

MINUTES OF THE BARROW POLICE COMMUNITY LIAISON FORUM
 HELD IN THE POLICE STATION, DUKE STREET, BARROW
 (venue changed from Forum 28, at request of Barrow Police)
 THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2005, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT

Members:

Cllr Mr Bill Smith	-	Cumbria Police Authority (Chairman)
Mrs Janet Lashmar	-	Cumbria Police Authority (Vice-Chairman)
Chief Superintendent Dee Collins	-	Cumbria Constabulary, South
Chief Inspector Iain Goulding	-	Cumbria Constabulary, Barrow area
Ms Lynne Slavin	-	Cumbria Police Authority
Cllr Mr N Bishop-Rowe	-	Ulverston Town Council/SLDC
Cllr Mr Jack W Rice	-	Ulverston Town Council
Mr M Kerr	-	Self (BAFPA)
Mr R Turner	-	Scouts Association
Mr G Appleton	-	Ulverston Trades Council
Mrs A F Martin	-	Self
Mrs M Stainton	-	Cumbria Assn.Local Councils (Bardsea PC)
Mr R W Hutton	-	Chair, Furness Neighbourhood Watch Assn.
M/s M Crawford	-	Neighbourhood Watch Association
Mrs B E Shepherd	-	Secretary

Guest:

Detective Sergeant Mike Unwin	-	Barrow Child and Adult Protection Unit
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There were 12 Members of the Public present, as follows:

Mrs V Beck	-	Self
Mr W Beck	-	Self
Mrs Margie Arts	-	Newby Terrace NW Association
Mr Ken Arts	-	BAFPA
Ms Anne Hardman	-	Furness Neighbourhood Watch Assn.
M/s Olive Quigley	-	Self
M/s S Shuttleworth	-	Victim Support Association
M/s C Search	-	Victim Support Association
Me Dennis Pye	-	Self
Mrs E M Rawsling		
M/s O Grimsby		
North West Evening Mail		

APOLOGIES

Ms Lynda Shaw	-	Cumbria Police Authority
Ms Marianne Buchanan	-	BAE Systems
Mr G McCreedy	-	Self
Mrs K Robinson	-	Self
Mrs Ann Booth	-	Self
Mrs Margaret Marshall	-	Furness Neighbourhood Watch Assn.(Sec.)

The Chairman apologised for the late change of venue, which had been requested by Police to accommodate a large 'Streetsafe' operation being held in Forum 28. He was pleased to welcome new Chief Superintendent Ms Dee Collins, together with Cllr Mr Jack Rice, new representative from Ulverston Town Council.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were then recorded as above.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by the Chairman and agreed that the Minutes of the 58th meeting held on 14th April 2005 be adopted.

3 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman read a letter from Chief Superintendent Garry Horlacher, who since last meeting had moved on to a new post at HQ. CS Horlacher had expressed sincere thanks and great appreciation to all his colleagues in the south of Cumbria who had made his period here so welcoming and useful. On behalf of all members and public, the Chairman said that Chief Superintendent Horlacher would be greatly missed, and he proposed a sincere vote of thanks recording appreciation of CS Horlacher's tremendous contribution particularly in the Barrow area; this was seconded by Cllr Bishop-Rowe and endorsed by all present at the meeting. The Secretary had already sent a letter expressing good wishes on behalf of the Forum.

The Chairman then introduced Chief Superintendent Dee Collins, whom he said would be assured of the Forum's full support in her new post.

4 CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT DEE COLLINS, AREA COMMANDER FOR SOUTH CUMBRIA

Chief Superintendent Collins thanked the meeting for its kind welcome, before outlining her experience together with her vision for the future policing of the Barrow area. A police officer for 18 years, she has been well acquainted with the area, but would make no assumptions and promised to do a good job, considering it an honour to be given the opportunity to make a difference and improve the area for its public whose support she hoped to gain. Although priorities and resources would always be a factor, she said she would work with other agencies to ensure that Barrow remained a safe place in which to be outdoors, and that it was important to inform her of any pertinent issues.

5 DETECTIVE SERGEANT MIKE UNWIN OF BARROW CAPU (CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTION UNIT) : VULNERABLE ADULTS INCLUDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Detective Sergeant Mike Unwin was in charge of the Child and Adult Protection Unit in Barrow. He explained that it had always been recognised that children had difficulty in making their voices heard, and the 'memorandum of good practice' outlined how police should work with children especially in relation to their criminal evidence for court proceedings. He said that the 1992 Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act had formalised how to deal with children, for the first time putting the rights of all ages on a similar footing; and that his Unit had evolved from that legislation.

DS Unwin defined a Vulnerable Adult as having:

- i) a mental disorder, recognised under the Mental Health Act;
- ii) a learning disability; or a
- iii) physical disability

He described people in the above categories as more likely to encounter difficulties in accessing or being seen in the criminal justice system. He explained that it was necessary to balance the needs of the courts and to protect

the vulnerable adults, and that solutions included use of screens, evidence given by live/video-link, removal of wigs/gowns to reduce intimidation. However, the defence could oppose any such measures, which had to be shown not to affect and/or to improve the quality of that evidence; and he gave a non-identifying example of how such considerations had helped a victim.

He noted that the defence could attempt to compel a witness to appear in court in person, but that this was unlikely to be granted in view of alternative options available.

Any 'vulnerable adult' incidents not involving criminal liability would be assessed for transferring to other agencies such as Social Services, concluded DS Unwin, who added that multi-agency work would continue as the difficulties had by no means been eradicated.

DS Unwin was warmly thanked for his contribution.

6 POLICING ISSUES

Chief Superintendent Collins, who was in week five of her new post, made observations regarding policing in the Barrow and Dalton areas. A major responsibility was crime and disorder, she said, but also community safety. CS Collins admitted that Barrow was not without its problems, but that sight should not be lost of the many excellent projects and amount of work being undertaken around the area; the continuing message was of people acting responsibly, she said, before handing over to CI Goulding who would outline the local picture.

6.2 Chief Inspector Iain Goulding, with responsibility for Barrow Police Station, then gave a brief summary of the position in relation to crime issues as follows:

- i) Overall crime rates.
For the first time in two/three years, there had been a slight increase of about 10% compared to last year.
- ii) Detection rates.
The high detection rate had been maintained in the league tables, the area being third best in the county and thus in the national context the third safest area when comparing like-with-like.

Burglaries remained a priority, and a massive programme of work had reduced burglaries to the lowest rate for three/four years and statistically second-best, with offences only every other day for the whole of Barrow compared with up to five per day five years ago. Vehicle crime had increased slightly; however, the area had the lowest rate in Cumbria. Domestic violence had also noted an increase; however, this was felt due to greater confidence in reporting incidents.

CI Goulding reminded the meeting that, whilst the press may report increasing violent crime, he warned of 'mixed messages', with many professionals noting that although this remained the public perception only 4% involved serious incidents and that 51% of these offences did not result in injury. He concluded that Barrow remained a safe area.

Questions were invited and answered as follows:

- When concern was expressed regarding 24-hour licensing, it was agreed that alcohol did pose a problem generally and formed a huge part of police work, fuelled by its reduced cost but also through consumption *before* evenings out. CS Goulding reminded the meeting that licensees had a legal right to operate, and that the trade remained vital to any town. However, through 'partnership' funds much educating was being done to ensure that licensees operated responsibly and within the law; also that 'test purchases' were being conducted with failures leading to prosecutions and even removal of licences.
- CS Collins noted that Ulverston division bore favourable comparison with the remainder of the area, seeing a reduction in crime statistics across the board through the hard work of officers. She added that long-term solutions were being sought to sustain these improvements.
- A member queried the method of recording violent crime, and whether legislation should now be changed to more accurately reflect the nature of incidents, to avoid the public unnecessarily living in fear of crime. CI Goulding agreed that amendment to the legislation along these lines was due and already being considered, adding that only 4% of that category (which included, for instance, dog attack injuries) were serious.
- The reported large improvement in statistics was attributed to partnership working, appropriate use of community intelligence plus co-operation of the area's public who were always willing to help.
- CI Goulding confirmed his satisfaction with manning levels, which he felt were sufficient to deliver an excellent service to the area.
- An attendee queried how many people were undertaking community service tasks, together with any benefits gained by the town. CI Goulding believed up to 30 of the most prolific offenders were working in the area, although their tasks would need to remain confidential in order to protect identities and not provoke additional problems. He agreed that uniforms for offenders had been considered but rejected for similar reasons. CS Goulding added that actual statistics were the responsibility of the Probation Service – from whom, he would seek information.
- It was suggested that police visibility could be enhanced by off-duty officers displaying identification card/stickers in vehicle inviting witnesses to incidents to make immediate reports direct to them, thus aiding faster solving of crimes. CI Goulding did not feel this to be a workable tactic, as off-duty officers had a right to their own personal life; further, they would not be in possession of necessary equipment such as radios etc – although he added that the idea had a sound basis, and was partly answered through knowing your own community police officer.
- Arising out of the above, a member further queried how any off-duty officer would react on observing a crime in progress. CS Goulding said that police officers had taken an oath and had a duty to protect the public, and would always respond immediately to any critical incident witnessed whether on or off-duty.
- An attendee queried whether a major government re-evaluation was necessary regarding current gun laws, citing a situation, say, where a gun might be found at a car boot sale or other public event. CS Collins noted that there was much responsible and legal gun ownership, and that it was a matter of balancing public acceptability regarding firearms' possession. Further, with her expertise as a firearms officer for 10 years, she was confident of providing appropriate response in the circumstances described.

7 INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME

7.1 Panel Chair Mrs Martin had no visiting reports to table.

7.2 On a general note, Mrs Martin pointed out that the absence of disabled toilets in Barrow Police Station, asking what procedures would be followed if a disabled person wished to become an ICV, and/or a wheelchair-bound suspect was arrested.

CS Goulding first emphasised the priority of investing in policing services. He then explained that Barrow Station pre-existed current disability laws and had outgrown its original purpose, noting that the previous disabled toilet had had to be demolished to provide disabled access which was of greater importance. However, short-term, he promised that any disabled visitor or inmate would be afforded as much dignity as possible within their limitations; and further, that CPA would take up this matter long-term. In the meantime, CS Goulding would welcome the challenge of accommodating a disabled ICV.

7.3 Mrs Martin pointed out that two long-serving ICVs, Mr Kerr and Mr Arts, were retiring following dissatisfaction with the new terms of office, about which the panel felt they had not been consulted. Specifically, ICVs were now required to make weekly rather than monthly visits, and with only three extra ICVs from the recent recruitment process this placed a much greater burden on the panel.

Forum Chairman Mr Smith thanked these members for their services over many years, and promised to pass their comments back to HQ. Ms Slavin added that a press article was forthcoming which it was hoped would encourage additional applications.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Concern was expressed regarding the Government's proposal to reduce the number of Police Authorities nationally, resulting in a possible merger of Cumbria and Lancashire Police Forces.

The Chairman assured the meeting that CPA had similar concerns, and that appropriate representations were being made.

8.2 A member asked whether Police would find helpful the introduction of a Freephone telephone number for non-urgent calls, which might increase the amount of assistance given by the public. Police agreed that this facility would be useful. A pilot along these lines was already underway elsewhere, the outcome of which would be noted - although one concern was potential loss of information that did not travel through the local control room.

9 DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 12th January 2006, Forum 28, Barrow.

ADDENDUM: Subsequently changed to 5th January, Coronation Hall, Ulverston.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

**MINUTES OF SOUTH LAKELAND POLICE COMMUNITY LIAISON FORUM
HELD IN HALLGARTH COMMUNITY CENTRE, HALLGARTH CIRCLE, KENDAL
TUESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2005, AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT

Members:

Cllr Mr J Nicholson	-	Cumbria Police Authority (Chairman)
Chief Superintendent Dee Collins	-	Cumbria Constabulary, South
Chief Inspector Kevin McGilloway	-	Cumbria Constabulary, South
Cllr Mrs Pauline Halfpenny	-	Cumbria Police Authority
Cllr Ms Jean Ewing	-	South Lakeland District Council/Res.Assn.
Mr M J Sherriff	-	Holme Parish Council
Mrs Sue Harrison	-	Self
Ms Fiona Crombie	-	Underbarrow Neighbourhood Watch Assn.
Mr T Gilbert	-	Self
Mrs B E Shepherd	-	Secretary

Guest:

Detective Sergeant Mark Somers	-	Kendal Child and Adult Protection Unit
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There were 2 Members of the Public present as follows:

Mrs M J Sherriff	-	Self
Mr D Hardy	-	Self

APOLOGIES

Cllr Mr R K Bingham	-	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Mrs Avril Dobson	-	South Lakeland District Council
Mrs Freda Kitching	-	Westmorland National Union of Teachers
Mrs Joyce Dean	-	Cumbria Association of Local Councils

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were listed above.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by the Chairman and agreed that the Minutes of the 58th meeting held on 13th April 2005 be adopted as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

Chief Superintendent Garry Horlacher, who since last meeting had moved on to a new post at HQ, had written to the Forum expressing sincere thanks and great appreciation to all his colleagues in the South of Cumbria. A sincere vote of thanks for Chief Superintendent Horlacher's contribution, which had been greatly appreciated, was recorded. In view of the timing of the letter, the Secretary had already replied offering good wishes on behalf of the Forum.

The Chairman then introduced Chief Superintendent Dee Collins, who would be assured of similar support for her new post in the South Lakeland area.

4 INTRODUCING CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT DEE COLLINS,
AREA COMMANDER FOR SOUTH CUMBRIA

Chief Superintendent Dee Collins gave sincere thanks for the genuine welcome she had been given in what was week six of her new post. She understood there to be many issues in South Lakeland, and was confident of the co-operation of the public in dealing with them in order to maintain south Cumbria in total as a safe place to live and work.

CS Collins asked Chief Inspector Kevin McGilloway, who held day-to-day responsibility for policing across South Lakeland, to lead Item 6 on the agenda.

5 DETECTIVE SERGEANT MARK SOMERS, KENDAL CAPU
(CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTION UNIT) :
VULNERABLE ADULTS INCLUDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Detective Mark Somers described the area for which his Unit held responsibility, which covered the whole of South Lakeland including Kendal, Sedbergh, Windermere, to Newby Bridge. Together with admin staff, he had six colleagues including two Child Protection Officers - all of whom, though working office hours, were available on call out of hours when required.

Giving a brief overview of the nature of work involved, DS Somers said that his Unit dealt with a number of new issues daily, and some 500 per year. Covering domestic violence and child protection issues, both schools, care homes, and vulnerable people living alone formed part of its daily work, as did homophobic crime.

DS Somers then invited questions from the floor which he answered as follows:

- A member queried whether domestic violence was increasing.
DS Somers replied that there had been an increase in reported incidents over the last five years, but he believed this was at least in part due to greater confidence in reporting to and receiving appropriate help from Police.
- Asked whether any 'thread' or pattern was apparent within such incidents, DS Somers judged 95% of incidents to be alcohol-related and were male-to-female assaults.
- A member asked whether, given that alcohol was a major trigger, the majority of assaults were male-initiated and occurred during evenings.
CS Somers reiterated that males were primarily responsible for assaults, which could occur at any time of day, but probably mostly during evenings.
- It was noted that assaults were not limited to certain sections of the community, but occurred across the spectrum and in all types of household, which could also involve grandparents living together as extended family.
- CS Somers stated that it was not his Unit's responsibility to vet people who wished to work with children, which task fell to HQ.
- Asked to give a flavour of child abuse work in which the Unit was involved, DS Somers said that referrals were made in a number of ways, ie, from schools, GPs etc – all of which pass to Social Services and Police on a shared information basis, generating a joint same-day meeting leading to immediate action. Any child in danger could be removed under an Emergency Protection Order which overrode a Police Protection Order, and could lead to foster care placement if necessary.

- Asked if child abuse was increasing, DS Somers noted that it did appear to be increasing, but that again, this might be due to greater awareness and more confidence in reporting incidents.
- Perpetrators of violent assaults would be immediately removed if appropriate; but also Cumbria had 'safe houses' where victims could be offered refuge.
- A member noted that some excellent work done locally had proved highly effective. A number of domestic violence issues – which police noted were always taken seriously – had been settled amicably; and the initiative of community policing in Kendal's Kirkbarrow had therefore had a huge positive impact in the area.

6 POLICING ISSUES – UPDATE BY CHIEF INSPECTOR KEVIN MCGILLOWAY

Chief Inspector Kevin McGilloway outlined year-end figures locally (described below), then referred to additional national measurements which favourably compared this area against others and placed our crime and disorder statistics in context across the country.

In comparison with 15 other areas, South Lakeland was:

- safest for domestic burglary
- second safest regarding robbery
- safest on vehicle crime

However, CI McGilloway noted that violent crime – of which domestic violence was a part - was increasing nationally and unfortunately locally. But he added that reporting of such crimes was continually encouraged; also, that this category contained only 4% of serious incidents, and still included non-violent incidents such as dog attacks and even offensive text-messaging.

Discussions arising from the floor included:

- A member queried whether alcohol-related problems especially in young people could be addressed as a health issue, ie, its severe long-term health consequences.
CS Collins would support a health-based approach to this problem, whilst encouraging responsible consumption of alcohol - which was not illegal. Significant funding was being channelled into the cause; the government had a responsibility on the issue, and appropriate lobbying would be supported.
- Licensed victuallers were said to fully support the police stance on alcohol issues. Publicans were aware of their responsibilities, and were offered training in methods of dealing with their customers. Test-purchasing was another tactic that is used
- Monitoring was carried out through test-purchasing; and publicans who acted outside the law received a gradual scale of intervention towards prosecution and risked eventually losing their licences.

In summary, the Chairman expressed concern that any action always dealt only with effects and not cause. However, CS Collins reminded the meeting that alcohol-related incidents were a nationwide problem, reiterating that alcohol consumption remained an acceptable method of enjoyment when used responsibly. Further, when the public was asked for their experiences of living in their community, feedback included some concerns but was generally positive without too many worries regarding violent crime. However, the public was urged to continue informing the police of any concerns in order that appropriate action could be taken.

7 INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME

7.1 There were no specific issues for discussion.

7.1 South Lakeland ICV Co-ordinator and Forum member, Mr Trevor Gilbert, mentioned his view that police presence on the streets could be increased, to encourage extra 'police visibility' at key areas/peak times such as schools, department stores etc.

CS Collins noted the comment, advising that prioritisation did not always allow such presence, but that (i) a current leafleting campaign would increase awareness; (ii) neighbourhood policing was being rolled out; and (iii) other local authorities and agencies working together in a 'Streetsafe' operation was being considered.

Further, CS Collins did intend to maximise the use of volunteers in administration, as well as uniformed 'special constables' who were also being recruited. However, the 'specials' scheme in particular was a victim of its own success as the specials often moved further into the policing service as experience was gained, creating constant vacancies.

Note: the usual age range for 'specials' was said to be between 18 and 50 years. CS Collins to confirm. (*See Addendum below.*)

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 A member queried whether CS Collins' views on rural policing would echo those of her predecessor.

The Chief Superintendent reassured the meeting that there would be no change in style for rural policing; and, although resources would always be a consideration, she was a great believer in local policing. She added that views would always be sought in the event of any changes becoming necessary.

8.2 A member queried current police stance regarding the Hunting Act.

CS Collins said that there have been no changes to this legislation, and felt local people were aware of their responsibilities in this connection; and that a watching brief would be maintained.

8.3 Further to Minute 7.1 above, Mr Gilbert noted his satisfaction with the excellent treatment he had always received when making independent custody visits to Kendal Police Station.

CS Collins thanked Mr Gilbert for his kind comments, which she would pass on to her custody staff.

8.4 A member queried CPA's views regarding the Government's proposal to reduce the number of Police Authorities nationally, with the potential amalgamation of Cumbria and Lancashire Police Forces.

The Chairman assured the meeting that this situation was being monitored and lobbied.

9 DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged, probably for February 2006. Chief Superintendent Collins to liaise with Secretary regarding dates. Consider Holme as future venue.

The Chairman thanked all attenders, expressing regret that there had not been a larger attendance especially in view of the meeting content. He declared the meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

ADDENDA

1. Minute 7.1 - CS Collins:

For recruitment the age limit is nominally 50 but the normal retirement age is 55 for Special Constables and 60 for senior ranking Specials.

However, in anticipation of the age discrimination legislation we in common with the regulars have an Extension of Service Policy where Special Constables upon reaching 55 can opt for a one-year extension of service subject to current satisfactory performance and medical. They can apply for further extensions until they reach 60. Consequently, applicants over 50 up to 55 are considered for recruitment on merit.

2. Minute 9

Next meeting since arranged for Monday, 9th January 2006, in Committee Room 1, County Offices, Kendal, at 7.30 pm.

**SPECIAL MEETING : SOUTH LAKELAND POLICE COMMUNITY LIAISON FORUM
KENDAL TOWN HALL : WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2005 - 7.30 PM**

PRESENT

Members:

Cllr Mr Joseph Nicholson	-	Cumbria Police Authority (Chairman)
Chief Superintendent Dee Collins	-	Cumbria Constabulary, South
Cllr Mrs Pauline Halfpenny	-	Cumbria Police Authority
Mrs Sue Harrison	-	CLA
Cllr Mr Roger K Bingham	-	Cumbria County Council
Ms Fiona Crombie	-	Underbarrow Neighbourhood Watch Assn.
Mr Michael O'Brien	-	"
Mr T Gilbert	-	Self
Miss Beryl Greenwood	-	Self
Ms Patricia Holmes	-	Windermere Town Council
Mr S Garnett	-	Kendal Trades Council
Mrs Freda Kitching	-	Westmorland National Union of Teachers
Mrs Joyce Dean	-	Cumbria Association of Local Councils
Cllr Mr Jim Bland	-	South Lakeland District Council
Mrs B E Shepherd	-	Secretary

Guest:

Mr Clive Alcock	-	Clerk&Chief Executive, Cumbria Police Authority
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There were 5 Members of the Public present as follows:

Mr J G Turner	-	Self
Westmorland Gazette		
+ 3		

APOLOGIES

Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Braithwaite	-	South Lakeland District Council
Cllr Mrs Wendy Thompson		
Mr Graham Wilkinson	-	Kendal College
Cllr Mrs Avril Dobson	-	South Lakeland District Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were listed above.
2. Chairman Mr Nicholson thanked members and public for attending during appalling weather conditions. He then introduced Mr Clive Alcock, who was attending to present the following item for consideration.

POLICE FORCE STRUCTURES

Mr Clive Alcock explained that on the 19th September 2005 the Home Secretary announced a review of police force structures in England and Wales. As part of the review Cumbria Police Authority is seeking the views of local communities so that any concerns they may have can be taken into account as the work on restructuring progresses. Background papers had been previously circulated to members, and included:

- Home Office APA Circular 52/05 Annex A on Police Force Structures
- Evaluation of Options for Force Restructuring
- Design Criteria for Force Restructuring; and
- Map detailing Police Service Strengths in England and Wales as at 31.3.05

In order to judge change, Mr Alcock detailed the history of policing services. He said it was not put on a statutory footing until the 19th century, with the Metropolitan Police set up in 1827; 1905 saw C & W combined, and Kendal had its own force until 1948. Cumbria Constabulary as a separate entity was formed in 1968.

In 1963 a Royal Commission concluded there were too many police forces, but the last major reorganisation was over 30 years ago in 1974 and the impetus for change has been detectable for some time now. Chief Constables cannot see any virtue in continuing with the current 43 forces, and feel modernisation would be beneficial with tripartite arrangements leading to standardisation of methods and purchasing power etc; and Home Secretary Charles Clarke called a meeting in London on 19th September 2005 of all Police Authority Chiefs and Chairs to discuss the report of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies (HMIC) and in particular to look at 'Protective Policing Services' which are the seven important areas of policing described as follows:

- Major Crime (homicide))
- Serious Organised and Cross Border Crime) = Level 2 Crime
- Counter Terrorism and Extremism)
- Civil Contingencies)
- Critical Incidents)
- Public Order)
- Strategic Roads Policing) = Level 1 (less serious)

The HMIC's conclusion was that, however well served by policing in the past, the current structure was no longer "fit for purpose" in terms of 21st century threats. Advice reaching the Home Secretary was that "bigger was better", and therefore forces like Cumbria with fewer than 4,000 staff were no longer viable.

CPA acknowledges that the Home Office seeks fundamental change to policing structures in England and Wales, principally on the basis it will improve performance across the board in the above seven protective services. It will work closely with Cumbria Constabulary to ensure any alteration in structure will achieve the best policing service for the people of Cumbria

Regarding the time-table, CPA's work regarding the potential for restructure will reach a significant milestone in December, by which time the Authority and Constabulary have a duty to report to the Home Secretary with their suggested options for future change at a regional level.

Mr Alcock said CPA needed to show that it could deliver the same or improved and cost-effective services, and he noted two ways of making up the shortfall:

1. By collaborating with other authorities (as already occurs on occasions), but this remains slow and unreliable in delivery of services.
2. Via the Home Secretary's own powers under Section 32, following considered representations from Police Authorities themselves.

The 'Toolkit' for change was received mid-October, with a deadline of 28.10.05 for initial report outlining cost-benefit analysis followed by 23.12.05 for receipt by the Home Secretary of CPA's final submission expressed as a voluntary merger

under the Act. In the meantime, however, Mr Alcock noted CPA's duty under Section 96 to consult with the people of Cumbria, which remained the purpose of this meeting, and that he was anxious to seek their views for policing this area – even if beyond the above deadlines and into the new year.

A questionnaire was handed out to attendees, who were urged by both Mr Alcock and Chairman Mr Nicholson to complete and return to CPA HQ by 28.10.05.

The following views were then expressed from the floor:

- Given that the proposals would form the biggest change for 30 years, concern was expressed that the extremely fast pace for consultation should not lead to inadequate implementation of any new structures and/or result in major disruption. It was also felt that this fast pace indicated a decision already made.
- Whether Acts of Parliament were required to set up and therefore make such force changes. However, Mr Alcock noted that Section 32 gave direct powers to the Home Secretary.
- Recent history had found similar exercises with other bodies such as DEFRA/GONW/RDA etc had not led to greater efficiency or benefited the public, but had instead led to *more* bureaucracy as well as greater road congestion, pollution *and* health problems (ie, through increased travel to meetings/confined to cars etc)

Mr Alcock further explained that a strategic police authority would still be able to ensure local accountability - for instance, as a regional/local policing board translating through a body such as this police liaison forum.

The Chairman then introduced **Chief Superintendent Dee Collins**, who first explained her reasons for choosing to come to Cumbria Constabulary, which was "because of what they do". Coming from an area with a role on regionalisation, she was also Secretary of Superintendents' Staff Association and therefore had opportunity to contribute to consultation. Superintendent Collins praised HMIC's assessment, noting that she remained committed to local service delivery believing neighbourhood policing remained the way forward: ie, that it would remain the same or even be enhanced.

However, one area of concern recognised and therefore being considered was the difficulty of producing, say, 150 police officers at short notice to deal with a major incident – highlighting the fact that currently Cumbria Force relied on *not* suffering critical incidents (such as the Soham/Lockerbie inquiries, for instance).

Questions were answered as follows:

- It was queried whether amalgamation would lead to more resources being available flexibly; and, if so, whether the same the same effect could be achieved by cross-county agreements to loan workforce wherever needed. CS Collins noted that working together on a pre-planned basis was used wherever possible, but her concern was to ensure any necessary action within the first crucial 24 hours of an operation, which was a prime role of protective policing services.

- CS Collins's was asked if she envisaged the above scenario to be an improvement; also, whether realistically a city such as Manchester would indeed be able to immediately spare such officer numbers, or whether the historic 'per capita' thinking would always prevail.
CS Collins gave reassurance that the plan provide more dedicated, flexibly moving specialists within the area having key skills reminding the meeting that it was folly to rely on Cumbria *not* currently suffering major incidents. She added that the geography was not changing, only the command structure, and that the government remained committed to local policing – although its nature was not yet apparent.
- It was noted and agreed that smaller rather than larger forces cost more pro-rata, the latter giving economies of scale and therefore greater flexibility especially during major emergencies. It should also be remembered that policing of many Cumbrian areas could also currently take officers to the nearer to Yorkshire, Lancashire etc, for instance.
- Concern was expressed regarding increased bureaucracy, also fearing this would lead to less efficiency. It was hoped, instance, that efforts would be made to reduce excessive form-filling and other similar processes.
- The necessity of any reorganisation at all – which always bore high costs – was queried, especially given the example of Cumbria's officers reaching the Lockerbie emergency in just over two hours.
CS Collins cited current lack of resources, noting that new proposals would benefit from pre-planning. She also explained the contribution following regional amalgamation into the now Serious Organised Crime Association, with its north-west office based in Penrith, filling a gap and bearing national responsibilities including international (level 3) crime.
- Mr Alcock noted that policing regions were set by Home Office rules, and that limited options dictated Cumbria's most likely merger to be with North Lancashire, created geographically by road networks etc.
- In spite of Mr Alcock's explanations, a major concern remained about the short consultation timetable for what was the largest change in policing services for 30 years, fearing that such haste which was felt unnecessary would compromise normal democratic procedures and a successful outcome. Mr Alcock replied that CPA took its duty to seek views seriously, noting a circulation of 1,000-strong when the recommendation required only 325; also, that MORI polls had been conducted based on the above-mentioned questionnaire.
- It was felt that the opportunity for more consultation regarding the sparsity factor was vital, which should take precedence over the 'per capita' formula. CPA was urged to lobby the Home Secretary to ensure an appropriate increase in Cumbria's member representation.

In conclusion, members and public accepted that merger was inevitable, but trusted that sufficient note would be taken of their views and concerns expressed above.

Mr Alcock noted that the final decision would be made by the Home Secretary. The Chairman then concluded the meeting at 8.50 pm by thanking all attendees, promising that all views would be taken into account with a watch being kept on regionalisation. He further emphasised the need to return completed questionnaires to CPA HQ at Carleton Hall, Penrith (even if beyond the requested date).

WORKING TOGETHER IN COPELAND

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHITEHAVEN POLICE AREA COMMUNITY LIAISON FORUM HELD IN THE CIVIC HALL, CLEATOR MOOR ON TUESDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2005 AT 7.30 P.M.

PRESENT

J. Woolley	Police Authority
Mrs. M. Johnson	Police Authority
Mrs. S. Donnolly	Police Authority
Co. J. McAllister	Cumbria County Council
G.D. Stephenson	Co-opted
J.C. Shaw	Assoc. Local Councils
Mrs. M. Whitehead	Co-opted
W. Foster	Co-opted
D. Verity	Co-opted
Mrs. B.A. Lamb	Secretary to the Forum

Also present: Christine Connoll (Gosforth Parish Council), J.C.D. Lamb, D. Polhill (Gosforth Parish Council), S. Whiteside, R. and P Hardman (Cleator Moor residents), S. Edwards (Police Authority – Guest Speaker) – a total of 17.

WELCOME

Mr. Woolley welcomed everyone to the meeting commenting that the weather was better than the last time the meeting was attempted. He introduced members of the top table including Stuart Edwards as guest speaker. He apologised for the lack of police presence but assured the meeting there would be a good reason for their absence.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. M. Simon, Councillor W. Southward (Copeland Borough Council), members of Egremont Town Council.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2005 in The Smugglers, Bransty were approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITOR REPORT

In the absence of Mrs. Simon, Chair of the ICV panel, Mrs. Lamb gave the following report. She said the station in Workington was visited weekly and the Station in Whitehaven fortnightly and the outstations such as Millom and Cleator Moor twice yearly. Mrs. Lamb said that since the last meeting of the Forum the

cycle of visits had been maintained with everything found to be in good order and no problems had arisen. One member of the public asked how the visitors were recruited. Mrs. Lamb said there had recently been an advertisement campaign which had resulted in two new ICV's being appointed. She added if anyone was interested in joining the scheme they should contact either herself or Stuart Edwards who would supply them with an application form.

PRESENTATION – POLICE STRUCTURE AND REFORM

Mr. Woolley introduced Stuart Edwards from the Police Authority. Stuart said that since the meeting that had been cancelled things had moved on in the process of the proposed restructuring of the force.

Stuart said in September the Home Secretary stated that the present number of 43 forces in England and Wales was too large and was not fit for the purpose. He said that in the case of Cumbria it could mean merging with one or more of the other forces in the North West region eg. Lancashire and Merseyside. The report reported on the future protective capability of the present structure of the Police Service and put forward options for change. The protective services referred to were counter terrorism, serious organized and cross border crime, civil contingencies and emergency planning, critical incident management, major crime such as murders, public order and strategic roads policing. Stuart said there were many forces in the country affected in a similar way. He said there were certain criteria to be fulfilled by the new structures – force must have 4000+ officers or 6000 staff in total. The Police Authority had considered the proposals and one option put to the Home Secretary was that of Cumbria as a stand alone strategic force. The Home Secretary told the Police Authority this was not considered an option and on 9th November the Home Office advised constabularies and authorities in the North West to look more closely at two options:

- three forces in the North West
 - Cumbria and Lancashire
 - Merseyside and Cheshire
 - Greater Manchester

- Two forces in the North West
 - Cumbria, Lancashire and Merseyside
 - Greater Manchester and Cheshire

Stuart said the Police Authority met on 10th November and at that meeting it was agreed to further consider the options put forward by the Home Secretary, to write to the Home Secretary to that effect and to point out the disappointment at the fact that Cumbria cannot stand alone. It was also agreed to work with the other forces involved to take the matter forward. Stuart said that by 23rd December the Authority must write to the Home Secretary to state the preferred option. Stuart said it was vital to get feedback from the public and that as well

as meetings such as the Forum the Authority had consulted a variety of individuals and stakeholders and the Constabulary along with the Police Authority had jointly commissioned a MORI phone poll of 1000 member of the public.

Mr. Woolley then opened the meeting for questions. He referred to an e-mail he had received from another authority who had written to the Home Secretary stating their objections and he said this was across all political parties.

The first question raised the issue of if three forces were combined who would have overall control and where would headquarters be based, who would be the Chief Constable and would control be biased towards the larger force. Mr. Woolley said at the moment there were obviously three Chief Constables, one headquarters in Penrith, one in Lancashire and one in Merseyside and he said he imagined the post of Chief Constable would be advertised and the headquarters formed in one place much as in the same way as Local Government Reorganisation in 1974. Stuart said after the amalgamation there would be one Chief Constable and one Police Authority.

A second questioner asked whether more money would inevitably be spent at the top of the organisation and less at the bottom. Stuart said this was a difficult question to answer at the present time but that there were likely to be savings at management level. Mr. Woolley said the Local Policing Teams would remain the same. David Stephenson asked about the possibility of there being a Commissioner and a Metropolitan force and would costs go up. A member of the public referred to the importance of local knowledge and he also referred to the Cleator Moor area and the importance of a dedicated constable for the area. Mr. Whiteside said residents never saw a policeman in the Distington area.

Mr. Shaw said he was amazed the Police Authority had considered a stand alone authority and said he would like to see the figures for the MORI poll. He also said he would like to see Carleton Hall used as a base in some form when the reorganisation takes place. Stuart replied saying 58% of people surveyed wanted no change and 26% supported change. Another member of the public asked whether it had been considered an amalgamation with the force to the north (Scotland). Mr. Woolley said this was not an option but that the forces work together and gave the example of the recent closure of the A74, the recent bombings in London and the G7 summit.

Mr. Whiteside raised the issue of speeding through Distington. Mr. Woolley said Chief Superintendent Smith had discussed this at a previous meeting and had not found any evidence of speeding through Distington.

The final question raised the issue of how an amalgamation would affect the political make-up of the Police Authority. Stuart said at present there were 17 members - 9 councillors appointed by the County Council, 5 independent

members appointed following public advert and 3 magistrates appointed by the Magistrates Courts Committee plus a full time staff of 4 and part-time staff of 5. Stuart said there would obviously be changes following any amalgamation.

PRESENTATION – INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING

Mr. Woolley said the presentation would be given jointly by Stuart Edwards and David Stephenson.

Stuart began by stating the role of the independent custody visitor was to enable members of the public to check on the welfare of people in police custody and to provide reassurance. He said the scheme was first introduced as a result of Lord Scarman's report on the Brixton Riots in the early 1980's and that the Police Authority had a statutory duty to run the scheme. He went on to say independent custody visitors had to be over 18 and resident or working in Cumbria but that they could not be serving police officers, special constables, police staff or police authority members. Stuart said there was a recruitment process and that appointments were made for a three year period subject to a six month probationary period and that no one was allowed to serve for more than 6 years. He said this was a voluntary position but that travel expenses were paid. Stuart said there were four panels in Cumbria – Barrow, South Lakeland, North Cumbria and West Cumbria and that the West Cumbria panel covered Allerdale and Copeland. He said Barbara had explained the regularity of the visits to the stations in West Cumbria and stated the visits were unannounced. He also said the panel met quarterly and appointed its own Chair and Vice-Chair. Each panel should have fifteen independent custody visitors. Stuart then handed over to David Stephenson to explain how the visits are conducted.

David began by asking if anyone present had been in a police cell. One member of the public said he had been in a court cell. David said the panel met regularly and the Secretary (Barbara Lamb) sent a reminder to the ICV's when they were due to make their visits. He showed a copy of the form that was filled in for each visit and went through the various questions. He said it was important to log the time of arrival and the time when access was gained to the custody suite. He said occasionally there could be problems but that an explanation was always given to the ICV's. David then read out the paragraph which applied to each detainee visited. He gave examples of things to look for on visits – provision of mattress, working toilet, when fed, when given exercise etc. David concluded by saying this was a worthwhile job and one which he very much enjoyed.

Mr. Shaw asked about overcrowding in cells. David said he had not come across this but that he could not answer for the court cells. A further question related to the number of arrests made during the Maritime Festival. Mr. Woolley said he thought there were no more than 7 over the three days. He then thanked Stuart and David for their presentation.

POLICE RELATED MATTERS UPDATE

Mr. Foster asked if there was any reason for there not being a police presence. Mr. Woolley said he had only known one occasion in the past when this had happened and there was a valid reason for it.

Mr. Shaw asked if the force was up to strength, how many vacancies there were, how many officers were on long term sickness, how many were on long term secondment. Mr. Woolley said he thought the West Cumbria team was up to strength but that he would find out the information for the next meeting. Mr. Shaw said when police officers visited the parish council meetings he was involved with he was given a different story. Mr. Woolley said through his involvement with a committee of the police authority he only knew of 6 officers who had been off for more than 1 month. He said he could not answer in relation to shift allocations. One member of the public said they had lost officers from this area. Mr. Woolley said 70 additional officers had been appointed and that had resulted in the setting up of Local Policing Teams. The member of the public stressed the importance of local knowledge of officers.

The member of the public present from Gosforth Parish Council stressed the quality of the job done by the Community Officer and referred to the surgeries set up and the lack of attendance by the public.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

24th January 2006 at 7.30 p.m. in the Royal British Legion Club, Kells.

Mr. Woolley thanked everyone for their attendance and wished them a safe journey home.

Meeting ended 9.05 p.m.

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.