

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Performance Management Committee** was held on Monday 21 May 2007 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter starting at 11.00am.

Present:

Chairman M Bull
J Currie, M Hicks and C Wallin.

Officers in Attendance: -

Police Force Acting Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing & Justice) R Spencer [item 8 only] and Chief Superintendent I Ansell (Head of Professional Standards & Performance Department) [items 8 - 10 only].

Police Authority R Martin (Policy Officer).

PM/447 Election of Chairman

Mr M Hicks proposed Mr M Bull, seconded by Mr C Wallin and there being no further nominations, it was:-

RESOLVED that Mr M Bull be appointed Chairman of the Performance Management Committee

PM/448 Election of Vice Chairman

Mr M Bull proposed Mr M Hicks, seconded by Mr C Wallin and there being no further nominations, it was:-

RESOLVED That Mr M Hicks be elected Vice Chairman

PM/449 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from C Bulley & Sir S Day.

The Chairman stated he would welcome the membership of this Committee to be increased. The Policy Officer indicated he would discuss this with the Chief Executive.

PM/450 Declarations of Interests

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

PM/451 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2007 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Members raised some concern around the issue of decriminalised parking enforcement and the proposals to handover responsibility to Local Authorities. There was unease of the impact this would have on traffic management issues and how this change would be perceived by the public. Members felt there was a danger that Council Tax increases may be necessary by Local Authorities to help finance the transfer of responsibility and the public may see this as having to pay twice for a service. The Chairman called for a report on the issue to be presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

PM/452 Force Performance & Tasking meetings

The Chairman provided Members with an update on processes developing in the Force to oversee and manage performance and their interaction with the Police Authority.

The Chief Constable has demonstrated that he is very performance driven and has empowered the Deputy Chief Constable to deliver against the priorities of achieving an immediate performance uplift and reaching top quartile status for the Force.

Performance Management Committee

21 May 2007

The Deputy Chief Constable holds a fortnightly Performance Improvement and Tasking meeting (PIT) at which BCU Commanders, Department heads and other senior officers and staff are held to account for the delivery of policing performance. The Chairman receives a copy of the minutes of these meetings and expressed his satisfaction and reassurance that the Deputy Chief Constable has a firm grip on the comprehensive range of issues affecting performance towards the Force targets and lead indicators.

The Chairman shared with the Committee certain issues that had been tackled at recent meetings, these included crime scene attendance by forensics staff, overdue crime lists, the impact of Crime Investigation Units, the Proceeds of Crime Act, prolific offenders and absence management.

Members were pleased with the rigour with which the Deputy Chief Constable was challenging senior officers over performance and welcomed the action plans which clearly identified who was responsible for what and by when.

The Policy Officer drew Member's attention to a recent HMIC document suggesting that it considered as good practice a Member of the Police Authority regularly attending senior Force performance meetings. The Chairman expressed some misgivings around this mainly due to the extent of the time commitment – half a day every two weeks. Other Members felt too that this could lead to an interpretation of the Authority's endorsement of the action taken at the Force meetings, potentially compromising Members' independence.

The Committee was of the view that Member attendance at Force performance meetings was not necessary other than on an informal and ad hoc basis. The Chairman indicated that he would discuss this with the Deputy Chief Constable at their next meeting.

PM/453 Police Authority Performance Focus Areas

The Chairman opened this item by reminding Members that in September 2006, Members agreed that the Police Authority should establish a set of performance priority areas that it would focus on in the coming year. This was seen as a way of concentrating its scrutiny role to particular areas of performance and was highly influenced by the findings from HMIC's Baseline Assessment of the Force for 2005. The priority areas were: Leadership, Communications, Forensics, Human Resources and Strategic Management.

Following the significant changes in the Force's senior management and the consequent developments in its performance management arrangements, it was considered a suitable time to revisit the priority areas to ensure they remain in-line with the Committee and the Authority's current thinking.

In reviewing the five areas:

Leadership – The last six months or so has seen significant changes in the Chief Officer Group (COG). Whilst the Committee expressed its confidence in the new Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable, it was thought premature to express an opinion on the entire COG due to its relative infancy. Also, the Chief Constable has recently announced additional management changes at chief superintendent level. These officers will also need time to embed and settle into their new roles.

With this in mind, the Committee considered it appropriate to keep Leadership as a priority area whilst recognising that it should be reasonably 'light touch'. The Chairman indicated that at a suitable time it would be useful to have a dialogue with the Chief Constable about the approach to this. The Policy Officer suggested the Authority/ COG meeting scheduled for 27/ 28 June may be an appropriate time for this.

Performance Management Committee

21 May 2007

Communications – This was an area the Committee has given less attention to. Although it had considered proposals for Call Management recently, more needed to be looked at in relation to how messages are delivered across the organisation. Again, it was considered necessary to retain this area until the Committee could satisfy itself that developments were leading to improvements.

Forensics – the Committee accepted that much had been done to improve this area of performance. As well as tasking Crime Scene Investigators and Technicians with visiting at least 3 scenes each per day, the decision had been taken to provide these staff with uniforms to assist with police visibility. Also, CSIs and CSTs are expected to contribute towards customer satisfaction targets by providing a positive experience to victims.

Despite these changes to working practices, the Committee was disappointed that significant improvements to sanction detection levels were yet to be seen. For this reason, the Committee agreed to retain this priority albeit through widening the scope of this area of work to cover all "Detections" but including forensics work within it.

Human Resources – this area was one that, whilst a critical area for its impact on performance management, had been remitted to and accepted by the Human Resources Committee for action. The Committee remained concerned at the apparent continuing issues in relation to this area of Force business and agreed that it should be retained as a priority but continue to be referred to the Human Resources Committee for its perusal.

Strategic Management – The Chief Constable has quickly established a firm and transparent management style clearly laying down his priorities and setting corporate standards. Again, it was recognised that time was needed for the new arrangements to settle in and begin to bring about benefits. The Committee was comfortable with the new approach being taken in this area and therefore agreed to drop this area as a priority for the Committee. In its place and considering concerns expressed at this meeting and other recent Authority meetings, Members agreed to include Neighbourhood Policing within the list of priorities.

RESOLVED

- (i) To recommend to the full Authority that the performance priorities for the Police Authority for the forthcoming year are: Leadership, Neighbourhood Policing, Communications, Detections (to include forensics) and Human Resources.

PM/454 Crime Detection and the impact of the Major Crime Investigation Team

The Chairman welcomed the Acting Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing & Justice) and Chief Superintendent (Head of Professional Standards & Performance Department) to the meeting. The Chairman explained that Members had just resolved that Detections was a priority area of focus for this Committee over the coming year. The Committee had heard at its meeting in January that a review of officer workloads had revealed that both NBM's and Response Officers were carrying a crime investigation caseload not numerically significantly less than the BCU detectives.

The A/ACC tabled a paper and spoke about the background and implementation of Crime Investigation Teams (CITs) across the Force.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The COG has agreed that all domestic burglaries, vehicle crimes, hate crimes and crimes of violence (except domestic violence offences) will be handled by Crime Investigation Teams.

Performance Management Committee

21 May 2007

This will reduce the caseload of Response officers. As an example, it is estimated approximately 27,000 violent crimes have been transferred from the workload of Response officers to CITs.

- The A/ACC apologised that up to date information was not available due to limitations in entering data onto FIMS.
- CITs were established in early April 2007 following approval from the Organisational Development Group.
- It was reported that some BCUs had transferred officers from Patrol and Response functions to the CITs. The A/ACC reported that BCUs had been strongly encouraged to leave visible, uniformed officers in post where possible and instead draw officers from elsewhere. A total of 151 officers Forcewide have been drawn into CITs and are taking 80% of the workload previously handled by Response officers.
- A mixed message is appearing across BCUs. Urban areas have responded positively to the introduction of CITs saying that Response officers are now able to provide a better service. The balance of the Funded Post Profile (FPP) across the Force varies and impacts different areas in different ways.
- The early signs are that a recovery in satisfaction levels is being seen, possibly as a result of the introduction of CITs. However, the A/ACC urged caution that more time was needed to allow the CITs to bed in and deliver improvements.
- When the Major Crime Investigation Team (MCIT) are not deployed to major incidents they will be tasked to address crime hotspot areas elsewhere. This approach by the Crime Department will supplement CITs and has real potential for performance uplift.

The Chairman welcomed the introduction of CITs but repeated the call he made at the Full Police Authority meeting on 11 May 2007, asking for patience whilst the new arrangements come to fruition and deliver performance improvements. The A/ACC indicated that improvement would be seen to be having an effect in three months time. However, regular snapshots would be taken over the next few weeks to identify any problems and issues.

The Chairman called for an update to be provided to the Performance Management Committee in September 2007 on the impact of the changes and the improvements seen as a result. The A/ACC agreed to this.

The A/ACC reiterated that this is the early stage of this initiative and there may be problems ahead that need dealing with as they arise. Complex resourcing issues needed balancing whilst recognising the impact of the changes on officers and staff.

The Police Federation had raised some concerns about the depletion of Response officers. The A/ACC had met with the press to clarify the impact the changes are having.

The Chairman thanked the A/ACC for his report.

PM/455 Review of performance 2006/2007

The Head of Professional Standards & Performance Department provided a brief review of performance for the financial year 2006/2007.

The Chairman congratulated the Chief Superintendent on his recent promotion.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

Performance Management Committee

21 May 2007

- There is recognition that a further reduction in crime is possible despite not recording a reduction during 2006/2007.
- The sanction detection level plateaued just below the target level of 27%. It has been suggested that the Force needs to adopt new ways of working and better processes to meet the 2007 target (also 27%). The establishment of CITs is seen as a positive step in the right direction and they are already showing some encouraging signs.
- Target 6, to seize £1.53m of criminal assets was exceeded thanks to a considerable seizure late in the performance year. It was reported that this area had come under greater scrutiny in recent months including Member involvement.

Members called for clarity in the way this data is presented and asked for future reports to indicate the actual net figure the Force would retain under the asset seizure rules as well as the overall figure. The Head of Professional Standards & Performance Department stated he would make arrangements for this.

There being insufficient time to discuss this item further, the Chairman thanked the Head of Professional Standards & Performance Department for the report.

PM/456 Performance against the Annual Policing Plan (Targets)

The Head of Professional Standards & Performance Department presented a report detailing performance towards the Force targets for 2007/8. Members were advised that the same report would be viewed by the Deputy Chief Constable at the Performance Improvement & Tasking meeting on 22 May 2007 and provided the most up to date information. This clearly linked the connections between areas of poor detection performance and the resulting negative impact on satisfaction levels.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Members were pleased to see that the satisfaction target had increased to 81% following a long period of under performance. Caution was urged though that this figure related to one month's data only whereas earlier surveys covered a three month period: therefore more results were needed before any accurate conclusions could be drawn. It was also stressed that this survey did not cover victims reporting anti-social behaviour and racist offences.
- Analysis suggested that levels of dis-satisfaction were reasonably level across the Force. 'Being kept informed' and 'treatment by staff' are the two elements of the indicator that are currently weakest. The links between detection performance and satisfaction rates were clearly illustrated to the Committee.
- The target to maintain the sanction detection rate at 27% is becoming more and more challenging despite being so early in the performance year. Performance is intrusively managed by the Performance Improvement & Tasking meetings which effectively sets and monitors weekly targets. This provides a frank assessment of whether the Force is keeping pace with the level of performance needed to achieve target by year-end.

There being insufficient time to discuss this item further, the Chairman thanked the Head of Professional Standards & Performance Department for the report. The Chairman indicated that the PIT report provided a fascinating example of dynamic performance management. This item, and those earlier in the meeting, show how the Chief Constable's priorities are being delivered through strong leadership. This demonstrates the dramatic turnaround the Force has made to be highly performance focused and accountable.

The Chairman called for this data format to be presented to each meeting of this Committee.

Performance Management Committee
21 May 2007

RESOLVED

- i. That the Committee noted the Force's performance against the annual policing plan targets 2007/2008.

The meeting closed at 1.35pm.