



CHESHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15 MAY 2007 IN CONSTABULARY HEADQUARTERS, WINSFORD

Present:

M Chapman, Chairman	E Lam
S Proctor, Vice-Chairman	B Maher
M Darby	P Nurse
A Doran	T Savage
C Kirkpatrick	

Also in attendance: M Ollerenshaw and P Walker
S Taunton, D Woolliscroft and A Mackie, Cheshire Custody Visiting Scheme

<i>Authority Officers:</i>	<i>Constabulary Officers:</i>
M Sellwood, Chief Executive	G Shewan, Assistant Chief Constable
A Collins, Engagement Manager	J Roberts, Safer & Stronger Communities Manager
M Eaton, Member Services Manager	B Cowling, Head of Corporate Communications

1. CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA

The Chairman requested that the order of the agenda be varied to enable agenda item 2 – Custody Visiting Scheme: Annual Report to be considered first, followed by agenda item 1 – Engagement Committee: Terms of Reference and agenda item 6 – Consulting, Engaging and Communicating with Communities – The Role of Police Authorities: APA Discussion Paper.

RESOLVED:

That the order of the agenda be varied.

2. CHESHIRE CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME: ANNUAL REPORT 2006/07

The Chief Executive submitted the annual visiting statistics for 2006/07 and reported that 283 visits had been made compared to 301 visits during 2005/06 with 3217 persons being detained at the time of the visits. Of the 1,451 detainees selected to be seen, 1,217 (84%) consented to a visit, compared to 959 detainees and 536 (56%) consenting to a visit in 2005/06. Of the detainees seen, 669 (55%) raised comments about requests for food/drink, additional bedding, writing and reading materials and relating to medical issues.

The Chairman welcomed the Convenors of the Eastern, Northern and Western Custody Visitor Panels, who each presented their reports and visiting statistics for the period October 2006 to March 2007. The Convenors highlighted a number of issues from their reports including the significant increase in the detainee acceptance rate for visits; the spread of visits; and the opportunity for newly appointed custody visitors to accompany officers on patrol.

Members in considering the visiting statistics, welcomed the increase in the acceptance rate and discussed various matters arising from the reports.

The Chairman and the Assistant Chief Constable thanked the Convenors for their attendance and expressed the Authority and Constabulary's appreciation to Mr Mackie who was standing down as Convenor of the Northern Panel after 8 years.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

3. ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered the terms of reference and recommended an amendment.

RECOMMENDED:

That the following amendment to the terms of reference of the Engagement Committee, be approved:

- (2) Monitor the performance of engagement mechanisms and citizen focus, and take appropriate action to secure continuous improvements.

4. CONSULTING, ENGAGING AND COMMUNICATING WITH COMMUNITIES THE ROLE OF POLICE AUTHORITIES: APA DISCUSSION PAPER

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the content of the draft APA report on community engagement.

The Committee raised a number of issues relating to the Authority's current approach to consulting with the community; the need to demonstrate how community and partner consultation influenced organisational and operational decisions; and the relevance of certain information given to the public. Members stressed the need for a partnership approach to engagement between the Constabulary and the Authority to avoid duplication and become a more focused learning organisation.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the draft guidance for the APA as outlined in the Chief Executive's report, be noted;
- (2) the Chief Executive submit the Committees' comments on the draft guidance to the APA;
- (3) the draft guidance be used as a basis for the review of the Authority's communication strategy and Police Forums; and

- (4) the Engagement Manager in consultation with the Safer & Stronger Communities Manager undertake a mapping exercise to address the questions contained in paragraph 7 of the Chief Executive's report and present an update to the Committee on 21 August 2007.

5. AUTHORITY AND CONSTABULARY ANNUAL REPORT 2006/07

The Chief Executive reported on the proposals for the production of the 2006/07 annual report, which would again be produced in a newspaper format and circulated to all households in the area. The report would feature the work undertaken by the Constabulary and Authority during the year; publicise the neighbourhood policing model and the various Constabulary contact details; and include a section depicting 150 years of policing in Cheshire.

RESOLVED:

That the proposals for publishing the 2006/07 Annual Report, be supported.

6. REASSURANCE PROGRAMME: UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Constable presented an overview of the key engagement developments within the Reassurance Programme. The report detailed the work in defining neighbourhoods; community intelligence developments; measuring the success of community engagement; engagement with the Citizens Panel; the development of the Restorative Justice workstream; the progress of PCSO recruitment; and workforce modernisation.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

7. COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT: THE WAY FORWARD

The Chief Executive presented a report on the strategic direction for the Engagement Committee and proposed a programme of work.

The Committee were invited to nominate a group of Members to assist in the review of the Communication, and Consultation & Engagement strategies.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) M Chapman, S Proctor and T Savage be nominated to assist the Engagement Manager in the review of the Authority's communication and consultation & engagement strategies and a revised strategy be submitted to the Engagement Committee on 21 August 2007 for consideration; and
- (2) the schedule of areas of activity as detailed in Appendix 3 to the Chief Executive's report, be approved.

8. ENHANCING ACCOUNTABILITY IN LOCAL POLICING

The Committee considered a briefing from the Engagement Manager on the Association of Police Authorities (APA) report “Enhancing Accountability in Local Policing – lessons from twelve police authority projects”.

The report detailed the results of an APA commissioned study of 12 police authorities, who each piloted different approaches to local accountability arrangements, structures and processes.

The Chief Executive commented on the link between engagement activity and citizen focus/satisfaction performance. It was reported that the review to be undertaken by the Engagement Manager would consider engagement activity in MSF and those top quartile performing forces for citizen focus.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the lessons learned from the pilot, be used to inform the review of Police Forums.

9. POLICE FORUMS

The Chief Executive submitted a report which detailed the scope and terms of reference for a review of Police Forums with respect to being fit for purpose, keeping pace with new legislation and value for money. The report also proposed the content of the July/August cycle of Forums include a presentation on the proposed new uniform and a focus on serious and major crime.

In considering the report, the Committee raised issues relating to measures to encourage greater attendance/participation and the involvement of younger people; how the meetings linked-in with Community Action Meetings (CAM) and partner agencies; and to introduce flexible processes that met the needs of the community.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the agenda for July/August Forums as outlined above, be approved; and
- (2) the proposals for the review of Forums be approved with findings and recommendations presented to the Engagement Committee on 13 November 2007.

10. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ACTION MEETINGS

The Safer & Stronger Communities Manager presented a report on the review and assessment of community engagement activity undertaken through the Community Action Meeting process. The report detailed the review’s findings; how CAMs benefit the local community; the costs of operating CAMs; and future developments for community engagement.

Members raised a number of issues relating to the operation of the CAMs including poor attendance; the lack of continuity; the need for a clear distinction between the roles of CAMs and Police Forums; and requested a map showing locations at all CAMs.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the review and conclusions be noted;
- (2) the tiered structure for community engagement and CAMs based on neighbourhood working approaches, be agreed in principle;
- (3) the focus on the short to medium term, on the development of community engagement and CAMs within Local Area Agreement priority wards and Super Output Areas (Tier 3 areas) as a priority, be supported, with particular attention given to furthering the opportunity for engaging with young people; and
- (4) future development of CAMs and other community engagement is best served via a suite of community engagement approaches, alongside recognised community safety partners seeking rationalisation and through cost-effective joint working wherever possible.

11. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SCRUTINY GROUP

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the establishment of a scrutiny group to look at customer satisfaction. The report detailed the membership, aims of the group and the proposed timescale for presenting the findings and recommendations back to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the scope of work to be undertaken by the Scrutiny Group and the timescales as outlined in the Chief Executive's report, be approved.

12. FOCUS GROUPS ON FEAR OF CRIME AND POLICE SERVICES: REPORT ON OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

The Engagement Manager reported on the methodology, findings and recommendations from the 21 focus groups conducted by the Authority with residents of Cheshire, Halton and Warrington last autumn. The groups aimed to identify how the Authority and the Constabulary could increase customer satisfaction in policing services and reduce the fear of crime.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

13 CHESHIRE LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS (2): UPDATE

The Safer & Stronger Communities Manager provided an update of progress against the LPSA 2 targets set by the Constabulary.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the report and findings of the March 2007 Public Perception Survey be noted; and
- (2) further analysis of the negative trend in Crewe and Nantwich be undertaken, and a further report outlining possible options to reverse this trend be submitted to the Engagement Committee on 21 August 2007.

14. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIPS

The Chief Executive submitted an update report on the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) reform programme and the business considered at the recent meetings of the CDRPs.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) future reports include a summary of Members' attendance at all partnership meetings.

15. CROSSING BORDERS: AUDIT COMMISSION REPORT

The Chief Executive submitted a briefing on the Audit Commission report "*Crossing Borders – Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers*" and an update on the subsequent work being undertaken to support Polish workers in Crewe and Nantwich since publication of the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Audit Commission report 'Crossing Border' be noted; and
- (2) the activities in Crewe and Nantwich to support the Polish community, be noted.

Duration of Meeting: The meeting commenced at 9.30am and finished at 12 noon.