

DORSET POLICE AUTHORITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 April 2010

A meeting of the Community Engagement and Communications Committee was held in Boardrooms 1 & 2, Police Headquarters, Winfrith on Thursday, 1 April 2010 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Mr G Hepburn (Chairman)
Miss L Wilson (Vice Chairman)
Col G Brierley OBE
Mr D Crowhurst
Mr A Jones
Mrs K G McNally
Mr N Reed
Mr M G Taylor CBE DL

Also Present: Mr C D Lee QPM, Deputy Chief Constable
Mr S Merry, Head of Corporate Development
Mr M J Goscomb, Chief Executive
Mr J Mumford, Policy Officer
Miss M Crichton, MCCD

APOLOGIES

78. Apologies were received from Mr N King.

MINUTES

79. The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2010 were taken as read and were confirmed and signed as a true record.

CODE OF CONDUCT

80. No members declared any personal or prejudicial interests under the Code of Conduct.

THE POLICE AUTHORITY (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND MEMBERSHIP) REGULATIONS 2010

81.1 The Chief Executive introduced the report which informed members about the community engagement requirements of the new Police Authority (Community Engagement and Membership) Regulations 2010 which came into force on 17 March 2010. The Regulations were consistent with the Policing White Paper in seeking to ensure that police authorities were more connected and closer to local communities.

81.2 Specific requirements of the Regulations included the need for police authorities to obtain the views of a wide range of people concerning local policing, to ensure that a sufficient range and number of views are obtained and to obtain views sufficiently often to ensure that authorities were

continually aware of such views as far as is reasonably practicable. A further update would be provided to members at the next meeting of the Committee in July to assess the implications of the new Regulations in greater detail.

- 81.3** With regard to the specific requirement to consult local people on the appropriateness of Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) powers, the Chief Executive advised that an initial general question had been added to the Community Safety Survey and the results would inform the future development of this area of consultation. Unfortunately it was not possible to include a list of PCSO powers within the context of the survey. The Deputy Chief Constable advised that PCSO powers in Dorset were currently being reviewed although it was felt that PCSOs were operating successfully locally and that the constant review of their role was unsettling. Members raised concerns about a general lack of public awareness around PCSO powers which could affect the consultation results and the sometimes negative national media portrayal of PCSOs.

RESOLVED

- 82.** That the report be noted.

REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 83.1** The Chief Executive introduced the report which asked members to consider revisions to the Committee's terms of reference to ensure that they were accurate, fit for purpose and reflected the business undertaken by the Committee. A key driver for amendments had been the introduction of the new Regulations reported to members under the previous agenda item.
- 83.2** Members were also asked to consider if this was an appropriate time to change the name of the Committee to the 'Community Engagement Committee' to reflect the true nature of the business being undertaken and to acknowledge that communications, whilst extremely important, essentially formed a subordinate facet of wider community engagement activity. Other changes reflected the wording and requirements of the new Regulations, specifically with regard to obtaining the views of a wide range of people and to encourage greater co-operation and joint working with partners in consultation and engagement activity.
- 83.3** Members were supportive of the proposed changes albeit mindful of the importance of effective communications and keen that this element of work should not be overlooked. Greater partnership working was encouraged although this would also need to be balanced with the specific statutory duties placed upon police authorities.

RESOLVED

- 84.** That the draft revised terms of reference for the Committee be agreed and be referred to the full Police Authority for consideration.

SAFER DORSET HANDBOOK

- 85.1** The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which informed members of the proposed arrangements for the production of the Safer Dorset handbook in 2010 and sought endorsement for the proposed approach. Whilst the current two, territorial division, editions of the handbook had been

well received it was felt that there was the opportunity to review the format with the potential of a single countywide edition to be produced, complemented by the development and increased circulation of quarterly newsletters at the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) level. A working group was proposed to review the requirements of the 2010 handbook, although it was recognised that the timescales involved were short in order to begin the design and production process.

- 85.2** Members were concerned about the proposal to change the current format which was successful and well thought of by local people. The Chief Executive also raised the statutory requirement for police authorities to publish local policing summaries and was doubtful that a single version of Safer Dorset would address these requirements. Members noted that Safer Dorset and the local newsletters were very different products and that there needed to be clarity over exactly what audience each publication was for and what each publication was intended to achieve. It was felt that any review of Safer Dorset should explore the possibility of moving to more editions of the handbook with a more local focus for each, rather than reducing the product to a single version.
- 85.3** An alternative recommendation was proposed for the existing format and two versions of Safer Dorset be retained for 2010, followed by a report to a future meeting of the Committee for members to consider alternative formats for the handbook, including the possibility of increasing the number of versions from the existing two version format. Members unanimously supported this alternative proposal.

RESOLVED

- 86.1** That the current format of the Safer Dorset handbook, with two different versions for each of the territorial policing divisions, be retained for 2010.
- 86.2** That a further report on the future options for the production of Safer Dorset, including the possibility of increasing the number of versions to be more locally relevant, be brought to a subsequent meeting of the Committee for members' consideration.

PEOPLE FOCUS PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK REPORT

- 87.1** The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the quarterly report which provided members with an update on the achievement of the Force priority to secure the trust and confidence of local people in their police force and the wider criminal justice system. The report was aligned with the six facets identified through local research as influencing public confidence in Dorset Police.
- 87.2** Members were advised that the single government target for the police service, measuring whether local people agreed that the police and local council were dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter locally, was particularly volatile with the Force now being identified as of 'some concern' in maintaining the required 'trajectory' to meet the Home Office target of 61% by 2012. This was in contrast to the measure looking solely at the police service, where Dorset was the second highest performing force nationally for public confidence. It was noted that a high number of 'don't know' responses had been received for the single government target question asked in the 2009 Community Safety Survey (CSS) and more work was being carried out to analyse this further.

- 87.3** Members felt it would be helpful if future reports could include direction of travel indicators to accompany the figures presented. It was also requested that relevant figures be included alongside percentages where appropriate, for example the sample sizes of the British Crime Survey (BCS) and CSS.

RESOLVED

- 88.** That the report be noted.

THE COMMUNITY SAFETY SURVEY 2009

- 89.1** The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which provided members with the findings of the 2009 CSS along with an update on the surveying process for 2010/11. For the fourth year in succession, 95% of respondents reported feeling safe in their local area. Financial crime was identified as the biggest crime worry and speeding / reckless driving as the quality of life issue that most concerned respondents. From April 2010, in line with Home Office requirements, the survey would be conducted quarterly and the results presented to members at each meeting of the Committee along with updates as required to members' seminars, the Strategic Planning Working Group and the full Police Authority.

- 89.2** In response to a query regarding how the results of the survey inform the Policing Plan, members were advised that the results fed into the strategic assessment which then informed the wider Policing Plan and Force priorities. A paragraph within the Policing Plan was used to explain this process. The Chief Executive noted that whilst there were linkages between the Plan and the survey these could be enhanced and be more reflective of the results in the future. Mr Merry agreed that further work could be done on the articulation of community views within the assessment and planning process and in the Policing Plan itself.

- 89.3** Members' noted the high levels of concern expressed by respondents on parking related issues which impacted greatly on the police despite this not being a directly policing related matter. On the issue of speeding, the Deputy Chief Constable advised of a number of 'speedwatch' initiatives in place nationally where local residents were assisting the police in managing speeding problems on smaller local roads. Members were wary of the potential consequences of involving members of the public in such initiatives and the possibility of raising local tensions.

RESOLVED

- 90.** That the report be noted.

NATIONAL POLICING IMPROVEMENT AGENCY (NPIA) PUBLIC CONFIDENCE ROUTE MAP

- 91.1** The Deputy Chief Constable presented the report which provided members with an update on the recently published NPIA Public Confidence Route Map. The Route Map was designed for easy reference and to signpost the police and partners to relevant information and evidence on the drivers of public confidence. The Force already has a well established Trust and Confidence work stream in place which was complementary to the desired outcomes of the Route Map.

- 91.2 The report also made members aware of the public confidence performance management arrangements that had been put in place by the Home Office and a fuller update would be reported to the full Police Authority meeting in June as part of the Chief Constable's Quarterly Performance report.

RESOLVED

92. That the report be noted.

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE

- 93.1 The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which provided members with an update on the performance of Safer Neighbourhood Teams and other related developments. Updates this quarter included the continued progress in implementing the 'Publicity Creator' software for the development of local SNT newsletters, a review of all Neighbourhood Profiles and enhanced activity analysis reporting which showed high levels of PCSO activity within SNTs in particular. More work was needed to develop local tactical plans and ensure that they were sufficiently focused on local priorities.

- 93.2 Members discussed the crime figures and satisfaction levels reported although they were advised that these were indicative only and were designed for local SNTs to respond to locally. A member commented that the figures for the Purbeck Section appeared to be out of line with other areas and it was suggested that it would be helpful to ask the member for that area, Mr C Weston JP, to look into the position in Purbeck and provide feedback to the Committee via the Chief Executive.

RESOLVED

94. That the report be noted.

UPDATE REPORT ON THE DORSET POLICE ACTION PLAN ARISING FROM THE HMIC POLICING PLEDGE INSPECTION

95. The Deputy Chief Constable presented the report which provided members with an update on the 26 priority areas for improvement (AFIs) identified following the HMIC inspection of the implementation of the Policing Pledge. The full action plan was still in development and it was agreed that an update on the full plan would be presented to members at a future meeting of the Committee. In the meantime, it was agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, supported by the Policy Officer, would meet with the Head of Community Engagement to view the full action plan and receive an update on progress so far.

RESOLVED

96. That the report be noted.

THE NEW NATIONAL POLICING IMPROVEMENT AGENCY (NPIA) NATIONAL CONTACT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

97. The deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which provided members on the new NPIA Contact Management Strategy Framework which had been launched on 2 March 2010. The Contact Management Board, on which the

Police Authority was represented, would be taking the strategy forward locally and a further update would be reported to the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED

98. That the report be noted.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

99. The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the update report on the Force and Authority websites. Both sites continued to see increased popularity with the only reductions in usage on the Force website being directly linked to the recent lack of recruitment opportunities. In response to a member's query concerning the member only areas of the website, he advised that funding for the SSL protocol to enhance existing security had been agreed and that installation had been followed up with the IS department.

RESOLVED

100. That the report be noted.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2010

101.1 The Chief Executive introduced the report which updated members on the Authority's community engagement programme arrangements for 2010. The results from the CSS question on consultation methods revealed surveying to be the most popular method identified by the respondents. Other popular methods included completing a freepost postcard, an idea that was currently being developed within the office. A provisional list of public events for the Authority to attend had been identified although it was recognised that further work was needed to develop this and make it less reliant on police specific events.

101.2 The consultation packs for members continued to progress and it was hoped that these would be issued shortly. Work was also ongoing to develop supermarket consultation opportunities and the community focus group initiative. A member had identified that the local magistracy were already adopting a similar approach to consultation and the Authority were keen to learn from this. Members were specifically encouraged to forward any views on events or engagement opportunities that they may have and to feed back on any meetings or events attended.

101.3 Members discussed issues in relation to Safer Neighbourhoods and the associated Neighbourhood Policing Protocol. It was noted that some members still experienced a lack of contact from their local Section Inspector although this did enable them to check the 'customer experience' by using the website, for example, to locate meeting details and other related information. The Chief Executive advised members to inform the office directly with any problems that they were encountering and the Deputy Chief Constable agreed to issue a reminder to Section Inspectors on the role of Police Authority members within the SNT structure.

RESOLVED

102. That the report be noted.

PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

- 103.** The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report that updated members on key issues relating to strategic partnerships. National developments included the publication of the Safe and Confident Neighbourhood Strategy, the Government's ASB action plan 'Tackling not Tolerating Anti-Social Behaviour' and the ongoing work of the Total Place pilot programme across Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset. Reference was also made to CDRPs locally discussing the monitoring of National Indicator 21 relating to 'dealing with concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police'.

RESOLVED

- 104.** That the report be noted.

DORSET POLICE AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIPS REVIEW

- 105.** The Chief Executive provided a verbal update on the work being carried out to review the Authority's partnership working arrangements, which the Policy Officer was researching. The review was assessing the most effective means for the Authority to be involved and engaged, including representation where appropriate, with local strategic partnerships. Initial recommendations had been made and further meetings were now required with the Force and relevant partners to develop these further. A full update and draft partnership strategy would be presented to the next meeting of this Committee in July, with recommendations then being made to the full Police Authority in September.

RESOLVED

- 106.** That the update be noted.

[Meeting ended at 12.20pm]