

Cumbria Police Authority
Community & Race Relations Committee
26th January 2006.

Agenda Item No.7

Report by the Clerk & Chief Executive.

CONSULTATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Background

As part of the joint action plan supporting their Joint Consultation Strategy, the Police Authority is undertaking consultation with young people through the medium of its Police Community Liaison Forums ('Section 96' Committees). The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about this area of activity and note progress achieved to date.

RECOMMENDED: That progress against the Action Plan be noted.

Detail

As part of the joint action plan supporting the Joint Consultation Strategy, the Police Authority is undertaking consultation with young people through the Authority's Police Community Liaison Forums (PCLFs), for the purposes of section 96 Police Act 1996.

The Secretary to the Allerdale and Copeland PCLFs contacted all the secondary schools in West Cumbria with a view to holding a "Youth Forum" at one of the schools. Following a positive response from Millom School, a Forum meeting was arranged at the School on 18th November 2005 (Minutes attached). The meeting proved to be a valuable learning experience in terms of the approach and preparation required for such an event. The School considered it to have been a useful exercise and would like to engage with the Authority in a similar event, possibly in April 2006.

The Eden PCLF is seeking to arrange an event at the Newton Rigg Campus in February 2006 and the Chair of the Consultation Working Group is working with officers from the Constabulary with a view to undertaking a consultation exercise at one of the secondary schools in Penrith.

The outcome of this activity will be reviewed by the Consultation Working Group, with a view to establishing an agreed and co-ordinated approach to consultation with young people across the County.

C R Alcock
Clerk and Chief Executive

19th January 2006.

Appendices: Copeland PCLF Minutes, 18th November 2006.

Background documents: There are no background documents.

Race and Diversity and Human Rights Act Implications: Consulting with all groups within the community is an action within the Authority's RES Action Plan, as is invigorating the Police Community Liaison Forums; whilst obtaining the views about policing of all people living in the Authority's area is as important as providing them with information, for the purposes of section 96.

WORKING TOGETHE IN COPELAND

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD IN MILLOM SCHOOL WITH THE
YEAR 12 PUPILS ON FRIDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 2005 AT 11.50 A.M.**

PRESENT

Head of Millom School 6th form
Mrs. M. Johnson (Police Authority)
Stuart Edwards (Police Authority)
PC Jonathan Wignall (Cumbria Police)
Councillor N. Houston
Councillor Mrs. S. Brown
Councillor F. Heathcote
Councillor G. Scurrah
30 pupils
Mrs. B.A. Lamb acting as Secretary

WELCOME

The Head of the 6th form introduced the panel and gave an outline of what the visit was about. He said the panel were there to gain the pupils' views on the police and he said all those present were at an important stage in their lives and many were eligible to vote and shape the future of the county and indeed the country. An agenda was distributed. He then handed over to Mrs. Johnson.

Mrs. Johnson welcomed everyone and said she was a member of the Whitehaven Police Forum which held meetings in various venues around Copeland quarterly and in the past it had been very difficult to encourage young people to attend the meetings and by visiting Millom School it was attempt to get their views. She then handed over to Stuart Edwards from the Police Authority who, she said, would give an overview of what the Police Authority did.

WHAT IS THE POLICE AUTHORITY AND WHAT DOES IT DO ?

Stuart said the Police Authority was a statutory body like the County or District Councils, established by the Police and Magistrates Courts Act 1994. He said there were 43 police authorities in England and Wales, one for each police force but he said the police authorities were independent from the police forces. He went on to say the role of Cumbria Police Authority was to ensure the efficient and effective policing of Cumbria

- Sets the budget
- Monitors Constabulary performance
- Monitors overall delivery of policing services
- Is the Best Value authority

- Runs the Independent Custody Visiting scheme
- Consults with the public
- Sets policing priorities for Cumbria
- Is responsible for the Annual Policing Plan
- Appoints and can dismiss the Chief Constable and other Chief Officers

Stuart said the police authority did not involve itself in the day to day police matters and that that was the responsibility of the Chief Constable. He then went on to say how the Police Authority was made up:

- 9 Councillors appointed by Cumbria County Council
- 5 Independent Members appointed following public advert
- 3 Magistrates appointed by the Magistrates Courts Committee

Plus 4 full time members of staff and five part time staff.

Mrs Johnson said these were cold facts but she pointed out that from the age of 18 any of those present could become Independent Custody Visitors or an independent member of the Police Authority. Mrs. Johnson then handed over to PC Wignall for some local input.

LOCAL INPUT

PC Wignall said he had only been based in Millom for 6 weeks but that prior to that he had served in Whitehaven for four years. He said there were 15 officers in Millom and 2 Local Policing Teams. He said he thought the most contact youths in Millom had was when they were asked to move on from street corners etc. He asked how many those present had had contact with a police officer or knew the names of any of the officers in Millom. No one had. He then asked if there were any questions. There were none. Councillor Scurrah then said he was amazed no one knew the name of any of the officers in Millom. He then referred to his own youth when officers were known. Councillor Scurrah said it was important to know what the youth of Millom wanted and information could only be passed on if it was known. Councillor Houston said when information was passed on the results would not be instant but that consideration would be given and action taken.

GENERAL DEBATE

The Head of 6th form asked two individual students why they thought youths were asked to move on. The answer was because there was nothing for young people to do. One student thought a skate park would be a good idea. The head found it difficult to draw the students further.

PC Wignall said the elderly in Millom, as in other areas, found it intimidating to be confronted by groups of up to 15 youths and that they did not feel safe particularly in the evenings. He did say that perhaps the reverse was also true.

Mrs. Johnson then spoke briefly about the proposed merger of the forces with Lancashire and perhaps Merseyside and asked whether or not the students thought this was a good idea or not.

Councillor Mrs. Brown said she covered Seascale as a Councillor and that the Community Police in Seascale served the community very well and worked with the youth to see what they wanted.

Stuart Edwards distributed leaflets about the Police Authority and the force. The head of the 6th form said pupils should read the information as he intended to spend time the following week to debate their findings. He said he would feedback the information to the Police Authority. Stuart referred to the website.

Mrs. Johnson thanked everyone for the attention and closed the meeting at 12.35 p.m.

After the pupils were dismissed there was an informal meeting to assess how the session had gone. It was agreed the format should be different – less officials and a smaller representative group of pupils. It was agreed with the head of 6th Form and the Head of the school that a further meeting be set up in March or April when an agenda would be forwarded to the school at least a month in advance. Each tutor group in the 6th form would pick 2 representatives (6 in total) who would then meet with Mrs. Johnson, Stuart Edwards and Barbara Lamb.