

DRAFT

DORSET POLICE AUTHORITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 January 2010

A meeting of the Community Engagement and Communications Committee was held in Boardrooms 1 & 2, Police Headquarters, Winfrith on Thursday, 21 January 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
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
Mr A Saunders, Media & Corporate Communications

APOLOGIES

51. Apologies were received from Mr N King, Mrs K G McNally and Mr N Reed.

MINUTES

52. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2009 were taken as read and were confirmed and signed as a true record.

CODE OF CONDUCT

53. Miss L Wilson declared a personal interest in minute nod. 60 to 61 as the ward councillor for Rossmore and Alderney. No other members declared any personal or prejudicial interests under the Code of Conduct.

QUARTERLY PEOPLE FOCUS PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK REPORT

54.1 The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the quarterly update which had been revised in order to align with the findings of the trust and confidence research undertaken by the Force. The report was now structured around the six factors identified locally as drivers of confidence in Dorset Police and showed performance in these areas through a mixture of British Crime Survey and Victim Satisfaction Survey data. Members were invited to provide feedback on the new format to aid with the ongoing development of the report.

54.2 Confidence and satisfaction figures were generally positive although some areas for improvement were identified. These included the disparity between confidence in the police and partners in dealing with what matters locally, compared to the police only, satisfaction of victims of crime with being kept informed of progress, satisfaction with dealing with minor crime and people's perceptions of drug use and dealing locally. Members cited examples in their local areas as to how police safer neighbourhood teams were successfully

tackling low-level crime and anti-social behaviour. Call handling satisfaction levels were also positive in the main.

54.3 The disparity in satisfaction levels between white service users and those from minority ethnic groups was primarily down to the Home Office calculation methodology outlined in the report, which included weighted percentages for all five crime or incident categories used even if no-one from a minority ethnic group was a victim of that category, often the case in smaller forces. Responding to a member's query, the Deputy Chief Constable advised that representations had been made to the Home Office regarding these statistical anomalies but little support for change had been received from other forces.

54.4 In response to a question regarding the further research into young people and confidence in the police, Mr Merry advised that this research was already under way and the findings would be reported to members as they arose. Young people and victims of vehicle crime had been identified as being the least satisfied with the Force and it was important to learn more on the reasons behind this.

RESOLVED

55. That the report be noted.

NATIONAL POLICING IMPROVEMENT AGENCY (NPIA) 'CUSTOMER INSIGHT' CONFERENCE

56. The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which provided an overview of the 'customer insight' conference exploring how forces could understand the needs, preferences and expectations of its customers. Key points from the day would be incorporated into the People First approach which was already well established within the Force.

RESOLVED

57. That the report be noted.

ASSOCIATION OF POLICE AUTHORITIES (APA) CONFIDENCE RESEARCH AND GUIDANCE

58.1 The Chief Executive introduced the report which provided members with an overview of the recently published trust and confidence research and guidance which had been commissioned by the APA. Given the current Government focus on the single confidence measure for the police service it was important for members to be kept updated on the growing body of research being undertaken in this field.

58.2 It was pleasing that the findings of the APA work were essentially consistent with the earlier research undertaken by the Force, although it was disappointing that the Dorset Police work had not been referenced in the APA review of research. Representations to this effect would be made to the APA.

58.3 A summary of some similar research conducted by the NPIA in November 2008 was also included as this provided a particularly concise and informative overview of factors associated with confidence in the police and the implications, with a particular focus on continuing to embed neighbourhood policing.

- 58.4** In response to a member's query, the Chief Executive advised that it was the finding of the APA review of research that there were few interventions shown to have a causal link to public confidence in the police. However, local research had identified specific key drivers and the Force was taking deliberate actions as a result to influence confidence in Dorset Police. The Deputy Chief Constable noted that whilst there were some issues that the Force could directly influence there were others that it could not effect, such as demographics, or could only effect in tandem with partner organisations, for example community cohesion.

RESOLVED

- 59.** That the report be noted.

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE

- 60.1** The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which updated members on aspects of Safer Neighbourhood policing within Dorset. HMIC had recently visited five Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) and early verbal feedback was very positive as to how engaged and effectively the teams were working. Criticisms were of some of the processes in place to support SNTs and work was ongoing to address these issues.
- 60.2** Members were advised that SNT website pages were being updated more regularly and that the next batch of newsletters were due to be distributed shortly. Neighbourhood profiles had been produced to support engagement with local communities and examples would be reported to members at the next meeting of this Committee. A six month project was also being initiated to ensure the full integration of Neighbourhood Watch and other Watch Schemes with SNTs and it was anticipated that this would be finalised in time for the annual general meeting of the Association of Dorset Watches in September.
- 60.3** A member advised the meeting that the County Council Cabinet had been discussing the effectiveness of local Partners and Communities Together (PACT) groups and were proposing to make a recommendation to the Police Authority that PACTs integrate with Local Area Partnerships (LAPs). The Chief Executive confirmed that no recommendation had been received to date and that discussion between partners on the proposal would be helpful. Members were concerned that LAPs had an urban rather than rural focus and that the existing PACT arrangements were the best way to address and resolve local issues. However, it was acknowledged that not all PACTs were attended by all of the appropriate agencies and work was needed to move away from the perception that this was solely a police, rather than partner, led initiative.

RESOLVED

- 61.** That the report be noted.

APA / NPIA WORKSHOP ON THE FUTURE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

- 62.1** The Policy Officer updated members on the third of the workshops that had been arranged jointly by the APA and NPIA, which focused on the future of Neighbourhood Policing. Key themes from the event concerned moving from neighbourhood 'policing' to neighbourhood 'management', the uncertainty

surrounding future funding of the programme, and the general lack of evaluation of the programme despite a consensus view that it was the right approach to be taking.

- 62.2** A member who had also attended the event noted that concerns had been raised about advertised public meetings not taking place and forces therefore not meeting their Policing Pledge obligations. The Deputy Chief Constable advised that a programme of 'experience audits' was being developed to monitor this locally.
- 62.3** Members were advised that a fourth workshop was due to be scheduled for this financial year, although no details of this event had been received to date. An update on this workshop would be provided to a future meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED

- 63.** That the report be noted.

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY (HMIC) – DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

- 64.1** The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which provided members with an update on the recent HMIC inspection of delivery of the Policing Pledge in Dorset. The Force was graded as 'fair' overall, along with the majority of other forces, with 'good' gradings received in two of the elements assessed. An action plan for improvement had been developed although this was currently being reviewed and prioritised given the number of individual actions identified. Members would therefore be updated on the action plan in due course.
- 64.2** The report also advised members that the APA had recently published guidance for police authorities on the monitoring and oversight of the implementation of the Policing Pledge. The Chief Executive was already in discussion with the Force over the best way to take this guidance forward, with due consideration to the findings of the HMIC inspection as well.

RESOLVED

- 65.** That the report be noted.

COMMUNITY SAFETY SURVEY 2009

- 66.1** Mr Merry provided a verbal update on the Community Safety Survey which from now on would be conducted quarterly rather than annually. The 2009 survey had now been completed with the results due to be published in February via the on-line 'crimemapper' facility. A full update would be reported to members in due course.
- 66.2** Some early headline figures were available and members were advised that 4,000 surveys had been completed, with 63% of respondents having confidence in Dorset Police. However, only 50% were satisfied that the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter most locally were being addressed and further analysis of the reasons behind this would therefore be required. The new survey format would provide results at a more local level

and would add to the understanding of the drivers of confidence in the police service.

- 66.3** A member made reference to the recent launch of the 'No Excuses' road safety campaign which was already having significant results and was ensuring higher police visibility through an increase in road patrols.

RESOLVED

- 67.** That the report be noted.

PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

- 68.1** The Deputy Chief Constable presented a report which provided an update on key issues and developments relating to strategic partnerships locally. This included an update on the recently published Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) for the three local authorities and their partners and on the Total Place programme pilot being undertaken in Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset.

- 68.2** Members were advised that a meeting had recently been held with the area lead for the CAA to discuss some of the issues around the first assessment and to agree improvements to the process in the future. This would include a pre-meeting with the Authority and Force to service an effective dialogue and ensure that future reports were placed in the right context.

RESOLVED

- 69.** That the report be noted.

INSIDE JUSTICE WEEK: 19 OCTOBER TO 23 OCTOBER 2009

- 70.1** The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which provided an update on the activities that had taken place as part of the Inside Justice Week initiative to raise public awareness of the criminal justice system. Members were shown a short video news item summarising the event.

RESOLVED

- 71.** That the report be noted.

YOUNG PEOPLE TAKEOVER DAY 2009

- 72.1** The Deputy Chief Constable updated members on the Dorset Police Young People's Takeover Day, part of a wider national initiative, held in November 2009. Four competition winners spent the day with the Force, providing them with an opportunity to see the inner workings of the Force and to give feedback on their experiences. All of the young people, officers and staff were extremely positive about the day and it is planned to repeat the event in 2010.

RESOLVED

- 73.** That the report be noted.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- 74.1** Mr Saunders introduced the report which provided an update on the latest developments and visitor numbers for both the Force and Authority websites. Visits to both websites continued to increase significantly but remained manageable without requiring an increase in resources. The majority of facilities were now fully functional, although some work was still required by the IS department to provide additional security before the member areas of the Authority website could be launched.
- 74.2** Members were given a demonstration of the Crime Victim Portal on the Force website. By entering their crime reference number, members of the public could view up to date information on the current status of their crime, along with crime prevention advice and support information. Mr Saunders explained that this system provided solid general information with little liability and whilst it would be possible to make it more interactive, this would require much more back office support. The Portal was only used for volume crimes and victims of more serious crime received a personal and individually tailored level of support. Members were also advised that there was the potential for locally developed features, such as the Crime Victim Portal, to be sold to other forces, a number of whom were following the Dorset Police website model.
- 74.3** Member's queried whether the website could provide local breakdowns of crime levels and evidence of how this was being tackled. It was demonstrated that this could currently be achieved through accessing the crimemapper facility for information on local crime levels and the SNT web pages for details of local priorities and actions being taken to address them. Regarding the longer average sessions by users on the Authority website than those on the Force site, members were advised that this was primarily due to the nature of the content of, and audience for, the Authority's website rather than difficulties in accessing information.

RESOLVED

- 75.** That the report be noted.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2009 AND 2010

- 76.1** The Chief Executive introduced the report which provided members with a summary of the Authority's consultation and engagement activity in 2009 along with the proposed programme for 2010. A summary of the results of the results from public consultation was presented, including member feedback from the SNT and PACT meetings that they had attended during the year.
- 76.2** An outline plan for 2010 was also proposed which would look to build on the Authority's mixed economy approach by including attendance at community events, supermarket consultations, individual member talks and discussion groups and the continued engagement with local SNT teams. Members were encouraged to feed back their thoughts on the proposed plan or to highlight any further ideas or opportunities for consultation and engagement for the year.
- 76.3** The consultation pack for members was nearing completion and the Chief Executive presented a sample pack to demonstrate the content and material that would be included. The pack would be designed to assist members in seeking the views of the public at any appropriate event, group or meeting

that they may attend regardless of whether this was part of a more formal programme of activities arranged by the Authority. Members were positive with how the pack was developing but also mindful of the need to ensure that the material used was kept up to date.

RESOLVED

77. That the report be noted.

[Meeting ended at 12.05pm]