CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP

Minutes of a Meeting of the Consultation Working Group held on Thursday 8 June 2006 in Conference Room 2, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith commencing at 11.00am.

PRESENT

Mrs C A Egan (Chair)

Mrs P M Halfpenny
Ms J Lashmar
Mr R Watson

Also Present:

Assistant Chief Constable (Mr N Rhodes)
Deputy Director of Strategic Development (Ms J Saunston)
Head of Strategic Planning (Inspector G Rutherford)
Constabulary Research and Analysis Officer (Ms H Grainger)
Deputy Clerk (Mr S Edwards)

33. MEMBERSHIP

The appointment of Mrs P M Halfpenny to the Working Group was noted.

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs L L Shaw and Mrs L Slavin.

35. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of any personal interests relating to any item on the Agenda.

36. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 9 March 2006 had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting.

The Head of Strategic Planning informed the Working Group that the agency specialising in consultation with young people referred to in Minute No.30 (Community Consultation Strategy) was “Hear By Right” and not “Hear It Right” as stated in the Minutes.

In response to a question from a Member the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Constabulary's website now had the facility to undertake web based consultation exercises.

RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 9 March 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

37. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ACTION PLAN 2006/07 - UPDATE

The Head of Strategic Planning presented a report appended to which was the most up to date version of the Joint Consultation Action Plan for 2006/07. In considering the report Members noted that work was ongoing to align consultation processes in Cumbria with those in Lancashire and work was currently underway to develop common consultation questions for use in Community Voice surveys and Lancashire's Opinion survey. In addition to developing common questions there were also issues concerning timing of consultation exercises. Reference was also made to staff consultation and it was noted that, depending upon other commitments and demands on the relevant staff, this aspect of the Consultation Action Plan may have to be cancelled for the current year.

Members reaffirmed their commitment to developing consultation with young people.

Members noted work being undertaken at LPT level which was ongoing in the Kendal, Barrow and West Cumbria areas. Necessary processes were being developed to ensure that the consultation activity maximised response rates in individual areas.

A Member referred to the importance of involving local Councillors when ward profiles were being developed as part of the LPT consultation exercises.

RESOLVED, that the current position with regard to the Consultation Action Plan be noted.

38. DRAFT PUBLIC CONSULTATION QUESTIONS 2006/07

The Head of Strategic Planning presented a report by the Acting Chief Constable which outlined the proposed public consultation questions for the Community Voice 2006/07 Annual Survey, taking into account questions to be asked in common with Lancashire Police Authority, whilst maintaining the flexibility to ask questions concerning local issues that would shape service delivery.

The Head of Strategic Planning went through the report in detail.

In considering the questions Members referred to the need to manage any expectations developed as a result of the consultation exercise and the importance of providing feedback to those consulted.

RESOLVED, that the approach taken in producing the questions be noted and the questions proposed for the Annual Survey be approved.

39. LANCASHIRE WAVE 12 SURVEY – CUMBRIA OPTIONS

The Deputy Director of Strategic Development presented a report by the Acting Chief Constable concerning a request from Lancashire Police Authority that consideration be given to the adoption of their survey questions in Cumbria to facility the provision of baseline information for the amalgamated Authority and Constabulary. This was part of the process for the joining up of consultation and planning processes in order to produce the Annual Policing Plan and Strategy Plan for the new Authority, which would be required by the end of March 2007.

Members were advised that Lancashire used a citizen's panel known as Opinion, which was very similar to the Community Voice used in Cumbria. They would be sending out their next questionnaire in June and July of 2006, which coincided with Cumbria's current timetable for consultation and priorities.

A range of options in terms of the request from Lancashire were put before the Working Group, namely –

(1) To add all of Lancashire's questions to the existing Cumbria survey
(2) To undertake a separate survey, using Lancashire's contractor
(3) To add to Cumbria's current survey the questions from Lancashire's survey on "confidence and feelings of safety" and an additional question about understanding of the role of a Police Authority.

After considering the options in detail it was -

RESOLVED, that option 3 above, together with previous survey information, be used as a comparator for the new Constabulary.

40. PARTNERSHIPS AUDIT

The Assistant Chief Constable advised Members that the partnerships audit had now been completed and a draft of the final report would be made available to Members through the Police Authority office. However, this work had been overtaken by the amalgamation process and partnership activity would be the subject of consideration by one of the amalgamation work streams. That work would be made available to the Working Group at a future date.

RESOLVED, that the position be noted.

41. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AUDIT

A copy of the results of the Community Voice survey into anti social behaviour and how it affected the people in Cumbria had been circulated to Members. The Deputy Director of Strategic Development gave Members a detailed presentation of the survey results.

It was noted that over 90% of respondents stated that they were affected to some degree by anti social behaviour. The categories showing the greatest levels of concern were litter and rubbish, speeding cars and vandalism.

Members paid particular attention to the table showing levels of concern in various categories of anti social behaviour compared with those claiming to actually be affected.

It was noted that 77% of respondents did not report anti social behaviour to the police, and that the police were informed of anti social behaviour in 22.53% of cases – either through calls, direct to a patrol or in person at a police station. Anti social behaviour was reported to other agencies or their representatives in 16.83% of cases.

Of those reporting anti social behaviour to the police 53.77% were satisfied with the response and satisfaction levels were highest in West Cumbria. There was no correlation between action actually taken by the police and levels of satisfaction.

Members welcomed the presentation and the report and suggested that it would be worthwhile reporting the overall findings to staff with a view to seeking their response to the results of the survey.

Members noted that the Constabulary, as a result of the findings from the survey, were producing targeted LPT packs, building the findings into the planning process for 2006/07 and using the information for comparison purposes with Lancashire as part of the amalgamation process. The data would also provide a useful baseline for the currently ongoing Respect campaign.

In response to a suggestion from a Member that the Constabulary should look to link in with surveys being conducted by both the County and District Councils the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Constabulary were contributing to a county-wide County Council survey in the near future.

Members again thanked the officers for the work that they had undertaken to produce this particular piece of work which they considered to be of the highest value.

Members asked that a further updating report be provide to the next meeting of the Working Group.

RESOLVED, that the report be received.

The meeting ended at 12.55pm