

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

Notes of the **PERRANPORTH POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETING** for the **Truro Policing Sector** held at the Memorial Hall, Wheal Leisure, Perranporth on 11 March 2010 at 7.30 pm

Present:

Police Authority

Mr B Jenkin (Chairman)

Mrs K Olver (Administrator)

Constabulary

Inspector M Richards, PC R Brierley

22 people attended of whom 19 signed the Attendance Sheet.

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced himself and Inspector Richards.

2. Matters of Interest from the Police Authority

The Chairman outlined the role and make up of the Police Authority. He had been a new member of the Police Authority since September 2009 when elected by Cornwall Council. The training provided by the Police Authority had been very interesting and informative and he had also spent time in the Police telephone call control centre. He considered that the staff at the call centre were doing a very good job and that the service provided had improved greatly since the call centre scheme was introduced.

3. Police Report

Inspector Richards presented his report:-

- He commented that he had missed the report regarding the Police aired earlier in the day on the radio about the Police service and expenses. The force would need to save £14,000,000 over the coming three years, however, there was no intention to make immediate cuts in front line services.
- Inspector Richards had been in charge of the Truro district for seven years and there were more front line Police in the district than when he came to the area. Devon and Cornwall Police were one of the best value for money forces in the country with one of the lowest precepts. The Truro and Perranporth area was one of the safest areas within the Devon and Cornwall Police force due to falling crime levels. Over the past twelve months there had been an increase in proactive policing, with a significant number of drugs arrests and this proactive work was reflected in the crime figures for the area.
- There were particularly good figures for the past 11 months for the area to the end of February 2010 with an 8% reduction in house burglaries, reduction in car theft and commercial burglaries and a total reduction in crime of almost 5%. There had been a rise in violent crime of 10% over the past 11 months and this was to be investigated more closely. The crimes seemed to consist of more harassment and stalking with an increase in such incidents of 70% over the past year. There had also been an increase in the number of assaults on Police Officers. Despite these increases, he considered that the figures were generally very reassuring and good news for the local area.

4. Open Session – General Questions on Policing Issues

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

- Concern was raised regarding skateboarders in the town who had been threatening in their behaviour towards residents and shopkeepers. PC Roger Brierly commented that there had previously been a byelaw in place until the new Cornwall Council came into being but that Police were finding it difficult to deal with problems with skateboarders since the introduction of the new Council. Skateboarding was a problem in a number of areas and there was a need to have a corporate way of dealing with this, including the use of antisocial behaviour stage letters. Members of the public were asked to contact the Police to report any incidents with skateboarders and Inspector Richards agreed to speak with Simon Tonkin at Perranporth Police regarding the matter. It was likely that the matter had not been identified during the PACT process due to the very low levels of returns during that local consultative process.
- It was noted that the PACT process had highlighted speeding in Perrancombe as a neighbourhood concern, however, nothing appeared to have been done in response to this. Inspector Richards commented that the highway design issues were a matter for Cornwall Council to address. Residents considered that they had been treated very badly by Mr Tatlow from the Council. There were similar problems in the Goonhavern area and additional Police enforcement work had taken place, however, the highway design issues were also a problem in this locality. Mr Jenkins agreed to raise the matter with the Highways Department at Cornwall Council.
- A resident commented on his concern regarding the pressure that Police Officers in Truro were working under. He had tried to speak with Officers regarding a burglary incident at his home but had found it difficult to get through and they had been very busy with other cases.
- A resident commented that she felt safe in the neighbourhood and commended the local Officers. She had noticed a number of bull terrier dogs in the area and questioned whether the Police had noted any concern regarding these dogs in the locality. Inspector Richards replied that there had been no problem identified with trophy dogs in the area, nor had there been any reports of dog fighting.
- A query was raised regarding whether there were any problems reported to the Police regarding racism towards residents in the area. Inspector Richards commented that it was sometimes difficult to get minority groups in the area to engage with Police Officers, however, specialist Officers were available to support any complaints received. Very few complaints had been received and the Police were anxious to ensure that the larger community understood that such complaints were treated very seriously. The Police were very keen to engage with and gain the support of the community and Diversity Specialist Officers were available to support the staff.
- Concern was raised regarding splitting staff between two stations in Truro. It was noted that the new office had been set up to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and was open from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm for public enquiries.
- A member of the public commented that he felt that there had been a great improvement in Policing in Truro over the previous two years. He had set up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme with great assistance from the local PCSO and sergeant and had attended a recent presentation in Truro College when the work of Officers had been recognised. He considered that local residents should be invited to such presentations to see the work of Officers and that confidence in the Police force had improved since the introduction of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in his area.

- Mr Hicks, a member of the Police Authority, commented on the increased numbers of Police Officers and the Chief Constable's vision to bring the force into the top 10 forces in the Country. This was part of a three year vision which had seen the Police precept increase by 7.9 % in the first year with an increase in the current year of 4.95%. The increased precept had allowed 200 Officers to return to front line duties and there were now 3500 Police Officers and 536 PCSOs. The budget had been set for 2010/2011, however, there could be problems in future years due to budgetary cuts. He commented that the Devon and Cornwall Police Authority had set one of the lowest precepts in the country and that the force were one of the lowest cost forces in the country. The Chief Constable was looking at making savings of £14,000,000 over the next few years and it was hoped that these savings would not affect front line policing.
- A resident of Penair View commented that he was very pleased with the Police Support provided to the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme there. He was concerned that, over the past year, the messages received from the messaging service had reduced from two or three e-mails per month to one every four to six weeks. He commented that there had been very good support in the old Carrick council area for the Neighbourhood Watch scheme but that this seemed to have declined since the introduction of Cornwall Council. Inspector Richards would arrange for the Neighbourhood Beat Manager, Adam Partridge to get in touch. It was hoped that the scheme could be revamped and further developed in the future.
- It was noted that there had been a high turnover of Special Constables over the previous few years and that there were currently 12-15 regular Specials in the Truro area. It was hoped that a further 12 Specials would be engaged in the near future.
- The licensing situation for the cumulative impact zone required reinstating within the next twelve months. This had been in place for 2-2 ½ years and had been working well.
- The statistics provided by Inspector Richards recorded that there had been increases in harassment and fraud. It was noted that the number of fraud cases had increased when an offender had admitted to a number of additional offences. Shop lifting offences were rarely reported and, although the number of offences may be rising due to the recession, there were fewer store detectives employed to deal with these offences which may account for the under-reported. A considerable amount of bank theft was under-reported as this was written off by banks and not notified. House burglaries were almost always reported, as were car thefts and it was felt, therefore, that these figures were more likely to be accurate.

5. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

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

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting and closed the meeting at 20.35 pm.