



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

24TH June 2010

1. MEETING

The Authority last met on 21 May 2010 which was the AGM

Set out below are some of the issues discussed

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR 2010/11

The Authority has re - elected Peter Conniff as the Chair and the Authority has appointed Linda Hockey as the new Vice Chair

3. ANNUAL POLICING PLAN 2010/11

The 2010/11 Policing Plan was published on 31 March 2010. The plan represents a joint commitment between the Authority and Police Force to build on the improvements made over the last few years.

Before agreeing the priorities and strategic objectives for the future, the Authority has consulted widely with local communities, businesses, partners and the Police Force, to ensure that the things that matter most to people are being addressed.

In Luton, the priorities have been agreed as:

- Tackling Serious Violent Crime
- Tackling Serious Acquisitive Crime (including burglary, robbery and vehicle crime)
- Addressing perceptions and local concerns regarding Anti-Social Behaviour
- Reducing re-offending by prolific, priority and young offenders
- Reducing repeat incidents of domestic abuse

For Bedford and Central Bedfordshire the priorities are

- Tackling Serious Acquisitive Crime (including burglary, robbery and vehicle crime)
- Addressing re-offending rates
- Reducing the number of repeat incidents of domestic abuse
- Increasing the number of drug users in effective treatment

4. **VALUE FOR MONEY OPERATION QUEST – A PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

The Authority has received an evaluation of a six month intensive process improvement programme. The Programme known as Operation Quest is a Home Office sponsored programme and has been delivered with the support of advisors from KPMG.

Operation QUEST aims to undertake process improvement work and deliver sustained benefits in the form of officer time savings, increased performance and improved customer satisfaction.

The programme began in July 2009 and through consultation with staff and a data gathering exercise it was clear that a number of potential improvements could be achieved in the areas of Incident Management, Crime Management and Defendant Management. The County Division was selected as the pilot BCU to implement the changes and these are now embedding across the Force.

There have been clear improvements in the timeliness and quality of policing services through this programme. In particular the feedback from customers in relation to the introduction of an appointment system for dealing with incidents has been particularly positive. The timelines from recording of crime to investigation have been shortened, as has the average time it takes to investigate a crime.

Also the introduction of Restorative Justice has been welcomed as a return to “common sense policing” by officers, our partners and the majority of the members of the public who have engaged in the process.

Restorative Justice gives victims the chance to tell offenders the real impact of their crime, to get answers to their questions and to receive an apology. It gives the offenders the chance to understand the real impact of what they’ve done and to do something to repair the harm. Restorative Justice holds offenders to account for what they have done, personally and directly, and helps victims to get on with their lives. Restorative Justice can take place when the offender has already been sentenced, in prison or in the community. It can take place when an offender has pleaded guilty in court, but before the judge passes sentence. It can be used as an alternative to prosecution

for less serious crimes. The impact on the performance data from the implementation of Restorative Justice are referred to later in my report

Already there are £1.2m of benefits that have been released through the programme and the release of benefit in a full year will be in the region of £3.1m. However not all of these are true cash savings but instead time savings which are being utilised to realise the significant service benefits.

As a result of the implementation of the QUEST programme this has allowed the reinvestment into Serious and Organised Crime, Protecting Vulnerable People and a permanent core QUEST team to enable the continuation of both service and cash benefits across other areas of the organisation

Building upon the work of Quest a new initiative known as Programme 2011

has commenced which aims to design a policing model which will, in a most cost effective way, deliver improvements to police performance and increase public confidence. The Programme will be delivered in 5 phases over a 2 year period and cashable savings of £4.5 M are anticipated. As with Operation Quest the Authority will closely monitor the progression of the project.

5. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

The Authority has considered the final end of year data in relation to its performance against the targets set for the year 2009/10.

Challenging crime reduction targets set by Bedfordshire Police Authority have helped to drive a reduction in overall crime across Bedfordshire and Luton of eight per cent in the year ending March 31st 2010. That means there were 3530 fewer crimes reported compared to the previous year.

As a result, over the last three years, crime has fallen by 27%, thereby significantly reducing the number of victims of crime in Bedfordshire and Luton.

The Authority's Performance Committee scrutinised the year's performance closely, welcoming the reductions in key areas such as burglary, vehicle crime, robbery and criminal damage.

In comparison to the same period in 2008/09 the data indicated reductions in the following crime areas

- Robbery – down 30%, meaning 300 fewer incidents
- Domestic Burglary – down 16%, equating to 632 fewer incidents
- Other Burglary – down 14%, with 488 fewer incidents
- Theft from a motor vehicle – down 19% with 966 fewer incidents

- Theft of a motor vehicle – down 26%, leading to 362 fewer incidents
- Criminal damage – down 8%, 691 less incidents

However violence against the person has increased by 6% (399 Incidents) in comparison to 2008/09 and a detailed briefing on the strategies and initiatives introduced to tackle all violent crime will be presented to Members at the next Performance Committee.

Detection levels had fallen slightly over the past year and an overall rate of 25.6%, just short of the target set for the year of 26%.

However, since the introduction of Restorative Justice(RJ) in the last quarter, 230 incidents have been dealt with via that means, which cannot be included in the overall detection rates and without which the target would have been met.

Approximately 40% of RJ's relate to incidents of theft from shops, 30% relate to minor assaults and 17% relate to incidents of criminal damage. As proven in other parts of the country, the use of Restorative Justice leaves victims more satisfied with the outcomes and reduces the re-offending rate and the Authority will continue to drive this process forward in the coming year.

Disappointingly detections in priority areas for the Authority, such as vehicle crime, robbery and criminal damage had not met the targets set for the year and Members have asked for urgent action to increase the number of crimes detected.

Overall this year's performance has seen significant strides in the right direction and focus for the forthcoming year will to reduce violent crime and increase detections.”

PETER HOLLICK
REPORT OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY