

GWENT POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE GWENT POLICE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CROESYCEILIOG, CWMBRAN ON FRIDAY, 4th DECEMBER 2009

Present: Mrs P Davies (in the Chair)
Local Authorities
Councillors H Andrews, P Clarke, A Crump, M Dally, M Evans, C Mann, P. Seabourne, E Townsend and W J Williams
Independent Members
Mr O Ali, Mr J Hathaway, Mr R Leadbeter and Ms G Reddington
Officers of the Authority
Mrs S Bosson – Chief Executive
Mr N Phillips – Treasurer
Mr N Taylor – Engagement and Performance Manager
Mrs S Curley – Business and Member Services Manager
Also in Attendance:
Mrs C Napier – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
Mr J Farrar – Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)
Mr N Stephens – Interim Director of Finance and Administration
Inspector M Smith – Staff Officer
Chief Superintendent S Prince – Head of Service Development
Mr S John – Head of Corporate Communications
Mr J Mapps - Police Federation
Mr M Vaughan – Police Federation
Mrs S Mayne – PA to DCC

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m.

The Chair formally welcomed everyone to the meeting. We were informed that Ms Geraldine Reddington, Independent Member of the Police Authority had handed in her resignation as of 31st December 2009 due to increased work responsibilities. We thanked Ms Reddington for her contribution to the Authority during the past few years.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Action

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Bayliss, Mr R Derricott, Mrs F Taylor and Mr M Giannasi – Chief Constable (CC).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

3. We received and noted the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd October 2009.

We noted that the HMIC/ WAO draft Inspection report had been due the week commencing 23rd November 2009. A letter had been received changing the date to 18th December 2009 due to a change in the quality assessment process undertaken by HMIC. Due to Christmas and New Year the consultation period had been increased to 15th January 2010.

We were asked to consider this report as soon as it is received and provide comments to the Chief Executive.

ACTION SHEET

4. We noted the actions arising from the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd October 2009.

We noted that the Annual Report had now been completed and published to the website.

CONFERENCES/SEMINARS ATTENDED BY PA MEMBERS IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2009

5. We received and noted a list of Conferences and Seminars attended by Police Authority Members for the period October and November 2009.

RECEIVED MINUTES

6. We received the following minutes:

Audit and Resources Committee 15th October 2009

Service Delivery Committee 28th October 2009

We noted that the meeting had taken place during the week of Inspection. We agreed that it had been a very useful and informative meeting and thanked the ACC for the information provided.

Equality and Human Resources Committee 2nd November

We re-emphasised the fact that the procurement of the mobile police offices would not impact or pre-empt any decision on the Estates Strategy. The vehicles would be used to enhance the current Neighbourhood Policing provision. Further detail on the use of the mobile police offices would be provided at the Estates Strategy briefing.

We noted the discussion that had taken place regarding the validity of the Health and Safety qualification held by staff and officers at Gwent Police. The matter had been resolved to everyone's satisfaction and the correct title for the qualification would now be used.

CC

A query was raised regarding the settlement of a significant employment tribunal claim. We noted that the claim was subject to a confidentiality agreement but lessons learnt would form part of a report to a future meeting. Consideration would be given to providing guidance for

members around confidential legal agreements for Employment Tribunal Claims.

**Action
CC/CEX**

Strategic Planning and Performance Committee 5th November 2009

Concern was raised regarding the increase in serious violent crime in Blaenau Gwent. We were reassured to note that although percentages were high, incidents were still relatively low in number.

Due to changes in timescale we noted that the report on the establishment of the Gwent Independent Film Trust would be presented to the next meeting of Full Authority.

CC/CEX

Professional Standard Committee 10th November 2009

We were pleased to note the progress with the recruitment of new Independent Custody Visitors. We noted that the visitors had been recognised for their long service and commitment at the Chief Constable's Commendation Ceremony in November.

We were reminded that each local authority in Gwent was asked to nominate a representative to the Animal Welfare Scheme annually. One authority had not made a nomination this year. Members were asked to remind their representatives to attend.

APA Council Meeting 16th September 2009

We noted that the Chair and Chief Executive had attended the APA Conference in Nottingham. A meeting had take place with David Ruffley, the Shadow Policing Minister. It had been useful to discuss the Welsh perspective with political representatives.

Police Authorities of Wales 16th October 2009

We noted that we would consider the budget requirements for the Joint Scientific Support Unit and Regional Intelligence Unit as part of the Gwent budget setting process for 2010/2011.

We were pleased to note plans for the Police Cadet Scheme in Gwent. It was hoped that this could be an issue for discussion at a Development and Awareness Day in the New Year. A pilot scheme was being rolled out in Blaenau Gwent, led by Superintendent Mark Warrender. 23 applications had been received for the voluntary positions which would form part of the Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The scheme was supported by the Blaenau Gwent Safeguarding Children Board and the uniforms had been funded by Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Partnership. There would be 135 voluntary positions in Gwent in the next financial year.

We noted that there had been some press regarding the introduction of qualifications for those in uniformed services. Members asked that this form part of the discussion on the Police Cadet Scheme at the

CC

(Mr O Ali arrived at 10.15 a.m.)

POLICE OPERATIONAL UPDATES

7. We received and noted a report by the Chief Constable outlining items of operational interest, which occurred during the months of September and October 2009.

The report was divided into the five Local Policing Units (LPUs), Response, Operational Support and Crime Investigation service areas. During the months of September and October 2009 the Command and Control System recorded 44,997 incidents. Numerous other non-incident based operations and initiatives were also undertaken.

The following key incidents were discussed:

- Ebbw Vale - Operation Willow

Operation Willow was a burglary operation in which a total of 13 people had been arrested, of which 2 were remanded in custody.

- Partnership Team

On 14th October the first Young Dragons meeting was held in Blaenau Gwent. Representation from the Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, Army Cadets and Scouts were present, along with GAVO. All voluntary organisations expressed a willingness to work together to improve the opportunities for adults and young persons within Blaenau Gwent, by working in the voluntary sector.

- Bargoed

During the latter part of September Police began to receive reports of a man trying to entice young girls into his car, in and around the Pengam, Fleur De Lys areas. The Neighbourhood Policing Team conducted high visibility patrols in these areas and provided reassurance around the local schools.

On 25th September a man was arrested after driving the wrong way down a dual carriageway in an attempt to escape from police. He had been charged with a number of offences and remanded. Several Neighbourhood officers had been recommended for a Divisional Commendation in relation to their role in securing the arrest of a highly dangerous individual.

- Bedwas - Tackling Anti Social Behaviour

The Friday Night Youth Project held at the Workmen's Hall was again up and running with up to 50 youths attending. The Ward Team had spoken personally with the head teacher at Bedwas High School in order to address the anti-social behaviour issues with the children at school assembly.

- Operation Windmill Tackles Crime

An operation took place in Bedwas and Caerphilly over 3 weeks in September and October 2009. The aim of the operation was to target those responsible for vehicle crime and burglary. The operation was successful in reducing crime and arresting those responsible for the target

crimes.

- Operation 'Townsafe'

This operation was implemented in the Caerphilly Town Centre to target a substantial increase of criminal damage to vehicles. A man responsible for the offences was arrested after a lengthy operation which took 4 months. The offender admitted to 24 offences of criminal damage to vehicles in September.

- Successful Truancy Patrol

The first Truancy Patrol initiative with the Education Welfare Officers went ahead on the 7th and 8th Oct. Consequently 35 Truancy Letters were sent to parents in the Bedwas and Caerphilly areas. A strategy meeting was held for a youth on the fringe of entering the CJS and this youth was now back in education and training.

- Chepstow - Stolen Caravan

During the early hours of the morning of 12th September 2009 an officer from the ANPR Intercept Team, together with three Special Constables located a stolen caravan and arrested three men for the theft. Two of the arrested men subsequently admitted the theft and have been charged to appear before court. In addition further stolen property was recovered as a result of searches conducted in the Newport area.

- Usk Show 2009

Usk Show this year was the most successful ever, with an estimated 27,000 people attending the show. There was no crime reported and only one disorder incident that was dealt with by words of advice. The pledge stand was a true success. This event was supported by the Police Authority with the Chair in attendance for most of the day. The staff on the pledge stand actively sought the views of people and were very proactive in getting forms completed.

- Dispersal order for Caerleon

As a result of numerous calls in relation to boy racers in the Coldbath Road / Broadway areas, a Dispersal order was put in place in both areas. Already, there had been a significant drop in calls and this combined with regular evening patrols by officers in the area would hopefully put a stop to this problem. As yet there was no evidence of displacement.

- Operation Bang - Newport Central Neighbourhood Team

The whole of Central Neighbourhood Policing team had been instrumental in the policing of Operation Bang. This ran between 17th October – 6th November. The success of this was measured by only 2 calls for disorder on both Halloween and Bonfire Night. The team worked extremely hard with crime prevention advice to retailers and diversionary work with local youths.

- Stow Hill Ward

The team had been involved in the Night Shelter Project. This would come into effect from the beginning of December allowing officers to direct homeless people to the nearest night shelter.

- Operation Prudent

7 warrants had been executed in Newport and 4 stop/searches causing house searches to be conducted. This resulted in 8 arrests and the following finds and seizures:

- 16.6g Heroin
- 3024 Diazepam Tablets
- £33k of Cocaine deals
- 60 individual deals of Crack Cocaine
- Ounce of Crack Cocaine Class A
- Half Ounce of Heroin Class A
- Cannabis Factory
- .22 bullet

Action

From September to November 2009 there had been 436 Stop Searches, 310 Intelligence submissions and 106 Arrests. This was an ongoing critical incident which had resulted in a major impact, particularly in Pill.

We asked that Inspector Neil Muirhead be commended for his work in engaging the community during this operation.

CC

- Operation Acer

The ACC reported that over 150 officers had been mobilised for this operation which involved a planned protest by the Welsh and English Defence League. The operation was being used as an example of good practice and was being shared with other forces.

We asked for our congratulations to be passed on to Superintendent Jon Burley who had led the planning team and noted that letters had been received from the community praising the actions of Gwent Police.

CC

General

We noted that the closure of Blackwood High Street had been successful but a member raised concern that coaches were unable to drop parties of children at the theatre and that the monitoring of the closure was considered to be overstaffed. We were informed that the monitoring was being undertaken by Special Constables. The matter of the theatre drop-offs would be discussed by the ACC and LPU Commander.

CC

A member had been impressed with the documentation provided at the Bargoed PACT meeting which had included PACT priorities, Neighbourhood news, Crime mapping and 101 information. The DCC confirmed that work was being undertaken to professionalise this area of business and that training would be given by Corporate Communications and Learning and Development to ensure a consistent approach.

CC

Members from Blaenau Gwent asked that Superintendent Warrender be thanked for keeping them briefed on operational matters.

CC

We were informed that the force has equipment which can test the visibility of tinted windows. An offer was made for members to be shown the equipment if interested. We also noted that the Drink/ Drive campaign had started and would include targeting those using mobile phones when driving. 600 drivers had been stopped in the first two days. We were informed that issues of car maintenance such as faulty headlights were always taken into account but would be particularly targeted during this campaign.

We were informed that information on the use of taser was available on the Daily Management Meeting (DMM) reports published to the intranet. An invitation was again extended to all members to observe the DMM.

Action

STAYING AHEAD

8. We received and noted a report from the Chief Constable providing an update on the Staying Ahead Review. The report presented the proposals for the configuration of Gwent Police for 2010/11 and set out how the operational policing services would be delivered to our communities, how these would be supported efficiently by the back office functions and what it would cost during 2010/11.

We noted that the Programme was currently in Phase 3, the Implementation Phase. The ICT, People Services and Service Development structures had been approved and staff were being appointed to posts. Recommendations for the Data Management Review had been received from the external consultants and approved for implementation by Chief Officers

For the next period, the detailed ICT Strategy was being prepared and would be reported to the Force Senior Management Team on the 23rd December 2009, then presented to the Audit and Resources Committee (Budget Setting) on the 20th January 2010. The Estate Strategy and Governance Structure were under development. A detailed implementation plan for Data Management Review recommendations was due for production.

Support Services Re-structuring

In August 2009 consultation was initiated for the finance, fleet and estate departments. The procurement and workshop sections were excluded whilst collaborative arrangements were considered.

The main element of savings to be released would be expedited by the implementation of IT software that would enable the requisitioning, expense claims and overtime claims to be automated. These arrangements would be in place between February and May 2010. It was the intention to move forward on the Central Admin, Business Management and Finance reorganisation with immediate effect.

With regard to Fleet, Procurement and Estates, it was currently the intention to leave these services unaffected subject to a completion of a review concerning collaborative working arrangements with appropriate partners.

We noted that Staff would be advised of this approach once the issues of timescales for software implementation were confirmed.

Implementation of Reported Efficiency Savings

Action

A governance structure was being put in place to manage the implementation of £6.4m of savings identified to date. A project team would be in place for each scheme including a sponsoring chief officer and senior management lead officer.

FORCE PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE LOCAL POLICING PLAN 2009/2010

9. We received a report from the Chief Constable on performance against the Local Policing Plan 2009/10. The report highlighted the current level of performance against the various indicators associated with APACS & the Policing Pledge.

Performance towards the Single Confidence Measure had been very encouraging. The findings of the 2008/09 British Crime Survey, which had been previously reported, represented a step change in improvement from the baseline of 39.3% to 47%. Focused activity was under way in order to build on this success, with local surveys to be undertaken in Force. These would allow analysis to take place at a more local level, before the publication of the next BCS. It was planned that 600 surveys would be made per LPU, totalling 3000 surveys in all.

We noted that the Force would be receiving support from the NPIA in gathering performance information and receiving information on the best practice used by other forces. This would provide extra reassurance for the Police Authority and ACPO team.

The use of the NPIA was not to provide capability support but to offer a 'health check' by peer experts. We were informed that the Home Office had set up a Police Performance Strategy Group to look at data. This exercise would enable Gwent to be in a more robust position when scrutinised by this group. We commended the force for commissioning this piece of work.

A discussion took place regarding the provision of information to the public regarding operational matters. We agreed that it was important to be as open and transparent as possible whilst maintaining public confidence. Ongoing consideration was given to the presentation of information to the public.

(Councillor Mann arrived at 11.45 a.m.)

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

10. We resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 12, 14 and 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act.

POLICE OPERATIONAL UPDATES

11. We received and noted a report by the Chief Constable outlining items of operational interest, which occurred during the months of September and October 2009. The report provided information on the work of the Local Policing Units, Silver Cadre, Uniformed Operations and Crime Investigation service areas.

Action

Members thanked the Assistant Chief Constable for the very informative report and asked for the ANPR team to be recognised for the significant work being undertaken.

CC

RISKS IDENTIFIED

14. No additional risks were identified at the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 12.00 noon