

Chief Constable's Report to the Police Authority

17th September 2010

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

FRIDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2010

Force Blueprint

The force is committed to providing the best possible service to communities in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, continuing to reduce crime and help people feel safe. To do this in a very uncertain and difficult financial climate poses unprecedented challenges for the force. To ensure the organisation is capable of meeting these challenges in a transformational way, a fundamental review of the way policing is delivered has been undertaken. It is designed to solidify the improvements already made in the organisation whilst at the same time enabling the same or an improved level of service at lower cost. It will, eventually, affect practically all parts of the force, but the initial work will impact first on such areas as roads policing, response and investigation. These are things which are core activities of the force, and they are at the same time the things which are the most expensive and impact most on communities. The ACCs have been assigned to work upon their new portfolio responsibilities in preparation for work to begin in earnest in October, and they are as follows: ACC Debbie Simpson – end to end crime management; ACC Paul Netherton – Contact management to incident resolution (response) and ACC Sharon Taylor – Geographic Policing and Partnerships. Progress is being and will continue to be reported to the Police Authority Chairs Committee, and a detailed presentation will be made to members once the detail has been worked through.

2012 Programme Update

The Blueprint work, which is a priority for the force, requires a restructure of the Programme governance. Resources are now being redeployed to support the implementation and further development of the Blueprint. Alongside this, preparations are continuing to procure a crime and intelligence package to replace the existing and outdated system, and to co-ordinate this with the implementation of STORM command and control system, again to replace our old-fashioned package. We currently plan to commence with STORM implementation later this year and complete by the middle of next year whilst we procure the replacement for the crime and intelligence system.

Job Evaluation

The Force is in the initial stages of a Job Evaluation (JE) programme. This is a systematic and fair method of assessing all jobs in an organisation against a common set of criteria to determine the size of each job and its relative significance or value to the organisation. This information is then used to establish fair and equitable pay and grading levels that reflect each role's position in the organisation. Communication with staff has already commenced using a variety of methods

including staff forums, face to face briefings with supervisors, and updates via the intranet. This is to make sure we engage well, and demonstrate that we have learned past lessons. The Police Authority, Chief Officer Group and the Trades Unions are actively involved in leading, managing, delivering and overseeing the project, and the governance arrangements for the project are on the agenda today. Any changes to pay resulting from JE are unlikely to be made before 2014.

Recruitment Position

At the moment, and until sometime after the Comprehensive Spending Review which reports on the 20 October, we cannot be certain what our budgetary position for forthcoming years actually is. So we are planning for a range of scenarios, which include a 'worst case' scenario of needing to reduce police officer and police staff numbers quite significantly. This means taking some action now, so a recruitment moratorium for police officers was introduced after the July intake of 22 new student officers and it is likely to be the last intake until at least April 2012. Internal candidates, including existing members of the Special Constabulary, have been contacted to inform them of the situation, and formal letters confirming the details have been sent to both internal and external applicants. Recruitment of PCSOs has also been paused; much of the cost of PCSOs is provided by specific central grant, which presently expires in March 2011. All other police staff recruitment will be closely controlled, with only limited recruitment for critical and specialist posts taking place. The Force is committed to doing everything it can to maintain the neighbourhood policing mix of Constables and PCSOs, providing a visible and accessible presence in every neighbourhood in the force area.

Police Regulation A19 – Compulsory Retirement of Police Officers

To plan effectively for a rapid reduction in police officer numbers, the force sought legal advice to explore the possibility of using Police Regulation A19 which allows for the compulsory retirement of officers with 30 years pensionable service in the interests of the efficiency of the force. There is no provision in law for making police officers redundant; they are servants of the Crown, and the unique status of the Office of Constable places restriction on police officers such as having no right to strike. Regulation A19 might be invoked if the natural wastage of police officers coupled with the recruitment moratorium proves insufficient to meet budgetary requirements. We are working with the Police Authority to develop a strategic financial plan for the four years of the Comprehensive Spending Review period.

Safety Camera Partnership (SCP)

The Ministerial announcement in June 2010 cut the Department for Transport Road Safety Grant to local authorities. It was agreed at the SCP Board meeting in July that to accommodate the cut, a 50% reduction in staff costs would be required if the SCP budget was to be met within this financial year. This has now progressed, and 13 members of police civilian staff (back office and front line) have been placed at risk of redundancy with others who were on temporary contracts being released. We

have sought clarification from Local Authorities over future funding but the replies received so far have all stated that whilst they wish to see enforcement continue using cameras, they are not in a position at this time to provide any indicated level of funding or guarantees of future funding. We will continue to work with our partner agencies to do our best to keep people safe on our roads.

Retirement of Chief Superintendent Elaine Marshall

After working for Devon and Cornwall Police for thirty years, Chief Superintendent Elaine Marshall, commander of Cornwall BCU, has decided to retire, and I wish her every health and happiness for the future. Chief Superintendent Chris Boarland will replace her as the interim Commander whilst we continue to develop the Blueprint work, and establish the future shape of the organisation.

Operation Zephyr

Operation Zephyr is a new operational team being established to tackle serious, complex and organised crime that affects the communities of the South West Regional Forces. It is being led by Avon and Somerset Constabulary and is designed to create a regional Serious and Organised Crime team, with forces in the region working collaboratively together to make communities safer.

Summer Policing Operation

The force has received very positive feedback from communities, MPs and others about the manner in which it has policed the various and many events that have taken place across the two counties over the summer period. In particular, the policing of Newquay has been mentioned, along with favourable comments in the ACPO national newsletter regarding the policing of the three day music festival 'Beautiful Days' in East Devon. Moreover, the Prime Minister, David Cameron, wrote a personal letter to each of the officers involved in the security arrangements made for him whilst on holiday in Cornwall, thanking staff for being "extremely professional".