

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Performance Management Committee** was held on Tuesday 28 March 2006 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10.00 am.

Present:

Chairman.....Mrs J Owen
Mr M Bull [item 4i onwards], Mr C Bulley, Mr J Currie, Mr M Hicks, Mr S Malloni [items 1 to 7], Mr W Thomas and Mr C Wallin.

Officers in Attendance: -

Police Force Superintendent I Ansell (Force Performance Manager), Deputy Chief Constable N Arnold [not items 5ii or 7], Detective Inspector D Beer (Plymouth Community Support Unit) [items 1-5ii], T Berridge (Force Diversity Officer) [items 1 to 5i], Detective Chief Inspector B Brown (Head of Plymouth Community Support Unit) [items 1-5ii], R Bullock (Force Performance Analyst), Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing & Partnerships) T Melville [items 1 to 4], Detective Sergeant C Nassaris (Plymouth Community Support Unit) [items 1-5ii], J Simmons (Force Diversity Manager) [items 1 to 5i], Chief Superintendent M Watts (Commander, Plymouth Basic Command Unit)[items 1 to 5ii] and Detective Chief Superintendent J Webster (Head of Crime) [items 1 to 5ii].

Police Authority R Martin (Policy Officer).

PM/387 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sir S Day and Mr D Money.

PM/388 Declarations of Interests

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

PM/389 Minutes

The Chairman confirmed that a presentation on Call Management and Communications had been made to the full Police Authority on 15 February 2006.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held 24 January 2006 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PM/390 Performance issues within Plymouth BCU

The Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing & Partnerships) provided an overview of the Peer review conducted by Plymouth BCU in December 2005. This was a new approach to dealing with performance concerns within the Force and was known as Operation Endurance.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Peer Review involved senior officers from BCUs and Departments across the Force.
- The activity outputs, known as Operation Endurance, focused on improving performance within offences brought to justice, sanction detections and domestic violence detections. It was felt unlikely that significant improvements on crime reduction targets could be achieved before the year-end.
- Operation Sunloch concentrated on a multi-agency approach to focusing on the areas with the biggest performance issues within Plymouth.
- iQuanta charts had reported improvements in several areas of performance following Operation Endurance.

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- Lessons have been learned from the Peer review that will benefit the organisation as a whole. Primarily this will mean adopting new ways of working.
- There would be a closer working relationship between the Criminal Justice Department and the Crime Standards Unit to keep abreast of paperwork and avoid lengthy delays.
- The Peer Review was seen by those participating, and particularly the Plymouth BCU Senior Management Team, as an excellent new approach to improving performance. Since Operation Endurance, other BCUs have self-initiated similar reviews.

The Commander of Plymouth BCU stated that in future, the city would co-locate detectives and community officers. Plymouth faced a challenge due to the transient nature of volume crime activity in the BCU.

The Committee congratulated the Force on this approach but emphasised the importance that performance improvement should be sustainable.

The Commander of Plymouth BCU briefly outlined the steps being taken to improve partnership working within the city.

Issues discussed included:

- The importance of the relationship with the new Chief Executive within Plymouth City Council.
- Acceptance that Plymouth's community safety issues would need to be accepted and addressed by a partnership approach.
- The city was receiving support from the Government Office of the South West.
- Plymouth BCU has the third lowest level in crime in its family group.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Committee notes the reports on the Peer review and partnership working within Plymouth BCU.

PM/391 Domestic Violence

The Force Diversity Manager provided a presentation on domestic violence within black and minority ethnic communities.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- There are a large number of victims of domestic violence whose ethnicity is unknown. This may indicate officers' reluctance to ask for this information. This could be caused by the officers not realising the value of collecting the information. This can be used to assist with assessing the level of risk to a victim.
- More work needs to be carried out around black and minority ethnic victims of domestic violence. In the past work has tended to focus on hate crime offences.
- The reasons for the apparent under-reporting of domestic violence within minority communities need to be better understood. In some instances, victims of domestic abuse have already been subject to racism in other areas of public services and would be less likely to report violence to the police.
- In future, the police should be able to provide more accurate information on the number of domestic violence incidents rather than just the number of victims.
- To address some slippage in undertaking impact assessments, each policy owner has been asked to identify two policies that will be assessed by September 2006.

The Inspector, Plymouth Community Support Unit, presented an evaluation report of the Plymouth BCU domestic violence model. The new approach to risk assessing, investigating and supporting victims of domestic violence had been introduced with the full commitment of the BCU Commander.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The new structure and methods of working were introduced following publication of guidance by the National Centre for Policing Excellence and Association of Chief Police Officers.
- The new structure provides for extra officers and staff within the Unit.
- Partner organisations will deal with victim care. These support groups are being encouraged to proactively engage with victims rather than await self-referral. An issue remains around the future partnership funding of this support.
- Domestic violence accounts for approximately 25% of total violent crime. It is a complex crime that requires specialist skills.
- On 17 January 2006, the Operational Commanders Board agreed that the other BCUs should introduce similar models where appropriate and to suit local circumstances.
- The funding of advocates remains a challenging issue for the Authority and Constabulary. Significant efficiency savings are required for the year ahead. The redefinition of Sector policing will bring additional investigative support.

The Vice-Chairman questioned resource distribution across the Force. The Deputy Chief Constable reported it had been some time since the Constabulary had conducted such an exercise. There may be an opportunity in the near future to revisit this again once the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) allocation is determined.

The Chairman thanked the officers and staff from Plymouth BCU for the reports and presentations.

RESOLVED

- a) That the reports on domestic violence within black and minority ethnic communities and the evaluation of the Plymouth domestic violence model be noted.
- b) The Force to undertake a full equality impact assessment of domestic violence policy and function in line with the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and identify and implement actions required to:
 - (i) Decrease the number of reported domestic violence incidents where 16+1 self defined ethnicity data is not collected
 - (ii) Increase the reporting of domestic violence by black and minority ethnic communities
 - (iii) Address any areas for improvement identified through the equality impact assessment
- c) The Force considers incorporating specialist Domestic Violence Investigators into each Community Support Unit

PM/392 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 28 February 2006.

12 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.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

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- Members expressed concern at the relative poor Force performance for user satisfaction. The Force rates 7th lowest nationally, although it has achieved the Force target of 75% for 2005-2006. On 27 March 2006, the Force Performance Board discussed how to improve user satisfaction rates. The different elements that make up the overall satisfaction figure were analysed by different work groups. This has resulted in specific pieces of work to help raise performance. Anti-social behaviour will soon be included within user satisfaction surveys.
- The Force has had early sight of best practice guidance from the Home Office.
- The new Force target of an 80% satisfaction rate will help drive performance up in this area.
- Screening crimes out did not appear to affect satisfaction levels.
- Work is ongoing to identify whether greater use of Penalty Notices for Disorder could be made to contribute to sanction detection levels.
- Anti-social behaviour continues to rise against a target of no increase. Approximately 70% is thought to be noisy neighbours and nuisance calls. This is an area the police have little or no control over. The National Standard of Incident Recording, introduced in 2004, allows the Force to benefit from two year's anti social behaviour data. Despite this, national performance figures are not yet available.
The introduction of the national non-emergency number is likely to raise further the number of incidents.

Members suggested that the way the Police Authority sets performance targets for the Force needs to be reviewed in future. Members criticised the fact that several target levels were changed, following consultation, after formal agreement by the full Authority. It was explained this occurred because additional information came to light suggesting the original 75% level would not have been adequate to lift the Force position within its family of Forces.

The Force Performance Manager stated the year-end performance figures and those from other forces needed to be received before future target levels could be set.

The Force Performance Analyst presented a report on forensics performance.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Generally all BCUs are improving. More crime scenes are being visited, more fingerprints and DNA are being recovered and more idents are being made.
- Work is in progress to understand why approximately 12% of conversions result in a decision taken not to proceed. Additionally, Crime Managers in BCUs will monitor why there is a number of 'no action' outcomes.
- The Force Performance Analyst reported satisfaction that the Force's data is accurate. Other forces' data is less reliable as some report scene attendance rates in excess of 100%.

The Vice-Chairman reported that it was now clear that SOCRATES would bring benefits to the organisation. However, he expressed disappointment that there had been no applicants for the forensic management posts within BCUs. Concern was also raised at the lack of planning or resources being provided to the Scientific Support Unit to manage the backlog of samples. This is likely to increase with the recruitment of extra detectives.

The Deputy Chief Constable reported the Scientific Support Unit had not presented a bid for more resources.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Committee notes the Force's performance against the annual policing plan targets 2005/ 2006.
- (b) The report on Force forensic performance is noted.

PM/393 Continuous Improvement Database

The Force Performance Manager presented a report detailing certain recommendations held on the Continuous Improvement Database within the Corporate Services Department.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Chairman stated the report was now much clearer and easier to follow. The Chairman thanked the Database and HMIC Liaison Officer for her work on this.
- The Leadership Best Value Review recommendations are not being progressed adequately. The Police Authority Policy Officer (EZ) will meet with representatives from the Human Resources Department to move these on.

The Vice Chairman expressed concern that the Police Authority had not had the opportunity to debate the 2005 Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) Baseline Assessment. The HMIC inspection process for 2006 will begin in May and Members thought it important that the previous HMIC report was discussed and addressed before then.

The Committee felt this of urgent attention and suggested the next meeting of this Committee on 16 May 2006 should be devoted to the 2005 HMIC Baseline Assessment report. Also, Members felt that the full Police Authority should be provided with the opportunity to discuss the HMIC's findings. This could follow at a Seminar or possibly at a full Authority meeting. The Policy Officer committed to speak with the Chief Executive about this.

As an initial measure it was agreed that the Performance Panel Members would meet at the earliest opportunity to review the recommendations from the HMIC report. The outcome from this may necessitate a presentation to the full Authority.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report highlighting the delay with the progress of the Leadership Best Value Review recommendations be noted.
- (b) That the next meeting of this Committee on 16 May 2006 be devoted to the 2005 HMIC Baseline Assessment report.
- (c) The Performance Panel Members meet at the earliest opportunity to review the recommendations from the HMIC report
- (d) The Policy Officer to speak with the Chief Executive about the possibility of holding a Seminar to address the 2005 HMIC Baseline Assessment report.

PM/394 Activity Based Costing

The Force Performance Analyst presented a report on Activity Based Costing (ABC) and its uses in improving performance.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The training for new members of staff in the ABC Unit has caused some delay in preparing for the total training plan.
- The Audit Commission is satisfied that the data collection methods used are accurate.

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- Demand and response profile has changed little over the last two years compared to staff availability recorded through ABC surveys. Plymouth BCU appeared to balance demand with available officers better than the other BCUs. Work is underway to understand the correct balance of response and neighbourhood policing against the levels of OIS demand.
- The number of hours spent waiting in custody had reduced by 6,900 hours on the previous year. The Policy Officer challenged whether these figures could be regarded as accurate. The Force Performance Manager stated a greater understanding was needed of the relative workloads of Custody units.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 1320 hours.