

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES of a meeting of the **Devon and Cornwall Police Authority** held at Police Headquarters, Middlemoor, Exeter on **Friday 18 July 2003**.

Present:

Mrs J Owen (Chairman), Mr D Money (Vice-Chairman), Mr L D Brokenshire, Mr M I R Bull, Mr C Bulley,
Mrs A Colborne, Sir Simon Day, Mrs O England, Mr B C Greenslade, Mr S M Malloni, Mr M Nevitt, Mrs C J Ryan, Mr J Smith, Mrs A Talbot, Mr P C Tregunna, and Mr C L Wallin.

APOLOGIES

Mrs G M R Cleveland, Mr T Evans and Mr W D Thomas

P/790 ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE TONY MELVILLE

The Chairman welcomed the newly appointed ACC, Tony Melville to his first Police Authority meeting. Members wished Mr Melville well in his new post.

P/791 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

P/792 ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

P/793 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2003 were signed as a correct record.

P/794 MATTERS ARISING

[P/779] The Chief Constable advised that the High Sheriff was invited to all BCU award ceremonies.

P/795 CHIEF CONSTABLES REPORT

Mrs Wallis had now completed 12 months in post and reported that the year had been both rewarding and challenging. Members considered the report of the Chief Constable and were updated on a number of incidents noted in the report.

Major incidents and Policing Diary

1.1 – 1.5 Many of the murders / attempted murders reported had been committed by persons known to the victims. Statistics showed that every four days, a woman was a victim of domestic violence and the Force were concentrating efforts on combating this.

1.8 – 1.13 A series of serious assault and rape crimes were reported. These crimes had been committed by persons not known to the victims. Further enquires were being undertaken.

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P/795 CHIEF CONSTABLES REPORT (Cont'd)

1.14 – 1.16 Members were assured that ACC Stowe, who was responsible for the Force Personnel portfolio, continued to check on officers who had been the victim of an assault to ensure that they received the necessary support.

1.17 – 1.19 The reports of incidents involving firearms showed the variety of situations in which firearms were being used. All three incidents had been resolved satisfactorily.

1.21 – 1.22 Joint funding from the Arson Task Force was used to help tackle arson. This funding was greatly appreciated.

1.29 Police Authority Members had been amongst those evacuated from Middlemoor after their meeting on 23 May. The Chief Constable reported that this was due to a severed gas main, and apologised for any inconvenience caused.

Operational Priorities

2.1 Feedback from local Devon residents on the policing of Smeathorpe linked to the Glastonbury festival was very positive. This operation had sought to prevent illegal gatherings on sites close to the festival, on the Devon / Somerset border.

Mrs Ryan had been asked at a recent Police Authority Liaison meeting in Bodmin to pass on local residents' thanks to the officers who had prevented a rave on Bodmin moor.

2.5 The Chief Constable reported on the 'Catch a Rat' initiative (operation PUMA). This operation involved police in Plymouth BCU working in partnership with a local newspaper and Crimestoppers and encouraged the public to call in anonymously with the names of persons suspected of drug dealing. Much promotional work had been done in the launch of this initiative and as a result 24 people had so far been arrested. Many had pleaded guilty and 20 had been remanded in custody. Overall, 74 offences had been detected. Information received from Crimestoppers had directly resulted in 17 arrests.

2.14 The Force had dedicated considerable resources to the policing of the Run to the Sun event. The event was a great success with a comparatively low number of arrests made.

2.15 Positive feedback had been given by members of the public attending Police Authority Liaison meetings at which presentations on the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing had been given. In particular, Plymouth and Teignbridge meetings had produced constructive feedback.

Awards and Commendations

3.1 The Chief Constable reported that the Officers who had attended the Bravery Awards had thoroughly enjoyed the event. The ceremony had received extensive coverage on channel 5.

Since the report, four officers had been involved in an incredible rescue in Newquay and the Chief Constable hoped that they too would be recognised for their bravery.

Mr Smith reported that two officers in Teignmouth had rescued a woman from the sea. The officers' bravery had been noted by the local community and at a recent Police Authority Liaison meeting, Mr Smith had been asked to write and thank the officers involved.

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Force Strength

The personnel snapshot taken on 30 June 2003 showed that the total number of police officers was 3247.1. This was one above the funded post profile (target).

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Representation of female officers stood at 23%. This was greater than the national average and had increased over the last two months.

Members considered the posters enclosed at the end of the Chief Constable's report entitled 'Spotlight on Success'. In particular, the June issue reported on the Audit of the National Crime Recording Standard by the Audit Commission. The Force had received a 'green traffic light' - the top mark under this system. The Chief Constable paid tribute to Graham Oakden who was responsible for ensuring the figures were correctly recorded. Issue 2 reported on the success of the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing. The Chief Constable thanked those responsible for producing the posters used to promote the initiative.

Mrs Talbot asked for the age profile of the Force. This information would be provided to the HR Committee in due course, however Mrs Talbot was assured that Devon & Cornwall Constabulary was a well balanced Force in respect of officer age. This was partly due to the intake of transferee officers and because new recruits were typically in their mid 20's. This recruitment policy ensured that the Force had sufficient officers with adequate experience.

ACC Pearce agreed to provide Mr Tregunna with an update to the recent spate of farm fires in Cornwall after the meeting.

P/796 DRUGS IN DEVON AND CORNWALL

ACC Pearce updated Members on the current impact of drugs within Devon and Cornwall. Strategic assessments, carried out every three to six months, showed that crack cocaine had not had the impact on Devon & Cornwall as had been seen in other parts of the country. Ecstasy, other illicit drugs and / or alcohol use however was more prevalent than had been thought. The report detailed the statistics involved.

The Force control strategy sought to reduce the impact of drugs on the communities of Devon & Cornwall. Intelligence and Incident Management Units played a key role in gathering and interpreting information and intelligence on those involved and the effect they had on the supply of drugs. Preventative measures, aimed particularly at young people, were used to try and discourage use or experimentation of drugs.

Police Officers worked with teachers, Doctors and Health Workers to put together constructed lesson plans to inform children of the dangers of drugs. These were delivered in schools throughout the region, with those schools where known drug problems existed being particularly targeted.

The Force worked in partnership with many other agencies and Forces. Additionally, a number of Home Office funded pilots and Force initiated operations were currently ongoing. These included operations COMPASS and PUMA, details of which were included in the report. The initiative to test individuals arrested for acquisitive crime for drug use was particularly welcomed by Members.

The Chief Constable advised that in Plymouth, the police had placed a £1m bid in the Invest To Save funding round and she was hopeful that this would proceed.

Members were advised that ACC Pearce would give a presentation on Drugs Action Teams and Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships at their Seminar on 31 July and would take that opportunity to update on the effectiveness of these partnerships.

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Members were pleased to hear that the time delay for referral to a Drug Treatment Programme had reduced to 3 months from 12. This was still not satisfactory however considerable work was ongoing to try and improve the situation.

P/796 DRUGS IN DEVON AND CORNWALL (Cont'd)

The figures in the report that detailed the percentage reduction in offending of those that had participated in Drug Treatment Programmes provided a snapshot of the situation at one moment in time. The monitoring of offenders post treatment was achieved by collating intelligence from the probation service, drug agencies and drug workers. It was not however possible to report exactly how many offenders having completed a treatment programme had remained clean. Members would welcome information on the number of people that actually completed drug treatment programmes.

RESOLVED to note the report.

P/797 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT – RECOVERY OF COSTS

The intention to charge for policing services at profit making events had caused some considerable public debate. To put the matter into perspective, ACC Pearce commented that recently, traffic management of a single event alone had cost £55,000. Policing of these major events also meant that other policing priorities were not being addressed.

Members were assured that the intention was to charge for profit making events only, and these would be judged on their own merits. Small and non-profit making events would not be effected. Members were also advised that any charges made would not be above actual cost of service – no profit would be made by the Force. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister would provide guidance to local authorities on charging policies. A draft copy of the guidance was currently available.

All Chief Executives would be contacted by the Force to advise of the proposed policy; the Chief Constable and her team would be talking with Chief Executives in the autumn. Implementation of the new policy in April 2004 would be considerate of feedback obtained from the communities in Devon & Cornwall.

It was accepted that some charitable events could potentially be classed as profit making. This type of event, and others that proved difficult to judge would need careful consideration when deciding whether to charge or not. The Chief Constable welcomed the suggestion for Members to be involved in these discussions and suggested that this could be done at their regular meetings with BCU Commanders.

to note the Force's intention with regarding to charging as set out in the report.

The Treasurer presented the revenue and capital outturn 2002-03 report to Members. The outturn position had already been discussed in detail at a Budget Working Party held in June, and an issues report had been presented to the Resources Committee.

The reported outturn position showed an overspend against the budget of £2.4m. Detailed analysis of the figures was provided in the report and appendices. Monitoring reports presented throughout the year had indicated that the budget was under pressure in specific areas where demands on the Force had increased during the year. This included arrests and prisoner handling, major operations, forensics and call management. Measures had been taken to offset some of these cost pressures by containing spending in other areas, however spending very late in the year had resulted in an increase rather than a decrease in the overspend.

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It was proposed that the £2.4m overspend be carried forward via the Budget Management Fund and recovered in the current year (2003/04). Some £1m of this would fall upon devolved budget holders as part of the agreed budget management rules. The remainder would come from corporate budgets and progress for recovery would be reported back to the Budget Working Party. Measures were being taken by senior commanders to strengthen accountability at devolved budget level and to reinforce the need for sound financial management. Police Authority Members and the Treasurer now sitting on the Force Performance Monitoring Board would help strengthen the focus on the budget management process.

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Members' attention was drawn to the fact that the accounts contained a Minimum Revenue Position for the first time. This was a national cost that Authorities were required to charge to the accounts for the future repayment of debt. Currently this Authority had no external debt, however the mechanism had been triggered by the use of credit approvals to support the capital programme. The future use of the MRP was uncertain because of the advent of new rules on capital accounting arrangements likely from April 2004. For the meantime, it was proposed to fund the charge for 2002-03 from general balances.

In summary, Members were assured that the Police Authority had a sound record for budget management and the Treasurer was confident that the current situation could be turned around given firm management from within the Force. A report would be presented to Members in the Autumn, detailing the progress made.

1. That the proposed revenue and capital outturn for 2002-03 be approved, including the suggested treatment of carry forwards, accruals, provisions, reserves, revenue financing and capital financing;
2. That the measures taken to strengthen the budgetary control arrangements, particularly with regards to the further involvement of Members of the Resources Committee and the Treasurer, be noted and supported.

The Authority received reports of the Committee meetings that had taken place since the last meeting of the Authority.

- (1) A meeting of the Best Value Committee was held on 12 June 2003.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee. The following recommendations arose from the meeting.

[BV/294] Best Value Review of Partnership Working 2003

RESOLVED that the amended Best Value Review of Partnership Working be approved as being complete.

- (2) A meeting of the Complaints Monitoring Group was held on 15 May 2003.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee. There were no recommendations arising from the meeting.

Members were advised that following the renaming of the Force Internal Affairs Department to Professional Standards Department, this committee would consider changing its name to reflect the change.

- (3) A meeting of the Human Resources Committee was held on 2 July 2003.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee. The following recommendations arose from the meeting.

[HR/36] Better management of Ill Health

RESOLVED

1. the decision to refer a case to the SMP be delegated to the Chief Constable.
2. the final decision under Regulation A20 as to whether an officer can be retained or retired to be delegated to a panel comprising three members of the Human Resources Committee. The panel will be determined in relation to each case by the Chairman and vice-Chairman of the Committee – a member who has not received training will not be eligible to serve on a panel.

Members were reminded that SMPs were independent from both the Force and Authority.

[HR/37] Human Resource Plans

that the Human Resources Plan for 2003/04 as circulated with the agenda be approved.

3. A meeting of the Performance Management and Audit Committee was held on 4 June 2003.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee. There were no recommendations arising from the meeting.

4. A meeting of the Resources Committee was held on 1 July 2003.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee. Minute references in the briefing sheet were not consistent with the minutes in the minute pack. This was due to late changes to the minutes. The following minutes references are representative of those in the minutes.

The following recommendations arose from the meeting:-

[R/268] Premises Improvement Fund

RESOLVED that

Two bids be submitted under the PIF initiative

- (i) Refurbishment of Bude, Brixham, Totnes and Ilfracombe
- (ii) Refurbishment of Bodmin police station

Other matters discussed included (with minute references in brackets):-

[R/266]. Mrs Owen would write to the new Minister for crime reduction, policing and community safety, Hazel Blears, to seek a meeting to discuss budget concerns. The Association of Police Authorities had set up a working group which was representative of all Police Authorities and were working with the Home Secretary to ensure relevant information was fed into the Treasury. A campaign was to be launched in the Autumn to lobby for more central funding for policing.

P/800 SCHEME OF LEAD MEMBERS

Members were provided with a list of Lead members together with the Committees to which Lead members would be expected to report. Additional Lead Members would be appointed as and when required.

An operating protocol had been prepared to clarify the precise expectation of the role of the Lead Member. This included a requirement for Members to submit a report on their service area to the designated committee.

To aid Members in their Lead Member roles, it was agreed that a list of key officers' email addresses be provided.

that the list of Lead Members together with the operating protocol and reporting processes be adopted.

A report was submitted identifying the key issues raised at the recent seminar held to discuss the future of consultation. A more detailed would be considered by the Planning and Consultation Committee at their meeting on 23 July the suggestion being that a number of working groups would be established to take the key areas forward. Membership to the working groups would not be limited to those Members sitting on the Planning & Consultation Committee.

that the report be noted.

A slightly revised list of Committee memberships was reported. When the preferences of the newly appointed member for Plymouth City Council were known the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would make the appropriate appointments to the Committees.

Members were advised that the revised membership of the Property Sub-Committee meant that each BCU in the Force area was now represented by a local Police Authority Member. Members were reminded that property issues should be discussed at their regular meetings with BCU Commanders.

The Chief Executive advised that as a result of the recent seminar it would be the intention to arrange a further round of meetings for the year. Liaison meetings would also be held during January and February as part of the budget setting process.

A number of minor changes to the list of meetings were noted.

that

(a) meetings be held on the following dates during 2004

