

Inwardleigh Parish Council Meeting APM. Minutes of the meeting held at the Village Hall on Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7:30 pm

Present: Cllr Timms (Chair), Cllr Dennis (vice chair),
Cllr Piddington, Cllr Ions,
Cllr Hooper, Cllr G Dexter,
Mrs Clarke (Clerk), Guest speaker Sgt Otley.
No members of the public.

APM MINUTES

1. **Apologies-** were received from Cllr. Leech, Cllr Henderson, who has resigned and will be sadly missed.

2. **Guest Speaker – Sgt. Otley,**

Sgt Otley provided his background in policing before addressing the subjects/questions raised by councillors.

A. Speed limit and speed watch, the parish council has requested a reduction of the main road to 30mph, as there are a few tricky junctions, bus stops etc. Sgt Otley indicated this is a decision the police cant assist with, however, he indicated he would scrutinise their data to see if it supports a 30mph speed limit.

B. Community speed watch, this has been passed to neighbourhood policing, the parish councils are setting this up. Any community speed watch data will be held with the police, which may be of assistance in making future decisions in the area. The chair explained the current position.

North of Okehampton there has been a spare to rural crime. The police scrutinise the crime and intell data that comes in every 2 weeks for patterns and trends and then set up relevant patrol plans. This area has rarely been looked at as there haven't been that many reports. However in the summer months there always is an increase in rural crime.

C. Drink driving in the community, reports have been received, no action has been taken. Every occasion needs to be reported with vehicle details, names if applicable and direction of travel. A frequent set of reports will trigger more policing in an area at a set time. Details that are required i.e. when drink driving is occurring what times, this is then passed to comms team in D&C police for specific action to be taken. If there are any immediate concerns Sgt Otley indicated a 999 call should be made.

D. Juvenile crime. Sgt Otley attended the neighbourhood policing meeting recently where there was a talk from officers from another area. There is a cultural problem in society. They had asked young people in their towns, what do they think about living here, they were told its crap. So the officer investigated how do you shift the cultural change, as the young people will not look after an area they don't care out. What they found is that they need to make young people feel valued and cared about in the community they are in, make the community something they are proud of - clubs, councils, police, social services, schools etc. all have their part to play in this. Any scheme or group that enables young people to contribute or engage out of their own social group should be supported. An example was the mens metal health club who invited teenage boys to learn a skill, as many were lacking a positive role model, that made them feel valued.

There are two new Pcsos working out of Okehampton, Sector Inspector Conway provided these to make a positive change to the community. The aim being to divert problems before they happen.

E. Dialogue with the public, the police had 50% staffing for the last 4 years, they now have 80%. Pcsos will be at events to engage with the public, and the police would like to know of any events, so they can attend. The challenge rurally is that 450 square miles needs to be covered. The Keeping Okehampton safe group which meets at the Okehampton Centre, the police attend this and Sgt Otley takes part in West Devon Matters every 12 weeks.

F. DC Alert is a two way messaging system, which Devonport has used for a number of years. Everyone needs to sign up to this, it works from the postcode, if anything happens in that area a message is sent to you to make you aware of what is going on.

A considerable amount of time involves knocking on door for enquiries however CTTV and the Ring doorbell technology can assist the police when something has happened. The DC alert system also allows for feedback as well. The DC alerts will be relevant so please sign up yourselves and encourage others to do the same.

There have been a number of crimes in relation to the public toilets in Tavistock, which had been concerning the public and we've been able to communicate back to people using this system. There was damage to the toilets, 25 toilet seats in two months, about £8000 worth of damage which comes from the tax payer - certain people start getting very frustrated over this matter.

Our visibility should improve again with the PCSOs, as they will be deployed to engagement with the public. Please send any event details to them to add to their event calendar.

G. Survey. If there's a trend starting to build the local police are quite agile in responding to it, using social media:- Facebook/Twitter and Instagram. The survey that was conducted on social media found three matters topped the list of concerns:

1. Antisocial behaviour
2. Drugs
3. Road safety

The most recent hotspot to us - has been North Tawton. Then the A386 - people going out on a Friday night drink driving and crashing. Sgt Otley indicates he has an understanding of what the communities feel about criminal activity/anti social behaviour. There is a very small portion of society that responsible for the large proportion of the crimes.

As a police Sergeant he cannot justify investigating somebody for litter as they do not have that capacity, however environmental health at the council will liaise with them over this sort of matter. Sgt Otley wants to encourage people to report crime for the crime intel, which may then warrant additional policing in the future. They are working smarter by using peoples CCTV or doorbell footage as that strengthens their case. The anti-social behaviour legislation the environmental health have is the same that the police have and they have quite strong powers to deal with individuals.

H. Youth groups We do try and engage with these groups as much as we can in social ways. This has been difficult with the lack of PCSO's but this will now change in a couple of weeks. The aim being to get them out there to go everywhere.

I- Jessop - Joint emergency services interoperability programme, this was used for the World War 2 bomb in Plymouth. Reporting across Devon, if the computer shows the data, it is then possible to go to the bosses and request extra policing. We need to get the wider community to report everything, he understands the reasons matters go unreported, this needs to change to break the cycle of low policing as the reports of crime data currently says this is statistically a low crime area therefore no extra policing is needed.

The feedback from the public is we need more police on the streets, the public survey that was sent out went to businesses to try to understand why people are not telling us that there is a problem. The comparable situation he presented was a person being punched in the face every day, after a while you stop caring. This is where the problem is.

Crimes recorded go into a supercomputer and it comes up with the number of police officers you need to deal with that. Devon and Cornwall have a unique problem, a permanent population of about 1.8 million and a transient population during the summer months of 3.2 million which puts a massive strain on everything. Operation Snap was mentioned, this is dash cam footage sent into them, they look at the evidence there and then making a decision whether to prosecute or not.

We have to prioritise different things i.e. ongoing domestic violence over a group of kids causing issues. Mention was made of searching criminals phones and the fact there is a 12 month wait on this and it results in approximately 13,000 pages of data. Sgt Otley would like people to understand why people may believe you don't get the service that you deserve, every two weeks we talk about what's going on and consider preventative strategies as a way forward.

There is dialogue and collaboration between the police and the schools and a meeting tomorrow between him and the youth intervention officer for the area. They use a police officer and the head at Okehampton college as they've been getting a lot of reports about young people which are very complex and time consuming to deal with.

In this area we have the least amount of antisocial behaviour but not the lowest crime rate due to the 26 miles of the A30. There are plans over the summer for a rural drink driving campaign as prevention is better.

The demographic is changing, towns are expanding and there are increasing numbers of properties for people where there are less services available to them when they move in, which has a detrimental impact on health and less jobs financial affecting the financial well being.

Throughout the entire country West Devon is the safest area.

3. The council thank Sgt Otley for his responses and plan to keep in touch on a regular basis.

Chair _____

Dated _____