

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2008/09

MARY SHERWIN

I am one of 9 Elected Members on the Police Authority. I am nominated by Leicestershire County Council, where I represent Burbage Castle Division, in Hinckley and Bosworth. I have represented the County Council for the past 6 years.

My contribution to Leicestershire Police Authority in the past year has been quite diverse, covering some periods of intense training, together with contributions to panels and committees. Most panels meet quarterly. Our role and responsibilities can change year on year. This year I was appointed to the:

Performance Panel : overseeing performance at all levels of crime detection, achievements, reduction percentages of crime, and comparisons to other most similar forces.

Call Management: overseeing and surveying response times to 999 and 0116 2222222 (commonly known as, 'the seven 2's') covering both emergency and crime reporting by the general public. My role is both supportive and an overview of reporting procedures and efficiency. I have taken the opportunity in the past, to visit the operational unit, giving me a first hand view of the pressures of this very important service.

Liaison Panel: A meeting with Senior Officers, Union officials, the Police Federation and Superintendents' Association to discuss any issues in the daily duties of officers and staff.

Finance and General Purposes: meeting with the Chief Constable, and other Senior Officers discussing all aspects of the annual budget of the Police Authority, discussion and decisions of the day to day running and efficiency of the service, ensuring it is kept in line with budgets. The Annual Budget Meeting in February after extensive debate, and data provided, recommend the precept level for the following year.

Diversity Panel: ensuring the Constabulary provides a full and equitable employment policy throughout the Force for both officers and staff. This covers dialogue with the Gay Police Association, the Black Police Association, the Disability Network and the British Association of Women in Policing, covering aspects of race, sexual preference, ethnicity and gender. The Constabulary operates an open and transparent diverse policy.

Professional Standards (PSC): as the Chairman and Lead Member, I ensure all complaints from both the public and the workforce, are dealt with fairly and fully, and in line with Government guidelines. This role also covers overseeing the Independent Custody Visitor (ICV), scheme. This involves volunteers, from the general public, who visit detainees in police custody, to ensure they are being treated correctly and are held in a safe condition. I have made visits to several custody suites, where substantial improvements have been installed to ensure their welfare and possessions are given adequate consideration. I have this year attended the ICV Conference where volunteers meet from across the UK to share experiences and protocol from their respective area, together with attending their regular meetings. Before the meeting for PSC, members select past complaint files to check over and report on the method and findings. The findings reports are then part of discussion in the meeting.

Police Authority meetings: there were 8 decision making meetings from April 2008 to March 2009. Authority meetings are open to the public and media. Prior to the meeting, all members have a

'discussion day' meeting, where all items are covered and any questions or queries on the agenda, are highlighted.

Training: this has also been quite extensive this year, due to changes within the Professional Standards regulations. The Taylor Report initiated a complete culture change in the way complaints were both recorded and dealt with, which meant a full day's training in London, plus other sessions locally. The changes affect discipline within the Force and complaints procedures. I have also had training for attending Police Appeals, and the recruitment of Chief Police Officers. A recent appeal case of an appeal by a police officer against dismissal involved over 14 hours of case file reading, and a 5 hour local hearing chaired by a Judge.

Recruitment: The latest recruitment was for the new Assistant Chief Constable (Crime), involving short listing meetings, and a day of interviews. Again, many hours of reading and assessment, compiling questions based on information provided.

Local meetings: several meetings have taken place with the Hinckley Local Police Unit (LPU) with the Chief Inspector, discussing local issues and crime levels. Also meetings with local PCSO's and Beat Officers, again discussing issues in the community. In line with my responsibilities at the County Council, I had long discussions with the Child Protection Unit, gaining confidence that both bodies were working in partnership to ensure the safety of children in Leicestershire, under the government's Every Child Matters paper. I also attended the Walkers Stadium Jobs Fair, interviewing and discussing the role of the Police Authority and guiding people wanting a role in the Police Force.

Finally, I would like to express how proud I am, to be a member of Leicestershire Police Authority, and to have the opportunity to share and shape the wellbeing of a top performing Police Force.

Mary Sherwin.
30 April 2009.