES information management system had helped focus improvement in this area and would continue to aid an uplift in performance. It was important to monitor the full implementation of this software system.

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Police Authority to retain Detections including forensics as a performance priority area for 2009/10.

Human Resources – the Chief Constable had personally committed to improving this area after an unsatisfactory report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in 2006. The report from HMIC's re-inspection carried out last year is due shortly. Members considered that this area was best informed by the Human Resources Committee and, as before, passed the duty for overseeing the HR function to the HR Committee.

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Police Authority to retain Human Resources as a performance priority area for 2009/10 with this being monitored by the HR Committee.

Protective Services – delays in establishing the Police Authority's Task and Finish Group to oversee work in this area were due in some part to the amount of support these groups required from the Police Authority office. However, it is hoped that this group will be able to commence work soon.

The Committee recognised the Police Authority needed to become closer involved in this work.

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Police Authority to retain protective services as a performance priority area for 2009/10.

The Committee then looked at additional options for priority areas.

Public confidence in the police – This is a national priority for all police forces. The single top-down target will measure individual force's delivery against this. For this reason, and the new focus on the Policing Pledge it was considered unnecessary to adopt an additional priority for public confidence.

Core Development Programme – (formerly the Force Development Programme) This was a critical area of importance for the Police Authority and Force for its ambition to become top performing.

The Chief Constable updated the Police Authority with the latest developments at its Seminar on 23 January 2009. It has been agreed that the Police Authority will establish a Task and Finish Group to oversee the Development Programme. This Group was scheduled to meet following this Committee meeting. It was recognised that expert external assessment advice would need to be brought in to assist the Authority with this work.

In the light of the significance of this work and the nature of the risk that is brought with it, it was **agreed** to recommend to the Police Authority that the Core Development Programme become a performance priority area for 2009/10.

The Committee also considered the areas of police visibility, domestic abuse and officer/ staff sickness and absenteeism. Despite each having individual merit it was recognised that the Force was progressing well established strategies to deal with these areas. Therefore the Committee was satisfied that these areas would be picked up as part of the normal performance management process and unless the situation deteriorated suddenly, would not need to be specific priorities.

The priority areas selected would be recommended for adoption by the Police Authority on 13 February 2009.

RESOLVED to recommend to the Police Authority that the performance priorities for 2009 are neighbourhood policing, detections including forensics, Human Resources, protective services and the Core Development Programme.

PM/547 National Crime Recording Standard and National Standard of Incident Recording compliance update

The Lead Member for National Crime Recording Standard and the National Standard of Incident Recording, Lynne Dunn, provided an update on the work she had undertaken since the last meeting.

A meeting with the Deputy Chief Constable is scheduled for 30 January 2009 at which specific issues will be discussed further.

- The 72-hour recording limit remains an issue.
- The recording of PND's continues to pick up but further improvement is needed.
- There is some evidence of certain crimes against children not being recorded but being referred to Social Services as incidents. It was recognised this area required further guidance from the Home Office.
- Log closure performance by the Call Management and Communications Department needed to improve.
- As part of the Core Development Programme, two police officers based in the Crime Registrar's Office had been released to the frontline. Another member of staff has recently been promoted.

The Chairman thanked the Lead Member for her report and continuing work in this area.

RESOLVED to note the report.

The Chairman thanked those viewers watching the WebCast and indicated that this meeting demonstrated the strong, robust commitment from the Force to drive up performance.

The meeting closed at 1205 hours.