

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

Notes of the **POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETING – KERRIER** held at Redruth School, Tolgus Vean, Redruth, on Wednesday 23 September 2009 at 19.30hrs.

PRESENT

Authority

Mr M Hicks Chairman
Mr M Clayton (Member), Mrs C Horton (Administrator)

Constabulary

Inspector R Hockin (Sector Inspector – Camborne, Pool & Redruth), SC Inspector L Higginson, Sergeant A Grigg (Neighbourhood Team Leader - Camborne), Sergeant P Grigg (Traffic), PC R Jenkins (Neighbourhood Beat Manager - Redruth North).

22 people attended the meeting, 19 of whom had signed the attendance register.

1. Welcome & Housekeeping

The Chairman welcomed everyone and introduced himself as the Police Authority member representing the Isles of Scilly and also introduced Mike Clayton who had recently been appointed to the Devon & Cornwall Police Authority (DCPA) representing the new Cornwall Council. The Chairman briefly outlined the role and responsibilities of the Police Authority and explained that any issues arising from the meeting would be fed back to the relevant person for action.

2. Matters of Interest from the Police Authority

The Chairman drew attention to the Police Authority newsletter which gives the latest information about the Authority, along with contact details and the dates of the next full Police Authority meetings. He also explained that one of the primary functions of the DCPA is consultation with the public and he requested that all those in attendance complete a 'consultation daisy' and give their response to the statement "I am confident that the police in my area deal with anti social behaviour and crime".

The Chairman explained that the DCPA is currently in the process of recruiting a new Chief Executive and a new Treasurer, and has also recently appointed a new Chairman - Mr Mike Bull, Vice Chairman – County Councillor Mr Bryan Preston, and four new independent members.

3. Police Report

Inspector Richard Hockin introduced himself and explained that he had been in post as Sector Inspector for Camborne, Pool and Redruth for 4 months, having previously been a Neighbourhood Team Leader in Penzance, and being a Police Officer for 12 years in total. The sector is very busy, with over 44,000 residents, and there are three main issues that are a concern in the area at present:

- Persistent drunken, yobbish behaviour which frequently results in fights and damage to property.
- An increase in burglary rates and theft from motor vehicles which is as a consequence of the actions of a few individuals.
- Consultation with the public and ensuring that policing is tailored to the needs of the local community.

Inspector Hockin went on to describe some of the actions that have been taken to date to try and tackle these issues:

- Red Zoning – areas are identified where problems frequently recur and officers go out on foot to target these areas, engage with local people and identify any problems. The current Red Zones are Trelowarren Street in Camborne and Troon. This system is supplemented by Street Briefings which take place where shifts overlap and the Sergeant will take officers into a specific area on foot patrol and identify any current issues.
- Pub Watch – additional work is required with pub landlords and their staff to ensure that they refuse to serve individuals who have already drunk to excess.
- Operation Restitution – a targeted policing team has been carrying out a series of dawn raids to 'round up' individuals who have been causing persistent problems with excessive drinking.
- Operation Raptor – plain clothes officers have been targeting vehicle crime through the use of unmarked 'covert capture cars'.
- Operation Tippett – officers have been working with the council's Anti Social Behaviour Team to identify young people underage drinking and have used headcams to record their behaviour to show their parents the problems they have been causing.
- Target Status – persistent offenders who refuse to improve their behaviour can be given Target Status which means they can then be stopped and searched at any time.
- Partners & Communities Together (PACT) – this process encourages the local community to identify and prioritise the most important issues in the local area and the PACT panel, which incorporates a wide range of local agencies and organisations, then takes responsibility for dealing with these priorities.

Inspector Hockin ended by explaining that he has a very busy, well motivated team and he is proud of the fact that the weekly crime level in the area has dropped by 30% in the past 6 months. He has started to write a monthly column in the West Briton to provide a response to the regular comments and complaints that are published on the letters page and to inform the public about the work of his team.

PC Rob Jenkins introduced himself as the Neighbourhood Beat Manager for the Redruth North area. He gave an update on the work being carried out in his area:

- Operation Goodnight was so successful last year that it was not necessary to operate the same curfew system this year due to the resulting drop in anti social behaviour and increase in parental responsibility. Street Games, such as Football and Basketball, have been run during the summer as a diversion tactic and this has contributed to a fall of 25% in total crime between April and August this year.
- Officers have been working with school children from 10 local schools to carry out speed checks and challenge speeding drivers. They have also been training members of the public, under the Community Speedwatch scheme, in the use of speed cameras so that they can carry out checks in their local area, record the details and pass the information on to the police.
- Operation Lara has targeted the use of motorcycles on the footpaths and bridleways in the area resulting in a number of prosecutions and bikes being seized.
- The RedYouth Dance Project is currently running a campaign called 'Music Against Knives' and they are planning an event to be held in October.

Special Constabulary Inspector Lee Higginson gave a short presentation about the voluntary officers of the Special Constabulary (SC). He explained that there are currently 15 SC officers covering the Camborne, Pool and Redruth area, all of whom live and work locally so have a vested interest in improving the area. They give their time on a completely voluntary basis and receive the same training as regular officers, but over a shorter timescale. Officers are aged between 19 and 60 and they assist with all areas of policing including response, traffic and special operations as required, and can be tasked by regular officers to supplement their full time staff. There is currently a national recruitment campaign to raise the profile of the SC and anyone interested in further information should contact Devon and Cornwall Police on 08452 777444.

4. Open Session – General Questions on Policing Issues

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

- Concern about police Cautions being accepted without taking legal advice – there are ample opportunities for offenders to take legal advice before accepting a Caution and the implications of having a Caution are explained. The procedure for taking someone into custody and issuing a Caution is very clearly set out in the Police & Criminal Evidence Act. Insp Hockin agreed to arrange for a Custody Sergeant to attend a Miscellaneous Licensing Committee meeting to explain the process to members so that they are better able to deal with applicants who have a Caution on their record.
- Drinking on the streets in Redruth – the town centre is a 'No Drinking Zone' and therefore PC Jenkins agreed to contact the CCTV unit to find out why offenders are not being drawn to the attention of the police.
- Lack of requests for license reviews by the licensing committee – Insp Hockin was pleased to report that there are no specific concerns about licensees at present, however there is a lack of involvement in the Pub Watch scheme and he is currently looking into this.
- Increased use of Restorative Justice – this had recently been used very successfully with 2 young offenders in Kehelland. It relies on the co-operation of both victims and offenders who then face each other in a police mediated session. It can be very effective and often has a greater impact than a fine or imprisonment, particularly for young or first-time offenders.
- Suspected 'spiking' of drinks in local clubs – victims need to be encouraged to report suspected incidents as it is very difficult to identify this as a problem if no pattern or links with a particular venue can be determined.
- Closure of public toilets in Redruth due to inappropriate use – the toilets were recently closed due to pro-active work by the police but have now been re-opened following alterations being made to try and prevent future inappropriate use. The local neighbourhood team are working with the police diversity officer to tackle the issue and the officers will continue to check the toilets as part of their beat.
- Graffiti in Redruth – the police were thanked for their pro-active work in tackling this issue and for engaging the Probation Service in cleaning up the town.
- Beach PCSOs in Portreath – these officers were thanked for the terrific difference they made to crime levels during the summer months. It was explained that the service is externally funded but it was hoped it would be repeated again next year.

The Chairman thanked the audience for their participation and also thanked Insp Hockin and PC Jenkins for their input.

5. Independent Custody Visiting Report

Mike Eddowes has been an Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) for 15 years. He explained that those in custody are innocent until proven guilty and therefore have a right to be treated correctly. It is the responsibility of the ICV to check this and ensure that acceptable standards are met. Members of the public who are interested in volunteering as an ICV were encouraged to contact the DCPA.

6. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

Dates and venues to be advised.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 20.50hrs.