

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority**30 June 2006**

Open for the purposes of FOI

Report of the Chief Executive & Clerk

Police Dog Welfare Scheme Annual Report (PA/06288)**Recommendation(s):**

- (i) **That the Authority notes the content of the report.**

Introduction / Summary

1. This report summarises the output from the Devon and Cornwall Police Authority Police Dog Welfare Scheme for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

Background Information

2. The purpose of the Police Dog Welfare Scheme is to enable an independent observation, comment and report on the conditions under which police dogs are housed, trained and transported with a view to securing greater public understanding and confidence in these matters. This arrangement also provides an independent check on the way police dog handlers carry out their responsibilities with regard to the welfare of animals in their care.
3. Devon and Cornwall Police Authority has administered a Police Dog Welfare Scheme since 1 March 2003.

Number of Police Dogs seen during the period.

4. Animal Welfare Independent Visitors may request any police dog handler who is on duty in the area that they are visiting to attend the police station. If the dog handler is unable to attend, for example if he/she is engaged on a specific incident, a full explanation is given to the Animal Welfare Independent Visitor and the explanation is recorded by the visitor in their report.
5. The following table shows the number of visits where a police dog and handler was seen by Animal Welfare Independent Visitor(s) for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

Police Station	Number of visits where a police dog & handler was seen
Barnstaple	1
Camborne	3
Exeter	5
Newquay	1
Plymouth	23
Torquay	10

Main issues arising from police dog inspections

6. At the conclusion of each visit and before leaving the police premises, Animal Welfare Independent Visitor(s) are required to complete a report form to provide details of the visit. A completed report form includes the name of the dog seen, the name of its handler and any matters raised.

There have only been 2 issues raised throughout the year:

- Villain (police dog) has had two fits
Villain has been cleared by the vet
- Dog cages in private vehicles of dog handlers
It has been suggested that each Basic Command Unit should supply dog handlers with cages for use in their private vehicles. Some handlers will be reimbursed for cages that they have already bought.

7. General comments noted on the report forms include:

- Well groomed
- Bright
- Alert
- Keen
- Healthy coat, and paws
- Good teeth
- Dog calm and behaved well
- Dog acted immediately to this handler's instructions
- Vehicle very clean & tidy, enough water

Events throughout the year

8. Two Animal Welfare Independent Visitors have separately been out with a dog handler and his/her dog on shift, to see the dog in a working environment.
9. All Animal Welfare Independent Visitors were invited to attend the South West Regional Dog Trials held at Seale Hayne, Newton Abbot on 28 February, 1 / 2 March 2006.

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