

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

Notes of the **POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETING – PENWITH** held in The School Hall, Cape Cornwall School, Cape Cornwall Road, St Just on Tuesday, 17 October 2006 at 7-30pm.

Present:

Authority

Mr. M. Hicks.....Chairman

Mr. B. Preston and Mr. I. Thompson (Administrator)

Constabulary

Sergeant Richard Hockin, Inspector Strickland (Sector Inspector), Chief Inspector M. Ward (Geographical Chief Inspector).

Apologies were received from Mr. Andrew George MP and Chief Inspector Wotton who was unwell.

28 people attended the meeting as recorded in the Attendance Register

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the Mayor of St Just, Councillor Mrs Smith and her Consort and introduced the Members of the Authority and the officers.

The Chairman assured the public that all items discussed at Police Authority Liaison Meetings were taken back and, where appropriate, were discussed at full Police Authority Meetings.

1. Police Report

The report was given by Chief Inspector Ward, Inspector Strickland, and Sergeant Hockin:

Chief Inspector Ward introduced himself and gave a brief overview of his role and responsibilities.

Liaison Meetings give the Force the opportunity to meet the public and to seek their views on the policing service they were receiving.

There is a very positive senior management team serving West Cornwall. Whilst it was noted that there have been communications issues, all the police team want to be accessible to the public and moves were afoot to further improve the central telephone system.

Inspector Strickland introduced himself and gave a brief overview of his role and responsibilities. He acknowledged that the Force was not yet good at giving feedback on reported crime to the victims of crime. There were some very positive changes coming in neighbourhood policing; whilst the number of Neighbourhood Beat Managers would be reduced, the increased numbers of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) would release uniformed officers. The PCSOs will work in the community and would not be distracted by having to work inside police stations.

Sergeant Hockin, Neighbourhood Team Manager, reported that approximately 8 months ago a Community Action Panel was set up to address issues relating to young people committing acts of anti-social behaviour. By working in partnership the result has been a reduction of crime

by some 47 %. The Community Action Panel was working in partnership with the police in addressing incidents of criminal damage, off road biking and other such items affecting the young people of the area.

Good News:

In the next two weeks a new Police Office will open here in school. The Head Teacher has provided office space and police officers will be moving in shortly. Independent telephone lines will be installed and an answer machine will be fitted. The office will NOT be a police station but will be available to the public by booking a visit through the new telephone number and/or leaving a message on the answer machine which will be addressed locally.

2. Presentation on “Neighbourhood Policing”

The presentation was given by Chief Inspector Ward:

There will be a big change in policing across the whole country. One of the most important parts of the change will be to neighbourhood policing. The community gives back to the force the information required to police properly the area. Devon & Cornwall has a good reputation for neighbourhood policing.

In Cornwall the change in Neighbourhood Policing will be the visibility of more PCSOs on the ground giving Police Officers more time to address other issues. This will enable a targeted response to serious acts of crime, anti-terrorism and organised crime.

Reviews of working methods have identified a failing in day to day crime detection and dealing with the victims of crime. The planned changes are designed to ensure a better team response to look after the victims of crime and deal with the criminals who commit the crimes. Whilst Neighbourhood Beat Managers (NBMs) would now have a larger area to police, the NBM will remain the first port of call for the public. A commitment has been made to ensure NBMs will remain in the area and not be abstracted to other duties. PCSOs will remain in the area long term giving continuity to local policing.

The new intake of PCSOs will have additional powers to those existing at present.

- The NBM will have to commit to a period of time in the post to ensure continuity.
- NBM posts will be seen as a stepping stone to promotion to Sergeant.

3. Open Session

Members and Officers then responded to questions from the public:

- i. There will be some 500 PCSOs within two years.
- ii. The central telephone system was undergoing constant change and, also, training for the call handlers.
- iii. The mobile telephone system has brought a huge increase in the number of calls received by the central telephone system.
- iv. A member of the public was very unhappy at the lack of response from Police Officers after travelling to and reporting an incident at the police station.
- v. Problems in Market Jew Street. Police cars giving way to oncoming vehicles which was a one way system.

There then followed a lengthy debate on the anti-social behaviour of young people in the area.

Items covered included:

- The Secretary of Pendeen Residents Association reported on the loss of the local bus service because of children's bad behaviour.
- Lack of police response from a reported incident.
- Acknowledgement of Officers working very hard.
- What has to happen to get a police officer to attend an incident.
- It was noted that these issues were to be addressed by the Community Action Panel.
- Police Officers would ride the "last bus" service to maintain the local bus service.
- It was noted that the central telephone system was grading incidents and not passing information to Penzance so there has been a lack of response. This was being addressed with Exeter.
- Young persons were throwing farmyard manure and eggs at the houses of people who they had identified as "reporting to the police". Some of these children were as young as six years of age.
- Young people committing criminal damage; how does a member of the public apprehend them whilst waiting for a police officer to attend and what is meant by "using reasonable force"?
- Moorland Close has seen 6 warrants issued and enforced for drugs raids this year.
- A Pendeen resident has been highly involved in assisting the police and was concerned at the lack of support the police was receiving from the community and, in particular, parents.
- Children under the age of criminal responsibility were referred to the Youth Offending Team. This team was working with parents trying to achieve a better working partnership and offering parenting skills.
- Several projects were now working in the area i.e. Sure Start and White Gold trying to give parents better skills to cope with their children.

West Cornwall has now formed a new anti-social behaviour team which was addressing the problems referred to this evening.

- Councillor Mrs Smith voiced her concerns at the lack of police vehicles available for officers' use and the speed at which these local vehicles travel.
- A review was being undertaken by the Force looking at all police vehicles, their use and whether the force have appropriate vehicles.
- Response vehicles can only be driven by specially trained officers and not all officers receive training.
- CCTV cameras in St Just were not linked to Hayle; to do this would cost some £300,000.
- St Just Town Clerk reported that the Council works very closely with the police and regularly rings Exeter and receives attention as well as regularly leaving messages for the officers on their answer machines. She emphasised that working together is the way to achieve.

- The Police were lobbying central government APA plus ACPO, talking to ministers and being constructive giving MPs feedback on how things were working.
- The new police office at the school will have a telephone number and answer machine which the public could use to leave messages.

Thanks were then extended to Police Officers for their support tonight. It was noted that full Police Authority meetings were open to the public but were held at Exeter Police Headquarters.

4. Matters of Interest from the Police Authority

The Chairman reported that:

All 999 calls were answered and dealt with within the target time.

All other calls were answered within 10 seconds but then could be held in a queue for a period waiting for an officer to take the report. This was an area of concern and moves were afoot to address this issue.

The vacant post of Chief Constable had seen a good response of applicants and interviews would be taking place on 25-26 October 2006 with the intention of the new Chief Constable being in post by January 2007.

A new review of jobs and grading (job evaluation) was to take place for civilian workers. This could take up to three years to complete.

5. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

Wednesday, 21 March 2007 at 7.30pm	St John's Hall, Penzance
Monday, 3 September at 7.30pm	Passmore Edwards Institute, Commercial Road, Hayle

There being no further discussions, the Chairman thanked all for their contributions to the evening's debate and closed the meeting at 21:10 hrs.