

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

Notes of the **POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETING** for the **CARADON** area held at the Library, Torpoint Community School, Torpoint on Wednesday, 18 March 2009 at 7.30 pm

Present:

Police Authority

Mr B Preston (Chairman)

Mrs K Olver (Administrator)

Constabulary

Superintendent C Downham (East Cornwall LPA Commander), Inspector M Williams (Sector Inspector for Saltash), Constable P Libby (Torpoint Rural), PCSO J Riggall (Torpoint Rural)

19 people attended as recorded on the Attendance Sheet.

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Officers present.

2. Matters of Interest from the Police Authority

The Chairman explained that the Police Authority had recently set the Police precept for the current year. The percentage rise of the precept had been higher than that for the new Cornwall Council, in line with a three year budget plan which had been set the previous year. The Police Authority were keen to maintain existing numbers of Police officers and would be one of the few Forces in the country to maintain this level of staffing. PCSO numbers would remain level over the coming year, with the 200 promised officers being returned to front line policing over the year. A number of the 200 officers released from back office functions had come to Saltash. The Police Authority and Chief Constable wished the Force to become one of the top ten Forces in the country. The Force was meeting targets and performing well, with improvements noted in most areas. A new senior team had been appointed and the focus was on working on community engagement through the Partners and Community Together (PACT) process. The cost of the local policing would equate to approximately 12p per household per week.

A neighbourhood policing website had been developed and all units now had their own pages within the site. Members of the community were able to access details regarding local officers, dates of PACT and PALM meetings and a crime mapping system.

The Chairman explained that the local policing summary produced and sent to all households last autumn had been distributed as a statutory requirement. Production and distribution costs had been approximately 8p per household. Work was now taking place on producing the document to be circulated during the forthcoming autumn and in response to comments received from members of the public, the latest report would include less jargon

3. Consultation Questions

The Chairman asked those present three questions as part of a consultation exercise relating to neighbourhood policing, the responses were as follows:-

- 9 of those present knew their local policing team;
- 11 of those present knew how to contact their local policing team;
- 8 of those present had recently seen Police officers patrolling in their local area.

4. Police Report

Inspector Williams presented the Police Report and commented that the area covered, which included Torpoint, Callington and Saltash, was a very large geographical patch.

- There had been 3255 incident logs over the previous year, of which some had required telephone follow up and others had required Police presence. Overall there had been 2130 crimes recorded since April 2008, this figure being the highest of the four sectors in East Cornwall. A total of 356 arrests had been made and most had been dealt with in the Launceston custody centre. A busy summer had been attributed to the poor weather. Local events such as the Maker Festival had taken place. In May 2009 approximately 10,000 people were expected to attend the local Celtic beer festival, which also coincided with the Brunel celebrations in Saltash.
- There had been a reduction in violent crime but unfortunately an increase in thefts from vehicles. Criminal damage figures were similar to last year but remained the highest in East Cornwall. Domestic burglary had also increased since the previous year, with a higher number of attempted burglaries and burglaries taking place through garages linked to properties. A number of offences could have been prevented through simple security measures; in some cases expensive equipment had been left on display. There had been an increase in criminal damage in both Torpoint and Millbrook.
- Concern was raised regarding lack of parental control of young persons and a number of young persons had been taken into custody following arrest. It was of particular concern that there appeared to be little concern for other persons' property.
- A successful Pub Watch scheme was running in three towns.
- Police were making use of their ability to disperse youngsters from certain areas for 48 hours and the special constabulary had been trained in the use of this legislation. A designated public place order was in place in Saltash, Millbrook and also in Callington. The use of such an order would be investigated for Torpoint, however, there was a need to be specific about the location to which the order applied.
- Of the additional officers freed up from back office duties, 5 had been allocated to Saltash. Four officers were currently in place and a fifth was currently completing training. The increased numbers of staff were allowing greater flexibility.
- The Torpoint town neighbourhood team consisted of PC J Alford and PCSO L Cork. Sergeant Gilbert had been promoted to CID in Saltash and interviews for his replacement were to be held shortly.
- The Neighbourhood Watch office for East Cornwall was sited in the Torpoint Police station and staffed by volunteers.
- A PACT meeting had been arranged in Torpoint in March 2009 which had been well attended by partner organisations but poorly attended by the general public. Antisocial behaviour, underage drinking and general damage had been identified as the main concerns of the area. Also, use of mobile phones when coming off the Torpoint ferry and nuisance motorcycles had been mentioned. It was noted that there were particular problems with off-road motorcycles in Hessenford and Seaton.
- A number of initiatives had been taking place in the area over the past year including the Trophy project which had been set up to provide activities for the town and Rame peninsula areas. Activities had included fishing and water sports and a number of other activities were being investigated. PC Alford was a qualified rugby coach and had been providing coaching through a further initiative.
- A scheme had been set up to include a nominated officer as a liaison officer at Parish Council meetings to feed information between the Police and the Parish Councils. The scheme had been identified as an

example of good practice to roll out to other areas and had been adopted in Callington. Very good teams of specials were working in Torpoint and Callington and were assisting with events and weekend policing.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Williams for his report.

5. **Open Session – General Questions on Policing Issues**

Officers and Members of the Authority responded to questions from the public; a summary of the discussions is given below:

- A request was made for the Trophy scheme to be extended to Callington and Saltash. There were also problems in Landrake and request was made for Landrake to be included. It was noted that there were links to the schemes available on the neighbourhood team website.
- The PACT liaison officer scheme was noted and it was queried whether all local parishes were aware that this scheme was available. Further information on this scheme would also be available on the website for interested Parish Councils.
- Concern was raised regarding the effect of the current national financial situation on the crime figures, in particular, those relating to domestic violence. The likelihood of more people losing their jobs and homes was noted and this was likely to increase the number of incidents of domestic violence and suicide. Additionally, the number of stolen goods being marketed was likely to increase, although it was possible that the number of alcohol related crimes might reduce as money became less available. Work had been carried out to profile the problems that may arise and address these. The problems experienced by Saltash and Torpoint in relation to travelling criminals were particularly noted and it was considered that the current financial situation may impact on this.
- Concern was raised regarding individuals taken to Launceston custody centre later having to find their own way home. Superintendent Downham commented that he did not consider it appropriate use of Police time to travel to Launceston to provide a taxi service and that there were not sufficient resources available to provide such a service.
- Mention had been made in Inspector Williams' report regarding dispersal of groups of youngsters. Such groups had not been noted in Torpoint, however, there had been groups of youngsters noted in Millbrook. The youth club facilities in Torpoint were well attended and were to be commended for helping to prevent major social problems within the town.
- Thanks were expressed to the Police for their recent quick response in attending a local burglary.
- Concern was raised regarding the use of the A374 by motorcyclists who continued to speed. It was noted that there were patrol vehicles, both cars and motorcycles, patrolling the area and that the possibility of a designated 50 mile per hour speed limit was being considered. Road safety markings were the responsibility of the Highways Agency and although the Police could provide advice and comment upon proposals, they were unable to introduce such measures themselves.
- It was noted that a number of students from Plymouth were currently attending Torpoint Community School and concern was raised that this could possibly present some conflict problems.
- Local residents were pleased to see the clamp down on motorists using mobile phones whilst leaving the ferry, however, it appeared that the problem merely seemed to have moved up the road towards the Community School.

The Chairman thanked those attending for their questions and comments.

6. **Independent Custody Visiting Report**

No Independent Custody Visitor was available to report.

7. **Neighbourhood Watch**

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators were passing on messages received through the messaging service but, unfortunately, not everyone was acting on the information received which was disappointing. It was

noted that special dusters had recently been purchased which would remove the circular marks caused by SatNav equipment in cars, and hopefully reduce vehicle crime; these would be made available to the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators for distribution. A Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator meeting was due to be held the following day. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Watch office was open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. The office was well equipped and members were very thankful for the facility and the support of the Police. It was felt that there was a need for better advertisement of local meetings for PACTs and PALMs and suggested that advertisements in the local free press might be appropriate.

8. **Dates and Venues of Future Meetings**

The date and venue of the next meeting would be advised.

The Chairman commented on the very valuable work of the specials in the town. He remarked that the area was very lucky to have such a large and dedicated team and that the team was working very well with the local Neighbourhood teams

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting and closed the meeting at 20.45 hours.