

**DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY**

**21 MAY 2004**

(FOI – Open)

Report by Chief Constable

**RESTORATIVE POLICING**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Police Authority on the progress of Restorative Policing within the Force and, in particular, Restorative Justice Training for Neighbourhood Beat Managers.

**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE TRAINING**

2. The Force has committed to train Neighbourhood Beat Managers (*NBMs*) in the use of Restorative Justice (*RJ*). A highly effective intervention and problem-solving approach when used well and in appropriate circumstances. Critical to its success is quality training and integration into mainstream processes. A bespoke accredited training package for delivery to NBMs, together with awareness training for first-line supervisors and senior managers has been researched and commissioned. A comprehensive strategy for roll-out of the training is also essential and the lessons learnt from other forces are being taken into account.

3. RJ training for NBMs essentially provides a preventative, problem-solving approach to criminal, anti-social behaviour and conflicts within the community. Evidence suggests that it should provide substantial gains in community capital as well as benefits across the whole of the Criminal Justice (*CJ*) process including:

- Increased victim satisfaction
- Reduced fear of crime
- Improvements in community cohesion
- Reduced crime and re-offending rates
- Increased police efficiency
- More effective administration of justice
- Greater public confidence in the CJ process

**RATIONALE -  
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE - THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY (JULY 2003)**

4. The Government aims to maximise the use of RJ in the Criminal Justice System (*CJS*) where it is known to work well to meet the needs of victims and to reduce re-offending. The Strategy aims to build in high quality RJ at all stages of the CJS.

5. In response to the Government's Strategy, ACPO are keen to take the RJ agenda forward, given that:-

- **It is better for victims:** Time after time carefully constructed studies have demonstrated high levels of victim confidence, satisfaction and reassurance. RJ is absolutely central to delivering on better victim confidence.
- **It is a key part of civic and community engagement:** RJ involves victims, offenders and the community in dealing with offending behaviour and provides the potential both to solve problems and increase public reassurance.
- **It can reduce re-offending:** A considerable body of high quality evidence identifies that RJ can significantly reduce the likelihood of future offending.

6. ACPO point out that there are other, broader philosophic reasons and other more detailed reasons for wanting to push ahead with RJ, but that these three reasons alone provide a 'business case' which should place the implementation of RJ as a key element of any reforming strategy for Criminal Justice.

7. Peter Neyroud, in his ACPO response to Restorative Justice: The Government's Strategy (October 2003) said "The Police Service, led by ACPO, wants to remain in the vanguard of its promotion and development for the benefit of the public we serve".

**PROGRESSING RJ TRAINING FOR NBMS**

8. The training of a growing body of NBMs in RJ will provide a firm foundation for forthcoming developments as RJ is introduced across the CJ system in line with the Government's Strategy.

9. A fully accredited, bespoke package for Devon and Cornwall Constabulary has been commissioned. This corporate approach to training all NBMs across the Force will place Devon and Cornwall at the forefront nationally in this important area of work.

10. Sir Charles POLLARD, member of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, has written to the Chief Constable, commending our commitment to this approach, stating "I think you will find that the investment will be repaid many times, both in Community Capital terms and in money terms. And you will be the first force to do this, and to receive the benefits – the first of many I should think, and you may find this will be the first step towards all Police Officers routinely being trained in RJ in the longer-term future".

11. The training of NBMs in RJ fully supports the Engagement Circle, Principles of Policing and Problem Solving, and the Command Team have stated they are all agreed this is a priority area.

## **TIMESCALES**

12. The timescales in relation to this are listed below

- 07 May 2004 - Senior Officers' Information Event
- 10 May 2004 - Commencement of 'Training for Trainers'
- 17 May 2004 - Commencement of NBM Training in South and West Devon BCU.
- July / August 2004 - Review of progress / evaluation
- September 2004 - Roll-out of NBM Training across remaining three BCUs

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS IN RELATION TO VICTIMS:**

13. It has been shown that:

- Victims who participate show consistently high levels of satisfaction and fairness
- Victims who participate have reduced fear, particularly of re-victimisation by the offender

14. The Oxford University July 2002 report of the 46 Youth Justice Board-funded RJ projects found that 79% of victims had been able to put the offence behind them, and 70% thought the offender better understood the impact of the offence on the victim.

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS IN RELATION TO REDUCING OFFENDING:**

15. The findings in relation to reducing re-offending show that:

- Re-offending rates after RJ interventions are considerably improved in many cases
- Rates of completion and compliance with agreements are higher than for court-ordered alternatives
- Offenders have consistently high levels of satisfaction and sense of fairness

### **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AS A CRIME PREVENTION MEASURE:**

16. Few studies have been undertaken to date to assess the impact of RJ in terms of community problem solving. However, a recent evaluation of the introduction of RJ training to Local Authority Care Home Staff in Hertfordshire, saw a 60% reduction in terms of incidents reported to police from those establishments over an 18-month period.

17. The proposed training package for NBMs in Devon and Cornwall is similar in nature and style to that commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council as above.

18. Opportunity for a research-based evaluation of the impact of the introduction of RJ training to NBMs in Devon and Cornwall is currently being sought.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

19. It is recommended the Police Authority note the contents of the report.

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