



30 MARCH 1998

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL/HAMPSHIRE CONSTABULARY
LIAISON MEETING**

Notes of the Liaison Meeting with Hampshire Constabulary held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 30 March 1998.

Present:

HAMPSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Supt K Murray - Sub-Divisional Commander (New Forest)
Chief Insp R Beale

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Councillors:

J E Coles - Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee and Leader of the Council (in the Chair)
J A G Hutchins JP - Chairman of the Council
W J Greer - Leader of Conservative Group
S A Hayes - Member of Hampshire Police Authority
N D M McGeorge - Chairman of Central Services Committee and Chairman of Crime Prevention Working Party
Mrs M J Robinson - Chairman of Housing Committee
Mrs B Smith - Chairman of Environmental Services and Licensing Committee
Mrs J K Vernon-Jackson MBE JP DL - Chairman of Planning and Transportation Committee

Officers

I B Mackintosh - Managing Director
Ms E Malcolm - Director of Environment Services
N J Gibbs - Director of Community Services
Mrs R Rutins - Committee Services
G Tombs - Head of Public Services
Mrs S Wilson - Community Safety Officer

1. NOTES (PAPER A).

The notes of the liaison meeting held on 30 September 1997 were received.

2. SERVICE PLAN 1998/99.

It was reported that the New Forest Division's Annual Service Plan for 1998/99 had recently been completed. Copies would be sent to the District Council in the near future. The main points were highlighted.

The Plan built on that for the previous year, with targets being directed towards the achievement of national key and police authority local objectives. For the year 1998/99 these were:-

National Key Objectives

1. To deal speedily and effectively with young offenders and to work with other agencies to reduce re-offending.
2. To target and reduce local problems of crime and disorder in partnership with local authorities, other local agencies and the public.
3. To target drug related crime in partnership with other local agencies.
4. To maintain and, if possible, increase the number of detections for violent crimes.
5. To increase the number of detections for burglaries of people's homes.
6. To respond promptly to emergency calls from the public.

Police Authority Local Objectives

1. To improve the quality of life of residents of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight by tackling threatening, intimidating and anti-social behaviour through the Enforcing the Peace initiative.
2. To reduce road collision casualties in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, particularly those which are serious and fatal.
3. To improve the quality of service provided by the Hampshire Constabulary in respect of high visibility policing, callers to the Police, victims of and witnesses to crime and the judicial process.

Each objective was accompanied by performance indicator(s), with force/divisional targets as appropriate.

Discussion took place on each of the objectives. With regard to the new National Key Objective 1, District Councillors agreed that it was extremely important to endeavour to expedite the judicial process where young offenders were involved. The use of cautioning and the circumstances in which this was applied were considered.

The programme for Restorative Justice being developed in partnership with the New Forest District Council's Crime Prevention Working Party was explained. Under the programme the young offender met with the victim of his crime and apologised for what had been done. Participation by the victim was voluntary. The victim would describe the ramifications of the offence and the offender and the victim agreed a programme of positive activity to redress the crime. Experience of the programme in other areas had shown that victims were satisfied with the

outcomes. The programme would need to be a multi-agency one and would require trained mediators.

With regard to National Key Objective 2, it was reported that the biggest crime problem in the New Forest was that in regard to motor vehicles. The promotion of a Car Park Watch scheme with the support of the public and business sectors, as well as the Forestry Commission, was proposed. Again, the emphasis was on a multi-agency approach. Included in the Division's proposals for meeting the target under this objective were proposals to increase the number of active, registered informants throughout the New Forest Division, increasing the number of officers trained to examine vehicles which had been the subject of crime, and to introduce a programme of follow-up visits to victims of cycle theft. This latter initiative would be allocated to special constables. Members were pleased to learn that the recent recruitment drive for special constables in Fawley and New Milton had been successful and these recruiting initiatives would be pursued in other areas of the District during the year.

In respect of drug related crime (National Key Objective 3) it was noted that the District's drug crimes were generally related to cannabis. Small amounts of stronger drugs were, however, in circulation and the District was vulnerable to the more widespread use in the adjacent conurbations.

The New Forest Division had had the best detection rate of violent crimes in Hampshire during the previous year. The force's domestic violence policy had been revised and all officers were being trained in dealing with this. The policy provided for a greater degree of positive action to be taken in response to domestic violence. Notwithstanding this, prosecutions could be taken only where there was sufficient evidence. Positive actions which could be taken without resorting to prosecutions were to intervene to remove one of the parties from the scene of the violence and to refer parties to Victim Support as soon as possible.

It was noted that burglaries of people's homes had decreased consistently in the New Forest over the past few years. Action was being taken to identify targets through crime pattern analysis and to target more effectively stop checks of persons/vehicles. 100% attendance at scenes of crimes was intended and greater identification of handlers of stolen property was being pursued. There would be close working with housing authorities in relation to offences contravening tenancy agreements.

Insofar as prompt responses to emergency calls from the public (National Key Objective 6) were concerned, the New Forest Division had achieved the targets of answering 90% of 999 calls within ten seconds and to arrive at 80% of all emergency response calls within fifteen minutes. More drivers were being trained for area response cars.

It was explained that a new Response Centre was being constructed at Netley. In the interim, steps were being taken to centralise all Police calls at the Hulse Road Headquarters and to direct all Police calls there. Emergency calls would be put through on a fast line to the 999 Emergency Service. Non-urgent calls would be passed to the appropriate place for attention. The Police representatives were confident that this would result in a better, more efficient service to the public although there could be adverse public reaction. The public's reluctance to dial 999 for emergency Police assistance and their apparent preference for contacting local constables or local stations was discussed. Every opportunity should be taken to emphasise that 999 should be used if there was any likelihood of an emergency Police response being required.

With regard to the Local Objectives, actions to implement the Enforcing the Peace initiative included the encouragement of the use of Exclusion Orders in relation to violent offences connected with licensed premises, liaising with the District Council to secure the provision of CCTV as a requirement of the grant of some Public Entertainment Licences, working with the District Council and others on the "Quality of Life Group" and the Crime Prevention Working Party and, as part of a multi-agency approach, to seek to address the needs of young people at Fordingbridge and New Milton.

The Local Objective regarding reduction in road casualties was being addressed by an increase in the number of officers trained to use handheld speed checking devices, taking positive action at identified accident sites or potential accident sites and for each Station Inspector to undertake one concentrated road safety operation per section. It was suggested that, insofar as cycling safety was concerned, the New Forest Road Safety Council be approached to promote a cycling safety awareness campaign.

Part of Local Objective 3 would involve a review of rural policing to ensure the most effective allocation of resources across the Division. The danger of this leading to public perception of a lower level of policing was highlighted. Supt Murray assured members that it was extremely unlikely that front-line officers would be lost from the New Forest area, although there might be a loss of some supervisory ranks. The thrust of the review was to ensure that the Division became more communicative and responsive while offering an excellent service to the public. District Councillors would welcome an opportunity to discuss these issues further at a later stage.

Mr Mackintosh referred to the fact that the Annual Police Service Plans were of great importance to the community and achievement of the Police's aims depended largely on co-operation and joint working arrangements with other agencies, including New Forest District Council. It was extremely important that all involved worked together to achieve these aims for the common good of the community.

3. CRIME.

The latest crime data for the New Forest for the twelve months to February 1998 were circulated. There was a consistent decrease in the number of crimes, with the exception of violent crimes which showed a disappointing 14.4% increase. However, Supt Murray felt sure that this was the result of greater willingness on the part of the public to report this type of crime. Although detection rates were still low, at 27%, the overall detection rate was good when compared with other Divisions.

Although juvenile crime was not shown separately on the paper circulated, it was the Police's perception that juvenile crime as a percentage of total crime was increasing. Again, it was important to approach juvenile crime on a multi-agency basis as there was no doubt that, whilst there was a hard core of repeat offenders, there was a large number whose behavioural patterns could be influenced for the good of all concerned.

4. CRIME AND DISORDER BILL (REPORT B).

The steps being taken by Hampshire and Isle of Wight local authorities to meet their responsibilities under new legislation proposed in the Crime and Disorder Bill were explained. A Standing Conference on Community Safety comprising

representatives of district councils, county councils, unitary authorities and police authorities, but also involving other agencies such as the health authority, voluntary sector, magistrates, business and the trade unions, would be formed. This group would set the overriding principles to which participating agencies should be working and would monitor progress, but individual authorities and partners would determine their own objectives and priorities. Supporting the Standing Conference would be a Chief Officers' Group comprising the Chief Constable, representatives of Social Services, Education, Local Authority Chief Executives and the Youth Justice system. The Group would be expanded to include other relevant agencies such as the health, voluntary sector, business sector etc when relevant items were discussed.

A meeting of officers of involved organisations had been held to discuss how best to take issues forward within the New Forest area.

Other actions being taken by the District Council in conjunction with other agencies to meet the proposed statutory requirements under the Crime and Disorder Bill, as set out in Report B to the meeting, were noted. It was the intention to devise a clear project plan against which achievements could be measured. Of importance to the District Council would be how best to handle the Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and the mechanisms for their implementation.

5. "DESIGN FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY".

Copies of the District Council's publication "Design for Community Safety", which set out how environmental planning and design could help reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime, were circulated. The document had been produced following wide consultation. The District Council was taking positive steps to ensure that the design and layout of developments reduced the likelihood of criminal and anti-social behaviour and allowed people to feel safer, while at the same time providing a high quality environment. The Police had contributed to the document.

Mention was made of a recent request from Hampshire's Assistant Chief Constable to consult with the Police on any developments over twenty houses or industrial or shopping complexes in the area. This was intended to assist the Police in the planning of resources such as siting of Police stations. It was also hoped to obtain contributions from developers towards Police resources. The District Council was happy to comply with the request for a meeting but it was felt more appropriate to deal with the matter on a Hampshire-wide basis. A reply in these terms had been sent to the Assistant Chief Constable.

Reference was made of a recent site visit by members of the District Council's Planning and Transportation Committee to Bartley Park where the development of youth facilities was proposed. The Police's Crime Prevention Officer had been consulted and had expressed a formal view on the application but had been unable to attend the site visit. The officer representing the Police had expressed views contrary to those of the Crime Prevention Officer. This had led to some embarrassment and confusion at the site visit. The matter had now been clarified and an appropriate report would be made to the next meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee. The Police had now nominated a single point of contact to avoid this type of situation occurring in the future.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

A provisional date of Monday, 26 October 1998 at 10.00 am was agreed. If the Crime and Disorder Bill had not become legislation by that time, it might be necessary to arrange the meeting at a later date.