

UTTLESFORD POLICE AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE GROUP held at 7.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES CRAFTON GREEN STANSTED on 23 OCTOBER 1995

Present:- Councillor G C Waterer (Chairman) and Mr M Easteal (Vice-Chairman) (Essex Police Authority)
Councillor F W H Cummings (Uttlesford District Council), Messrs S Bolton, R A E Clifford and P G Leeder (Parish/Town Councils) and Rev C Bishop (UCVS)

In attendance:- M T Purkiss - Secretary to the Group (Uttlesford District Council) Superintendent G Dossett, Inspector A Rayner and Sergeants M Harman and A Welham (Essex Police).

I. CHAIRMAN

As the Chairman was not present at the commencement of the meeting the Chair was taken by the Vice-Chairman.

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R C Smith (Uttlesford District Council), J Drummond (Parish/Town Councils), G J Thompson (Churches), R Board (Education), M Perry (Chambers of Trade and Commerce), I Mackenzie (Rotary) and C Cooper (Neighbourhood Watch).

I. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 1995 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

I. MATTERS ARISING

Mr Clifford considered that in reporting upon the crime statistics it would be more useful to have the actual numbers recorded in addition to the percentages. However, statistics were normally reported in percentages in the interests of brevity. He then asked for the role of Neighbourhood Watch to be clarified and stated that some areas of Stansted did not get copies of the Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter. He added that the Parish Council distributed newsletters four times each year and would be willing to include the Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter with this. Sergeant Welham would discuss this matter with him after the meeting.

Superintendent Dossett referred to the suggestion made by Councillor Smith at the last meeting that the Police had not recorded an alleged suspicious incident at Great Canfield. Councillor Smith had since found this not to be the case and had accepted that the incident had been investigated and recorded.

I. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr M Easteal reported on the last meeting of the Police Authority. He stated that consideration had been given to a report from the Police Complaints Authority relating to the first week of policing at Brightlingsea. In general terms, the Police had been exonerated and had since held a local meeting in Brightlingsea to discuss areas of concern. The demonstrations were now at a much lower level and required less policing. This had been the biggest single operation which Essex Police had ever had to mount in its history.

He then referred to proposals to upgrade the custody suites at main police stations and a proposed site for a new police station in Great Dunmow. The role of the Police and Community Consultative Groups had also been considered and it was generally agreed that these were working well. It had also been decided to involve a representative of Stansted Airport in the Group and this matter would be addressed. The Police Authority would like to see more publicity given to the meetings and to broaden the membership where appropriate. Mr Easteal asked for all Members to help in this area.

I. POLICE REPORT

Superintendent Dossett reported on the following matters.

(i) HMI's Report

Superintendent Dossett reported that the Inspector's report had now been published and he issued copies of the executive summary to all Members.

(ii) Annual Review

He circulated copies of the annual review 1994/95 for the Braintree Division.

(iii) Milkwatch

He then reported on the Milkwatch Scheme which was being operated at Saffron Walden and referred to the useful publicity on national radio and television which had highlighted the strengths of the links between the Police and Uttlesford District Council. A tape of the Radio 4 interview was then played for Members.

(iv) Police and Community Safety Strategy

Superintendent Dossett stated that there had been some concern that Neighbourhood Watch Schemes were not consistent and there is probably gaps and duplication. The Police were looking to develop a more consistent approach and had identified an Inspector to research this matter as an ongoing project. Councillor Clifford welcomed the initiative and felt that the emphasis should be on education as prevention was better than cure.

(v) Truncheons

He reported that Essex Police would not be using side handled batons but would be taking delivery of longer straight and telescopic style truncheons which would be issued after training. He would arrange for a demonstration of these at a future meeting.

(vi) Brightlingsea

He reported that at the peak of the demonstrations 20 Officers per day from the Division were working at Brightlingsea but the situation had now changed and only a small team of Officers needed to be set aside. However, this did cause some disruption to shift patterns.

(vii) Inspector J Emmerick

He reported that Inspector J Emmerick had been off from work with an injury since January. He would be leaving Essex Police on medical retirement on 5 November 1995.

(viii) Stinger

Inspector A Rayner then demonstrated the Stinger Spike System which was available to the traffic unit to terminate high speed pursuits. A video was also shown.

I. DIVISIONAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

At the last meeting Superintendent Dossett had explained the Force and Division Plan and he now updated Members on progress with the 7 operational objectives and 5 organisation goals for the whole Division as follows:-

(i)

Violent Crimes

Target detection rate - 85%

Progressive total - 66%

(ii) Burglary of Homes

Target detection rate -
greater than 20%

Progressive total - 28.6%

(iii) Crime Prevention

This covered reducing the number of domestic and other burglaries, violent crimes and vehicle crimes. With the exception of vehicle crime, all objectives were on target.

(iv) High Visibility Policing

This area had yet to be measured. However, there had been an increase in the number of special constables.

(v) Emergency Calls

The immediate response for rural areas was 16 minutes in 85% of the time. The current rate being achieved was 81.9%. However, it was noted that the Brightlingsea situation had probably seriously affected response times.

(vi)

Maintaining Peace

This related to ongoing problems not dealt with by an immediate response and a number of action plans had been initiated.

(vii)

Road Accidents

The police had signed up to National Accident 2000, a campaign aimed at reducing the number of road traffic casualties by 1/3 by the year 2000. Within the Division a target had been set to reduce the number of road traffic casualties to a level of 15% below the projected trend. However, at the present time the number of casualties was running above the target set. Inspector A Rayner then provided more figures on the situation for Uttlesford, including the M11, and stated that the unit would be targeting geographical areas for particular activities (eg speeding, seat belts etc). In October, Newport would be concentrating on vehicle defects and during December drink driving would be the main area targeted. He referred to the problems with high powered motor cycles in the district and stated that this had been addressed and a letter of thanks had been received from Leaden Roding Parish Council for the action taken.

Superintendent Dossett then referred to the 5 internal organisational objectives. In particular he referred to the re-organisation of the Division and stated that following a review, division wide shifts had been discontinued in favour of increasing local sectional responsibility. He added that there were now two Inspectors at Saffron Walden (Inspectors Bull and Robinson). They would share the role but would have specific responsibilities. Sergeant Welham was now based at Stansted and the police office would be open from 9 am to 5 pm on Monday to Friday from November.

The second objective he referred to was to design and implement a Divisional Crime Strategy to help assess trends. He intended to invite the Detective Chief Inspector responsible for this strategy to attend a future meeting to explain this matter further. One particular area of concern could be a proposal for the police not to visit all crimes, particularly where they could not be detected.

A number of questions were asked concerning traffic calming measures and the relationship between the Police and the Highways Authority. It was noted that the Highways Department had produced a document which evaluated the effectiveness of all traffic calming measures and Superintendent Dossett added that both authorities shared knowledge from a common database and he considered that there was a good working relationship. Councillor Waterer reported that rumble strips had been ruled out in a number of areas because of the noise factor but coloured road strips had been successful in many areas.

I. LOCAL POLICING PLAN

Superintendent Dossett reported that the Home Secretary would release the objectives for 1996/97 in late October and they were not expected to be dissimilar to the current objectives. He stated that he needed to write the Divisional Plan taking into account the views of the Consultative Group. It was generally considered that the current objectives were the right ones but more attention needed to be given to the problem of drugs. Superintendent Dossett outlined what was currently being done locally and referred to the Government's

increased spending on drugs prevention education. He added that Uttlesford had been arranging a series of meetings on drug prevention and there had been a very positive response. The main efforts of the police were aimed at identifying the importers and distributors of drugs.

He asked for any further feedback on the Local Policing Plan by no later than 20 November 1995.

I. QUESTION TIME

Mr Clifford stated that he was disturbed at the role of the Home Secretary at setting police objectives as he had always considered that it was the public's police force. This view was noted and Councillor Waterer added that he was pleased at the setting up of the National Criminal Investigation Service which correlated many activities but left the local police role intact.

Mr Leeder then asked about the future of the police house at Thaxted and Superintendent Dossett explained that the police were currently reviewing the future of police housing nationally. Currently, the Officer at Thaxted did not need the house but as the police office was an integral part of the building he felt it unlikely that the police would dispose of the property.

Councillor Waterer the outlined a compensation scheme for special constables which was being investigated with a view to attracting more recruits. He also reported that Essex Police had been invited to set up a blueprint for policing in Albania.

I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 19 February 1996 at the Guildhall, Thaxted at 7.30 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm.

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