

**CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Special meeting of COUNCIL held in The Council Office, 44 Old Street, Clevedon on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016 at 7.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Chairman – Cllr J. Geldart  
Councillors N. Barton, C. Blades, A. Giles-Townsend, B. Hatch, G. Hill, L. Little, J. Middleton, T. Morgan, K. O'Brien, A. Shopland, D. Shopland, C. Starr, G. Watkins,  
Town Clerk - Ms P Heath;

**16/707 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Cook (work commitment), C. Francis-Pester (other commitment), C. Hall (Illness), J. Norton-Sealey (illness), J. West (other commitment)  
**RESOLVED:** That Council **ACCEPTS** the apologies and reasons given for absence.

**16/708 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no formal declarations of interest on items on the agenda.

**16/709 DISCUSS WITH AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE COMMISSIONER SUE MOUNTSTEVENS POLICING IN CLEVEDON AS PER THE REQUEST BY COUNCIL ON 17<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST MIN NO 16/685**

The Chairman welcomed Police Commissioner Sue Mountstevens and reminded members that the Council had requested a meeting following discussions on the Police priorities consultation. Avon & Somerset Police Commissioner is one of only 3 independent commissioners in the Country.

PCC Sue Mountstevens explained about the constraints made by the budget cuts. Avon & Somerset Police have to make cuts of 20 million over the next 4 years with 8 million of that having to be found in 2017/18 budget. The government has already calculated into its figures an expected 1.9% rise per year in the council tax request and the cut are calculated including that increase. Since 2010 over 600 police officers have been lost. In the 2015 election policing was not an issue discussed on the door step yet 10 years ago it had been in the top3 of areas of concern

She then gave a quick overview of the priorities agreed by the consultation

**1 Protecting the most vulnerable**

Police officers have to make hard choices they cannot spend all their time being a visual presence in the high street. She explained that an increasing problem is the amount of cyber-crime which requires officers being at desks finding the perpetrators. There is an increasing amount of child abuse and exploitation across the country not only in large cities but also in the small towns and villages with the growth of smart phones and technology. No longer are children safe when in their bedrooms as the internet allows access to victims from anywhere. Because of its nature any investigation is complex and often with a victim who is unwilling to assist.

MsMountstevens spoke of the work she was undertaking with others to lobby for mandatory sex education and good relationship education in schools. Many youngsters are learning about sex from porn sites or online groomers leading to a rise in sextext, the sending of intimate pictures, which can be used for blackmail purposes.

Helping the most vulnerable now takes up about 80% of police time and resources, working with an assortment of partners policies and procedures have been put in place to assist the officers as they deal with those members of the public. Mental Health nurses now sit in the

control room who can advise officers and there is also acute crisis beds funded by North Somerset Council at Southmead Hospital.

In 2015 200 mentally ill patients were kept in police cells as there was nowhere else for them to go this year to date only 4 patients have been in the cells due to their violent nature until support could be given.

#### 2) Strengthen and Improve local police teams

Clevedon has a full local beat team stationed at Castlewood. Clevedon also benefits from having the Police horse and dog training unit located at Davis Lane with officers frequently riding through the town. Avon & Somerset Police have set up local independent panels to scrutinise the work of the police leading to greater transparency.

#### 3) Right People Right Equipment

Avon & Somerset Police Officers will be issued with body cameras which will allow a record of any incident to be kept and used in the court room giving a clearer understanding of the crime and circumstances facing the officers when they attend an incident.

#### 4) Working Together

A key part of making the limited resources work is the combining and working with organisations around the district. The Avon Fire Service will soon be moving into the Portishead Police Headquarters combining back room support. Current government funding is under consultation and along with others Sue Mountstevens is lobbying for a fairer allocation for the Avon & Somerset Police with a current 40 million pound shortfall a fairer allocation could see more police officers employed.

Questions from the Council had been sent to Police Commissioners Office prior to the meeting.

*How effective is the current CCTV provision in Clevedon how many instances have led to any police crime solving in the last 12 months? Can the statistic be provided on a monthly basis?*

This is impossible to answer in specifics. CCTV is the first port of call in all incidents, sometimes the footage will be the major breakthrough at others it may just provide a link or background to an incident. There is no recorded data on the percentage the CCTV footage played in solving a crime or bringing a suspect to court.

NSC Officer at a recent meeting had said that they were getting no feedback on the work of the CCTV monitoring room. The Town and District Council need to justify the expenditure and feedback would provide this. It was appreciated that the presence of CCTV does provide a level of confidence to the members of the public.

**ACTION: A & S Police to provide feedback to NSC and the Town Council on a regular basis**

*NSC have said there is a direct link from the CCTV operations room at North Somerset Council in Weston-Super-Mare to their own HQ in Portishead? Can images be sent direct in "real time" from Weston to Portishead HQ? Is it possible to access collaborative past evidence from the analogue cameras? Can images from analogue cameras be used as evidence? Are Police available to answer calls from the CCTV Control Room*

The Control room in Weston has a direct radio link to the Police Control Room and Police Officers that enables them to talk direct to the officers responding. They can also direct the live feed of the CCTV cameras to the Portishead Control Room. Members were informed that with new technology the live link could be streamed direct to the officers attending an incident so that they are aware of exactly what is happening before they arrive on scene.

The Council were invited to see the Control rooms

**ACTION: arrange a visit to the control room in the new year.**

*If the deterrent of CCTV is valued why does Avon & Somerset Police not contribute to its running costs? Police in other parts of England provide maintain and operate similar schemes why is North Somerset different?*

Avon & Somerset Police do not have the financial ability to pay for the CCTV or to move it to their control rooms. Many of the Local Authorities use their CCTV control room for other services, such as monitoring fly tipping hot spots, and out of hour's services.

*In the past the Police have informed the Town Council of a radio system linking shops and traders to the CCTV Control Room. This appears to now be working in Nailsea. Have the Police pursued a similar scheme for Clevedon traders?*

There is a good system in Nailsea and Portishead but traders in Clevedon did not take up the offer nor want to be involved.

In response to a question it was explained that Police can use private business CCTV as long it is of sufficient quality. Technology will soon be able to undertake facial recognition which will need good quality pictures.

A question was asked about using the money currently paid for CCTV, £15,000, to pay for a PCSO. It was explained that CCTV is a 24/7 facility operating 365 days a year. A PCSO would be under the command and control of the Chief Constable and could be directed to cover operational needs, the officer would only be on duty a set number of hours a week and would require holiday and training time taken from their operating hours; the cost of a PCSO would be over £30,000.

Concern was expressed that the use of CCTV had led to the demise of police services in the town. Members were referred back to MsMountstevens opening remarks about the changing face of crime and the methods needed to police them. Budgetary constraints and the altering way of policing meant the relocation of the Clevedon Police Station, joint working means that a lot of the front desk services are done by NSC officers; the police have traditionally used civilian staff in this capacity. It was noted that the signage to and at Castlewood for the Police Station was poor. MsMountstevens was aware that people want to see the reassuring presence of an officer on the beat but this is not financially viable or practical as crime changes then so must the policing.

Clevedon is a low crime area. One main priority is burglaries this had been discussed at length with the Chief Constable to ensure it remain a high priority. In September 2015 there were 2 reported and in Sept 2016 8 reported.

Speeding in response to a question it was confirmed that vehicle registration numbers past from Speed watch to the police are followed up and the drivers contacted. If an area is identified as a problem there is an option to have the traffic police vans and motorbikes visit; Town Council can request their presence.

**ACTION: request police traffic van or motorbikes to areas identified by Transport & Highways Committee**

The police will use the speed allocated to an area so would police 20MPH areas, it is for the Council to ascertain and request the reduction. Evidence has shown that the reduced limit is effective in reducing speed but contra to popular belief it is often local residents that speed more than visitors driving through and area.

The Police were asked to look at the problem of "boy racers" in Tesco's Car Park late at night causing a disturbance.

**ACTION: details to be passed to local beat team by Sue Mountstevens.**

Speed Humps. In response to a question the use of speed humps is subject to certain criteria but these would need to be paid for locally. The humps are not always accepted by those who live adjacent to the humps due to noise of cars slowing and accelerating and the thud as they go over.

PACT – Police and Community Team. Members were encouraged to work with PACT as a conduit into the local beat team. It is not possible for police officers to attend every parish and town council meeting. Members wished to know who their local beat team were

**ACTION: to provide details of the local beat team**

Special Constables. Members felt that more advertising and promotion should be made of the role of special constables.

Parking. Members noted that this was due to pass to NSC responsibility with the introduction of civil enforcement , they were assured that although parking in general was not a high priority and dangerous parking if a public safety issue will be responded to.

Meeting closed at 9.00 pm.  
APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN.....DATE.....