

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

Notes of the **POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETING** for the **Helston Policing Sector** held at Helston Methodist Church, Coinagehall Street, Helston, on Tuesday 17 March 2010 at 19.30hrs.

PRESENT

Police Authority

Mr M Clayton (Chair)

Mr M Hicks (Member), Ms J Norris (Asst Chief Executive), Mrs C Horton (Administrator)

Constabulary

Superintendent M Orpe (LPA Commander – West Cornwall), Inspector C Coad (Sector Inspector – Helston & the Lizard), PC A Butcher (Neighbourhood Beat Manager – Helston Town).

23 people attended the meeting as recorded on the attendance register.

1. Welcome & Housekeeping

The Chairman welcomed everyone and introduced himself as one of the three Police Authority members who represent Cornwall Council. He also introduced Mike Hicks who is the Police Authority member representing the Isles of Scilly, and Joy Norris, Assistant Chief Executive, Police Authority. The Chairman welcomed Charlotte Chadwick, who is employed by Cornwall Council as the Community Network Manager for the area and who plays a pivotal role in community engagement. The Police Officers in attendance all introduced themselves.

2. Matters of Interest from the Police Authority

The Chairman drew attention to the Police Authority newsletter and highlighted a number of matters of interest, including the appointment of a new Chief Executive, Ms Sue Howl. He also reported that the Police Authority had recently set the Police precept for 2010/11 and approved indicative budgets for 2011/12 and 2012/13. The precept has increased by 14p per week for a band D property.

The Chairman explained the Community Messaging system which enables the police to contact members of the public to ask for their help to prevent or solve a crime in the local area. He requested that all those present complete a form with their contact details so that they can be added to the Community Messaging system.

3/4. Police Report & Discussion on “Local Policing in the Area”

Inspector Caroline Coad introduced herself and explained that she had been in post as Sector Inspector for Helston and the Lizard for approximately 18 months. She explained that the geographical area covered by her team had changed over the past 12 months, with the parishes to the east of Helston becoming part of the Falmouth area. The area is now exactly aligned with the Cornwall Council Community Network area which enables good partnership working and excellent links have been established with Charlotte Chadwick, the Network Manager. There have also been some personnel changes with the Neighbourhood Beat Managers swapping areas in order to bring new enthusiasm to each area. Insp Coad reported that:

- 290 fewer crimes have been reported in the year to date than at this time last year. This is an average of 15 crimes per week compared to 25-30 last year.
- The detection rate is up by 5.7%

The current Partners & Communities Together (PACT) priorities in the area are speeding, anti-social driving and youth anti-social behaviour. Red Zones have been identified to tackle these issues.

PC Anne Butcher introduced herself as the Neighbourhood Beat Manager for Helston Town. She outlined the work that has been on-going in the Bulwark Estate where problems had been identified through the PACT and Youth PACT processes:

- A survey of the local residents was carried out, followed by a multi-agency meeting which led to a very positive and successful Community Action Day.
- A project to refurbish the play area had been designed and developed in conjunction with the local young people, for which funding of £80,000 is currently being sought.
- A number of people have volunteered to be the founder members of a new residents association which will be open to all residents of the area regardless of the tenure of their homes.
- Community Payback has been enlisted to improve the area by painting local properties.
- It is hoped that, through community involvement and local ownership of the improvements, people will be encouraged to respect each other and their surroundings and therefore reduce future problems in the area.

Superintendent Martin Orpe reported that, according to a recent survey, Devon and Cornwall is the 3rd safest place to live in the country and people who come into contact with the police are very satisfied with the service they receive. However, those who do not have direct contact with the Force are often negative or ambivalent about the service and therefore there is a Force-wide focus on improving public confidence and encouraging the reporting of crime.

5. Open Session – General Questions on Policing Issues

The Police Officers and Members of the Authority responded to the following questions from the public:

- Lack of information available to Neighbourhood Watch (NW) members – a new system for the cascading of information through NW Co-ordinators is being trialled in Porthleven. This will then be rolled out to all groups. NW is a fantastic and under-used resource and the force are 100% committed to improving the working relationship.
- Neighbourhood Team in Porthleven – the Officers were praised and thanked in particular for their work with the Neighbourhood Watch groups in the area.
- Change of PCSO hatbands – although there was some concern about the hatbands now being the same colour as those worn by Helston Town Band, the local Officers are not concerned and still feel respected for the work they do.
- Cars parked on pavements in the town centre – a recent operation was undertaken in Church Street/Cross Street, but Insp Coad agreed to look into the matter again. She requested that people report offences so that they can be dealt with and explained that the police are working closely with the Civil Enforcement Officers.
- Enforcement of 20mph speed limits – these speed limits are only advisory at present although drivers can be charged for driving without due care and attention. A Community Speedwatch scheme is planned for the town and a successful scheme is already in operation in Leedstown and Praze-an-Beeble.
- Lack of a police call centre based in Cornwall – many improvements have been made at the call centre, including changes to the shift pattern and better training, and this has resulted in a 98% customer satisfaction rate. It does not matter where the call centre is based as long as the calls are handled correctly. The Police Authority has been monitoring the concerns about the call centre for some time and a presentation was recently made to its Community Engagement committee to report on the improvements that have been made. Complaints are taken very seriously and monitored on an on-going basis. Ms Norris agreed to provide some additional information to the questioner.
- Helston Town Warden – Supt Orpe introduced Craig Bowcutt, the Town Warden, and thanked him for his work as part of the team helping to improve the town.

- Concern about the level of unreported crime – although the number of unreported crimes are not believed to be high, the police are very keen to encourage people to report all crimes so that problem areas can be identified and issues tackled.
- Helston Police Cadets – the police have been working with Helston School to set up a new group which is due to start in June.
- Funding for projects – from the 1st April, each Cornwall Council member will have a budget of £8,500 to help tackle issues within their Community Network area.
- Low attendance at Police Authority Liaison Meetings – different forms of publicity and alternative venues were discussed. It was noted that the low turn-out could be as a result of the low crime levels and general public satisfaction; however the Police Authority is currently reviewing the way the meetings are run.

The Chairman thanked the audience for their participation and also thanked the Officers in attendance for their input.

6. Independent Custody Visiting Report

As there was no Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) present, Joy Norris outlined their role. Volunteers are appointed to monitor the conditions in custody suites to ensure that standards are being maintained. They visit, unannounced, in pairs and each custody suite will receive between 2 and 4 visits each month. There are approximately 60 ICVs across Devon and Cornwall and anyone interested in volunteering should contact the Police Authority.

7. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

Dates and venues to be advised.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 21.00hrs.