

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

Notes of the **POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETING – PENWITH** held at Cape Cornwall School, St Just, on Tuesday, 14 October 2008 at 19.30hrs.

Present:

Police Authority

Mr M Hicks - Chairman

Mrs C Horton (Administrator)

Constabulary

Superintendent M Orpe (Local Policing Area Commander – West Cornwall), Inspector M Eccles (Sector Inspector - Penzance), Sergeant P Grigg (Traffic)

13 people attended the meeting as recorded in the attendance register

1. Welcome & Housekeeping

The Chairman introduced himself and the officers present at the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. He explained that the minutes of the meeting would be available on the Police Authority web-site and that any important issues would be fed back and dealt with at the next Police Authority meeting in December.

2. Local Policing Summary 2008/2009

The Chairman explained that the Police Authority has a legal obligation to produce and distribute the Local Policing Summary which outlines the role of the Authority and gives details of the Police performance in the past year along with targets for the forthcoming year. There had been problems with the distribution of this document to all households last year, but it was hoped that these issues would be resolved this year.

3. Consultation Questions

The Chairman asked for a show of hands to assess how many people had received the Local Policing Summary through the post. 3 of the 13 people present recalled receiving it, all of whom had read the information and found it to be relevant.

4. Police Report

Superintendent Orpe explained that he was one of three new Local Policing Area (LPA) Commanders in Cornwall. These posts have been introduced following a recent review of the structure of the Force in Devon and Cornwall and have replaced the former Chief Inspector posts. Superintendent Orpe covers West Cornwall (Penwith, Kerrier & Isles of Scilly) and is responsible for a Support Inspector along with 4 Sector Inspectors who each cover Penzance, St Ives/Hayle/Isles of Scilly, Camborne/Redruth and Helston/Lizard.

Sergeant Grigg introduced himself as Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) for Road Traffic Investigations which is a non-geographic role managed from Middlemoor, but based in Camborne. He is also the Family Liaison Co-ordinator and, as such, is responsible for ensuring that people receive the best support available at a very traumatic time. He works with 4 other officers to tackle antisocial driving and terrorist threats as well as dealing with road traffic incidents. The department is very successful and receives reports of a high level of customer satisfaction.

Inspector Eccles explained that he is Sector Inspector for Penzance which includes the rural area out to St Erth, Zennor and Goldsithney. He gave the following report on performance in the area:

- There has been a slight increase of 3.7% in the total crime in the area over the past 12 months, mainly as a result of an increase in Violent Crime and Criminal Damage, both of which are often

associated with alcohol related incidents; but also as a result of the pro-active work that has been undertaken in the area in relation to drug dealing.

- Vehicle Crime remains stable.
- There has been a major decrease of 26% in Domestic Burglaries.
- The Detection Rate in the Penzance area is the 2nd best within the Cornwall Basic Command Unit (BCU) and 4th within the whole Force.

Inspector Eccles also highlighted the following issues:

- There has been a large increase in the number of calls regarding people drinking in Penzance Town Centre, in particular during the day, which often creates a negative atmosphere in the area. This is a problem that is replicated across the rural area, for example in St Just there are problems with young people drinking and becoming a nuisance. Inspector Eccles requested that people report these issues as they arise, either through the call centre (08452 777444) or via the PACT process, to enable the problems to be tackled.
- Speeding vehicles in the Newbridge area have recently been targeted following the issue being raised by local residents at a PACT meeting. 30 enforcement tickets have been issued in the past month, the road surface has been changed and the Traffic section has also been asked to assess the area.
- A 15 year old boy, whose graffiti had been identified through You Tube, has been apprehended for over 70 incidents of damage to property on the rail network, in the town centre and on private property.
- The main focus in the coming months will be tackling alcohol related issues and antisocial behaviour in Penzance.

Inspector Eccles explained that the low levels of crime in the area make Penwith one of the safest places to live and pointed out that success is also about meeting the needs of the community and not just about crime statistics.

5. Open Session – General Questions on Policing Issues

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

- Missing CCTV camera on Mackays in Penzance – Inspector Eccles explained that the whole CCTV system is due to be replaced and is currently out to tender, but agreed to raise this issue with the CCTV management company.
- Increase in ‘boy racers’ in Penzance Harbourside Car Park – This has been tackled in the past but the problem has returned, therefore the police will soon be targeting the drivers again. Inspector Eccles has been in touch with the Town Council to re-emphasise the importance of them installing new barriers to prevent entry to the car park at night.
- Disturbances linked to the late night economy in Penzance – The change in licensing hours has not increased the number of offences but has moved them later into the night/early hours of the morning which makes them more difficult to police. Local officers are currently working with the licensees to ensure they have appropriate admissions policies and to make them more responsible for their customers.
- Minimal reprimand of a youth detained for pulling a knife in St Just – Inspector Eccles assured the meeting that knife crime is taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately. He agreed to look into this specific case.
- Repeated damage to vehicles in St Just – This often occurs overnight and as a result of alcohol. It is important that these crimes are reported in order that patterns can be established and tackled.
- Regular intruder in garden in West Place, St Just – Inspector Eccles will ask the neighbourhood team to follow this up.

- Poor police cover in Penzance town centre at night – Late shifts and night shifts work together at weekends to strengthen the cover, but problems occur when there is a major incident as all resources will be diverted to assist and there is only a finite number of officers available.
- Traffic monitoring in Newbridge, Sennen and St Buryan – this was very successful, but there are limited traffic resources available to repeat the monitoring on a regular basis as they have to be allocated according to demand and the severity of the problem. It is often the perception of speed that is the problem in rural areas rather than drivers exceeding the speed limit, however, the Neighbourhood Team will still monitor speeding when they visit the area.
- Mobile Speed Visor for Land's End Parishes - Inspector Eccles would support a bid to the County Council Member's budget to purchase a speed visor which could be moved around the area.
- Dangerous driving in Market Place (outside Wetherspoons) – Inspector Eccles will contact County Highways to request improved road markings and signage to ensure that drivers are aware that the road is not a one-way street.
- Community Police Offices – There are now several police bases across the area – in St Just, Newlyn, Treneer and Heamoor – which are working well and act as a good point of contact for the local community. These will continue and be developed in future.

6. Independent Custody Visiting Report

There was no Independent Custody Visitor present.

7. 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 relevant contact details.

He explained that the Authority handles a budget of £246 million and reassured the meeting that the Authority's investments are secure and not subject to the current banking crisis. The Police Authority is responsible for setting the annual precept which, in the current financial year, was increased by 7.9% to enable the planned reinstatement of 200 officers to frontline duties. This process will be complete by 31st March 2009 and will include 6 officers being based in Penzance.

8. Date and Venues of Future Meetings

The next Police Authority Liaison Meeting to be held in Penwith will take place on Tuesday 17 February 2009 at 19.30hrs in Committee Room (1), Penwith District Council, St Clare, Penzance.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 20.45hrs.