

# **REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WEST MERCIA POLICE AUTHORITY HELD ON 8 JUNE 2004**

## *Chairman and Vice Chairman*

1. At the Annual Meeting of the Authority held on 8 June 2004 Mr R M Forster (Independent member, Telford) and Mr P Deneen (Magistrate member, Ross on Wye) were re-appointed Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for the ensuing year.

## *Retirement of Member*

2. The Authority placed on record its appreciation of the service to the Authority of Mr Dilip Thakrar (Highley), whose four-year appointment as an independent member ends on 18 July 2004. Mr Thakrar has been Chairman of the Professional Standards Panel for the past two years.

## *Appointment of Member*

3. Mr Zadvinder Padda has been appointed as an independent member of the Authority with effect from 19 July 2004 until the 1 April 2007. Mr Padda is Head of Operations at a personnel company in Bretforton, Worcestershire.

## *Capital Programme*

4. In view of the decision by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to examine the Authority's budget more closely as part of the nomination process, the Authority considered it prudent to take no further action about the proposed capital schemes at Leominster, Hereford and Shrewsbury until the conclusion of the nomination process.

5. A delegation from West Mercia met with Ministers on 29 June 2004 to explore the budget issues further and an announcement is expected in Parliament in early July 2004.

## *Performance 2003/2004*

6. The Authority received a report on the performance of the Constabulary during 2003/2004. The final results will be included in the Authority's Annual Report which will be published in July 2004 and copies will be available on the website [www.westmercia.police.uk](http://www.westmercia.police.uk) or from the Director to the Police Authority's office.

7. Overall the number of domestic burglaries and vehicle crimes has fallen in comparison to the previous year, although in line with national trends the number of violent crimes recorded has increased.

8. The Authority was concerned that the detection rates for total recorded crime, domestic burglaries and vehicle crime were below target but the Chief Constable gave an assurance that this was an area where improvements would be made. It was, however, recognised that in comparison to other forces West Mercia's performance was favourable.

## *HMIC Inspection of Telford and Wrekin Police Division*

9. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary [HMIC] carried out an inspection of the Telford and Wrekin Basic Command Unit (Division) in October 2003 and has published his report.

10. The report highlighted a number of multi-agency projects and the Division's performance in reducing crime, together with efforts to achieve high visibility patrol and increase levels of reassurance.

11. The report was recognised as being very complimentary of the Division and its leadership. The Inspection Team concluded that Telford and the Wrekin was a well-managed, well-motivated Division, focused on delivering results to the community it serves. A broad range of high quality management activity was present at senior level, together with a management team who ensured that they were accessible, approachable and visible.

12. The report made three recommendations relating to the auditing of hate crime and domestic violence reports; use of the National Intelligence Model; and the management and deployment of Special Constables.

13. The report also identified two further issues relating to the collection and use of community intelligence and for training needs analysis for the prisoner handling team. Both these issues are being addressed and an action plan has been developed in relation to the three recommendations.

14. Members were concerned at the lack of custody facilities available to the Division and have asked the Chief Constable to report formally to the Police Authority on overall custody provision.

15. The Police Authority has congratulated the officers and staff on Telford Division for their efforts and enthusiasm in delivering a good standard of policing service and were particularly pleased that the partnerships within Telford & Wrekin were working well and continuing to deliver tangible benefits to local communities.

#### *Recruitment of Officers*

16. The Authority agreed in February 2002 to increase the number of police officers by 300 and the target of securing an overall Force strength of 2400 police officers was achieved in July 2003.

17. As at 1 May 2004, the actual number of police officers was 2389. The full-time equivalent strength (reflecting part-time working etc) was 2369.33 F.T.E. (full-time equivalents).

18. The target is to achieve and maintain staffing at least at a level of 2400 FT.E police officers rising to 2419.3 F.T.E. and the Authority will continue to monitor this position.

#### *Best Value Reviews*

19. The Authority has approved the implementation plans for the Best Value Reviews of Forensic Services, Force Crime Squad, Intelligence, Major Incident Rooms and Criminal Justice Support.

#### *Stop and Search*

20. A new Stop and Search Policy and Procedural guide has been formulated to reflect the revised Codes of Practice with the creation of new stop and search forms to specifically record self-defined ethnicity. At present extensive work is taking place to ensure the extended fixed penalty schemes and subsequent documents capture ethnicity data.

21. The Constabulary is producing Stop and Search data analysis monthly. This data considers the national picture and West Mercia's Stop and Search trends. The information provided identifies Divisional activity in relation to the number and reason for the search, temporal patterns, proportionality, age, ethnicity, arrest rates, positive search rates and geographic distribution.

22. Stop and Search activity is closely monitored and Divisional Review Boards have been initiated in all divisions to undertake an analysis of individual stops and searches to ensure compliance with Force Policy, Codes of Practice, Human Rights and Race Relations legislation.

23. The Independent Advisory Groups are also involved in advising all Divisions. A common pattern emerging is that members of the Race Equality Council are reviewing and advising on divisional stop and search data in terms of ensuring non-discriminatory practices.

#### *Findings of the Evaluation of Community Support Officers Pilot at Herefordshire Division*

24. The Community Support Officers (CSO) Pilot in Herefordshire Division has been evaluated and early indications show that they have been well accepted internally by police officers and other police staff and externally by the public.

25. From the activity returns it is estimated that approximately 70% of a CSO's time is spent on patrol. This will include visits to victims and to community based organisations whilst on patrol. Some 10% of time is spent in meetings, 10% of time spent assisting police officers and 10% of time on administrative tasks.

26. With at least 70% of their time spent on patrol, they have begun to close the gap between the public's wish for a visible uniform presence on the streets and the organisation's ability to provide that with police officers.

27. Whilst there is some evidence that this visibility is increasing reassurance, more comprehensive qualitative evidence is needed to support this. What is clear is that CSOs are attending and dealing with incidents that historically often did not receive a police response because of the unavailability of a police officer to attend. They are carrying out targeted patrols in 'hot-spot' areas at a level that is unachievable with the present number of police officers.

28. The availability of CSOs to attend incidents is saving officer time, although the extent of this is difficult to measure. A redesigned monthly activity return will capture this more accurately in the future.

29. CSOs are also becoming increasingly involved with community safety issues which affect the quality of life in communities and are resolving/helping to resolve these issues, providing valuable reassurance to the victims of crime and anti-social behaviour and establishing good community contacts.

#### *Community Safety Accreditation Scheme*

30. West Mercia proposes to run an evaluated Community Safety Accreditation pilot scheme in partnership with Wyre Forest Housing Trust and also with the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA). The latter Scheme is part of a programme which is being rolled out on a national basis and which has been developed in consultation with the Home Office and ACPO. The development of such schemes should contribute

towards increasing local ownership in identifying and addressing local quality of life issues.

*Questions on Police Matters at Council Meetings*

31. The Authority is required to nominate a member to answer questions on the discharge of the functions of the Police Authority at meetings of the relevant councils and the following members were appointed for 2004/2005:

Herefordshire Council	Mr B Hunt
Shropshire County Council	Mrs M E C Winckler
Telford and Wrekin Council	Mr J T Hicks
Worcestershire County Council	Mr J M Cairns

*Police/Community Consultative Groups (PCCGs)*

32. The Authority has appointed the following members to attend meetings of PCCGs during 2004/2005.

Bridgnorth	Margaret Winckler
Bromsgrove	Dilip Thakrar (up to 18/7/4) Zad Padda (from 19/7/4)
Bromyard and District	Bernard Hunt
Droitwich Spa	John Cairns
Evesham and Pershore	John Cairns
Hereford	Peter Dunford
Herefordshire Rural	Paul Deneen
Kington	Bernard Hunt
Leominster	Bernard Hunt
Malvern	Jennette Davy
North Shropshire	Bob Forster
Oswestry	Bill Morris
Redditch and District	Girija Nathan
Shrewsbury	Kate Pready-James
South Shropshire	Kate Pready-James
Telford and Wrekin	Arul Selvaratnam
Worcester	Alwyn Davies
Wyre Forest	Dan Wicksteed

Signed on behalf of the  
West Mercia Police Authority

R M Forster  
Chairman

*Further Information*

Any person wishing to seek further information on the subject matter of this report should contact David Brierley or Ian Payne on Shrewsbury (01743) 344314

*List of Background Papers*

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of the Police Authority) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda papers for the Annual Meeting of the West Mercia Police Authority held on 8 June 2004.