

## Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

### MINUTES

A meeting of the **Performance Management Committee** was held on Monday 31 July 2006 in the Conference Room, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 2.00pm.

#### **Present:**

Chairman .....Mr M Bull  
Mr C Bulley, Mr J Currie, Sir S Day, Mr I Doggett, Mr M Hicks, Mrs A Malcolm [items 1-5 only],  
Mr S Malloni, Mr W Thomas and Mr C Wallin.

#### **Officers in Attendance: -**

**Police Force** Superintendent I Ansell (Force Performance Manager), Mr R Bullock (Force Performance Analyst), Chief Superintendent A Clarke (South and West Devon BCU Commander) [items 1-5 only], Acting Deputy Chief Constable T Melville [item 1-5 only], Chief Superintendent B Spencer (Commander, Call Management and Communications Department) [items 1-6 only] and K Vincent (Force Strategic Analyst) [item 6 only].  
**Police Authority** Mr R Martin (Policy Officer).

#### **PM/404 Election of Chairman**

**RESOLVED** That Mr M Bull be elected Chairman

#### **PM/405 Election of Vice Chairman**

**RESOLVED** That Mr M Hicks be elected Vice Chairman

#### **PM/406 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Money.

#### **PM/407 Declarations of Interests**

No declarations of interest were made in respect of any item on the agenda.

#### **PM/408 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held 16 May 2006 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **PM/409 Chairman's Statement**

Thanks were expressed to Jill Owen for her work as Chairman of the Performance Management Committee. The Chairman stated he would also write to Jill Owen.

#### **PM/410 South and West Devon BCU Performance**

The South and West Devon BCU Commander delivered a presentation on the steps being taken to improve performance within the BCU.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The BCU is focusing on placing more officers and staff in frontline roles. This has led to reductions in officer and staff numbers elsewhere. The Force is looking to change 30 police officer posts to police staff posts by March 2007. Assistant Chief Constable (Operations Support) is reviewing all police officer roles for their potential to be converted to police staff roles.
- The BCU is focusing on bringing about sustainable, positive changes in performance.

- The BCU Commander has placed an emphasis on improving performance. A chief inspector has been tasked with increasing sanction detection performance specifically.
- Close working arrangements with North and East Devon BCU have been in place for some time. Efforts are now being made to generate cross-BCU partnership engagement. Members questioned whether plans were to merge the two BCUs. The Acting Deputy Chief Constable stated that merging the BCUs was a proposal within the 'Meeting the Challenge' business case submitted to the Home Office. This is a medium-term project.
- Sickness levels are being tackled by consulting with the Force Medical Officer on roles that can be undertaken by staff who are on long-term sick leave.
- With the Crown Prosecution Service involved at the start of the charge process, certain charges have not been allowed to proceed thus affecting the number of offences brought to justice.
- Overtime levels are managed by the BCU and were under-budget last year. The BCU Commander stated that whilst levels of overtime were considerable, he was confident they would remain within budget again.

The Chairman asked what arrangements were in place to manage forensics within the BCU.

The BCU Commander stated that more scenes needed to be visited to increase the potential for identifications.

A detective chief inspector had been tasked with reviewing outstanding crimes on a fortnightly basis. A backlog had been cleared but this resulted in the focus lapsing somewhat as other performance issues were addressed.

Forensics was the first of the Committee's three top priority areas of concern for this year. Accordingly, the Chairman urged this should not be allowed to slip again and periodic reports to this Committee would be expected.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) That the Committee notes the presentation from the South and West Devon BCU Commander.
- (b) That a report be presented to this Committee periodically detailing the actions taken to improve forensic management performance within South and West Devon BCU, with a further report being submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

#### **PM/411 Call Management and Communications Department Update**

The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department, presented a report on the progress made against recommendations and issues raised within the HMIC report 'First Contact'. The report also updated the Committee on changes to crime log management.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Access to services via SMS text messaging should be available this financial year. IT problems have meant a delay in its introduction.
- The Director of Human Resources is preparing a Staff Retention Policy.
- EISEC (Enhanced Information Service for Emergency Calls), a facility that delivers caller information to a call taker, is on target for introduction.
- The Department are unable to appoint more staff due to physical call-centre space capacity and Health and Safety issues. Staff are currently spending 80% of shift-time at terminals against an industry standard of 65%.

- The impact of the 1315 Project and the Quality of Service Commitment has meant that call takers are spending more time dealing with each call. This has led to satisfaction rising in some areas but may fall in other parts of the customer satisfaction process, for example ease of contact.
- Staff within the CDIB (Crime Data Input Bureau) are being encouraged to handle calls from the public. However, UNISON is suggesting staff resist this due to historical employment issues.
- Meeting performance targets for call handling in 2006-7 will be challenging. Members asked what work was being done to reduce mis-use of the 999 service. The Commander, Call Management and Communications Department, explained that key dates were targeted such as Halloween and New Year's Eve. Joint campaigns with other emergency services to reduce unnecessary calls have been undertaken. Members indicated that the demand on the call centres was likely to increase as the use of text-messaging and e-mails rises and major new communities are built.
- Building capacity remains the biggest issue for the Department. Senior Department staff recently visited a site in Plymouth that could be adopted as a non-emergency call centre as well as possibly offering other accommodation solutions to the Force. Members of the Police Authority were invited to attend. It was suggested that issues of politics, resilience and shared services needed to be considered carefully.

The Chairman thanked the Commander, Call Management and Communications Department for the progress report and asked for the Committee to be kept updated regularly on the issues affecting call handling performance.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) The Committee notes the progress of the Force against the recommendations of the HMIC Thematic report 'First Contact' and the update on OIS log management.
- (b) The Committee is to be kept updated regularly on the issues affecting call handling performance.

#### **PM/412 Performance against the Annual Policing Plan (Targets)**

The Force Performance Analyst provided an overview of the performance against the annual targets for the year to date.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- 5 of the 16 targets are projected to be achieved based on current trends.
- Information packs are to be sent out to victims of vehicle and violent crime in an attempt to raise satisfaction levels. The Committee expressed its concern at the continuing poor performance regarding satisfaction levels by the Force.
- The target to reduce British Crime Survey comparable crime by a minimum of 7% currently stands at a rise of 1.8%. The increase is largely due to a significant rise in criminal damage (11.3%).
- Sanction detection performance is predicted to improve during July and August following targeted work with the BCUs by the Force Crime Registrar.
- The improvement in sanction detections during 2005/ 2006 was mainly due to converting administrative detections into sanction detections. This option has now been exhausted and there is a need to detect more offences in order to meet the target (27% sanction detection rate). It is hoped this will be achieved through more intrusive supervision, professionalising the investigative process and process changes. The Head of Crime is

leading on work examining crime management issues to facilitate increased detection rates. .

- Each BCU Commander has been given a PDR objective to improve asset recovery. The current total of assets recovered is £68,281 against a target of £1.53m.
- Recent Government policy changes have allowed the seizure of assets from the value of £1,000 upwards, previously the figure was £5,000. The Assistant Chief Constable (Operations) is leading a Working Group to identify how criminal asset seizures could be increased.
- The detection rate for domestic violence stands at 40.1% against a target of 65%. Members continued to be concerned with this level of performance.
- Home Office policy relating to the use of cautions in appropriate domestic violence cases has been clarified and promulgated to operational staff.
- The visibility of uniformed operational officers is approximately 62% (against a target of 60%) as recorded in the first survey of the year. The next survey is due in September/October.
- Criminal damage continues to increase with an 11.3% rise as at the end of June 2006, against a target of a 3% reduction. A problem profile concluded that much of the increase was a result of very local issues requiring problem-solving responses in partnership with others.

The Chairman thanked the Force Performance Analyst for the high quality of analysis presented to the Committee.

The Force Strategic Analyst delivered a presentation on a review of brought to justice outcomes for rape offences.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The number of sexual assaults in the Force rose dramatically following the introduction of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- Under reporting of sexual offences is expected.
- The detection rate for rape offences stands at 21% (national average is 22%). Of this, the conviction rate is only 6%. Members expressed concern at this low figure particularly when it is estimated that in 75% of cases the offender is known to the victim. The Force Performance Analyst stated that some rapes may be convicted as other offences, for example indecent assault. Members questioned whether the best use of forensics was being made. The Force Strategic Analyst stated that the key issue was timely reporting of the offence. Late reporting can result in forensic opportunities being lost.
- The Head of Crime is looking into how Sexual Offence Liaison Officers (SOLOs) can be better used to support victims.
- The Force adopts a victim-focused approach. The investigation process is specialised and sensitive.

The Force Strategic Analyst explained that the recommendations from the report would be delivered over the next 6 months.

The Chairman thanked the Force Strategic Analyst for the report and presentation and asked that the Committee be provided with an update of the outcomes of this work in due course.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the Committee notes the Force's performance towards the annual policing plan targets 2006/ 2007.
- (b) That an update of the outcomes of the work reviewing brought to justice outcomes for rape offences be presented to this Committee in due course.

**PM/413 User Satisfaction**

The Force Performance Manager presented a report outlining Force action to improve user satisfaction performance.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Home Office has indicated that victim and user satisfaction is viewed as being of equal importance to crime reduction and investigation.
- The Home Office has recently produced a good practice guide. The Force has studied the report and made visits to other forces to see what can be learnt.
- Work is underway within the Corporate Services Department to ensure standards are reached regarding Quality of Service, victim and witness codes and customer expectations.
- In September, the findings from the victim survey for the first quarter of 2006/ 2007 are expected.
- Long-term poor publicity in the media will have impacted on this area of performance.
- Victim surveys for anti-social behaviour incidents will be brought in next year. It was stressed that many anti-social behaviour incidents are not the sole responsibility of the police.

The Chairman thanked the Force Performance Manager for the update but stated that Members remained concerned at the poor levels of attainment in this area.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the Committee is concerned that the Force continues to perform poorly regarding victim and user satisfaction.

**PM/414 NCRS and NSIR compliance 2005/2006**

The Force Performance Manager presented a report detailing compliance with National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) and National Standards of Incident Recording (NSIR).

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Force received gradings of 'good' for data quality and management arrangements.
- The work of the Force Crime Registrar was praised.

The Chairman thanked the Force Performance Manager for the update

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the report be noted.

The Chairman thanks everyone for their contributions during the meeting

The meeting closed at 4.25pm.