

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY : (SPECIAL MEETING)

7 June 2010

Present:

Councillor Dilys Baldwin (Chair)

Councillors Shiel, Branston, Mrs Danks, Hobden, Newcombe, R Smith, Payne and Wardle

Community Safety Officer and Member Services Officer (HB)

Also present:

Councillor Newton - Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Involvement

41 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

42 Community Safety Partnership - Presentation on Crime Figures

The Chair welcomed Michael Miller, the Community Safety Partnership Co-ordinator.

At the Special Meeting of this Committee on 15 February 2010, Community Safety issues had been discussed and Members had requested a further presentation on the detailed breakdown of crime statistics to ensure that elected Members were confident that the statistics were an accurate reflection of crime and that key areas were being addressed.

As Superintendent John Vellacott of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary was not present a detailed presentation on the statistics would not therefore be possible and neither would it be possible for him to appraise Members of the background to and implications of a letter sent by Shaun Sawyer, the Deputy Chief Constable to the Chief Executive on a request for the City Council to enter into a dialogue with the Police and other partners on issues relating to reducing police costs whilst, if possible, improving services. It was also not possible for responses to be given to a series of questions prepared by a Member who had also submitted his apologies for this meeting, the questions having been tabled for Member's information.

Michael Miller spoke on the statistics covering the period 1999/2000 to 2009/10, highlights having been set out in an accompanying paper on acquisitive crime, violent crime, criminal damage and all crime. With the introduction of Ethical Crime Recording there had been a significant increase in crime numbers from 2002/03 onwards and he explained some of the changes in recording techniques. The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary had received complimentary reports from the annual audits of the crime recording system made by the HMIC and had since made steady progress in reducing the crime figures since 2002/03. He responded to Members queries on the impact of CCTV, the background to the figures on drug offences and sexual offences and undertook to obtain further information on the composition of the figures on "other criminal offences".

The Chair requested that the reason for the non attendance of the representative of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary be obtained and the Force invited to a further meeting on 5 July 2010 with a substitute representative to be held in reserve if the allocated officer would be unavailable to attend on the day.

Scrutiny Committee - Community agreed that a further meeting be held on 5 July 2010 to discuss the crime statistics further and to receive a briefing on the closer collaboration sought by the Force with partners on cost reductions and service improvements.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.15 pm)

Chair