



**MINUTES OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE MEETING
HELD REMOTELY AND PARTLY IN PERSON AT CONFERENCE ROOM ONE,
HEAD QUARTERS ON 19th JULY 2021 at 4:00 PM**

PRESENT: Martyn Evans – Chair - Animal Welfare Visitor (ME)
 Laura Buchanan-Smith – Animal Welfare visitor (LBS)
 Caroline Herbert - Animal Welfare Visitor (CH)
 Gillian Hathaway – Animal Welfare Visitor (GH)
 Anthony Davies – Animal Welfare Visitor (AD)
 Martyn Smith - Chief Inspector (MS)
 Nicola Warren – Scheme Administrator, OPCC (NW)
 Ceri Davis – Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC (CD)

The meeting commenced at 4:04 p.m.

	Notes and Actions	Action
1.	Apologies	
	Apologies for absence were received from Sergeant Julie Pearse, Louise Crawford, Lisa Winnett and Jennifer Deasington.	
2.	Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings	
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record. We noted that all actions had been completed.	
3.	Scheme Update	
	As the nomination of Vice Chair had not taken place at the previous meeting, NW contacted Jennifer Deasington following the meeting to inform her that she had been nominated to remain in the role of Vice Chair for another year and Jennifer accepted the nomination.	

	<p>NW reminded us that the minutes of the meeting would be published on the OPCC website.</p> <p>NW informed us that a letter had been received from the Association of the Retired Police Dog Charities regarding the meeting from the 26th October 2020 whereby reference was made to the Thin Blue Paw Charity being the main charity for the welfare of retired police dogs. The letter clarified that there are several charities that undertake a similar role and wanted to ensure we were aware of this fact. NW confirmed that further information about various other charities could be found on the Internet.</p> <p>NW confirmed that visits had resumed in May 2021 and no issues had been raised.</p> <p>NW informed us that Elis Park had made the decision to resign from the scheme and a letter of appreciation had been sent from the Commissioner's Office on behalf of the scheme for his valued support during his time on the scheme. Elis had sent his thanks to the scheme for their support.</p> <p>NW advised us that a recruitment campaign was underway, and the advert was being promoted on various internet pages.</p> <p>NW informed us that all police dogs should be visited within a twelve-month period in accordance with the Animal Welfare handbook and to ensure this requirement was met CD had inserted an additional tab on the Performance Framework Spreadsheet listing all sixteen dogs and the date the dog had been visited. To aid the facilitation of visits, it was agreed that the Inspector should also be sighted on the spreadsheet in addition to the visitors.</p> <p>NW advised us that the handbook states that a visitor should be undertaking at least three visits per year to ensure all visitors were contributing equally.</p> <p>NW asked all visitors to ensure their ID cards were up to date. CD to circulate the process for renewing ID cards.</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>CD</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Operational Update from the Dog Section</p>	
	<p>MS informed us the Dog section would no longer be a stand-alone unit as they now formed part of the Roads Policing Specialist Operation Support Team. This involved the dog section working with a team of officers who are responsible for roads policing.</p> <p>MS advised us that Inspector Havard would be the new contact when organising the visits. CD to circulate Inspector Havard's contact details to the AW visitors. MS advised the visitors that he should be copied into all emails regarding the arranging of visits.</p>	<p>CD</p>

MS advised us that there would always be four dogs on each shift, two to cover the east and two to cover the west which would assist with arranging visits.

MS informed us there were two new dogs, Woody and Maui who were both now fully licensed. Maui would be working with PC Porter and Woody would be with PC Thomas who was a new recruit.

MS informed us that the two dogs had been trained together and were licensed as general-purpose dogs.

ME and GH advised us that they had observed the training of the new PDs.

MS advised us that the G7 summit that had been planned to take place in Wales, had now been changed to London. Gwent would not be deploying PDs and officers to London.

MS informed us that the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, Conference of the Parties (COP 26) would take place in Scotland and Gwent would potentially be deployed there in November. This would see an increase in requests for dog handlers.

MS advised that PC Ellery had sustained an injury whilst on duty with police dog (PD) Toby but was recovering well.

MS advised us that in the hot weather the PDs would not be kept in the vans whilst not on patrol but would be kept outside in shady areas, close to a river and would not be exercised in terms of their training regime.

MS informed us that in the exceptionally hot weather the PDs deployment would be reviewed based on the value of receiving a positive result verses issues around the temperature.

MS informed us that to ensure the welfare of the PD in the heat the handlers vans had temperature gauges, air conditioning and the PDs had cooling jackets. Also, the PDs have sufficient water and are kept hydrated, they are not over exercised during the course of the day and have enough shade and cool areas available.

LBS asked if cooling mats were used in the back of the vans to aid the cooling of the PD. MS advised us that towels would be soaked with water and used but they would try not to put the dogs in the van.

MS informed us that PC James and PD Ralph had been involved in several successful operations. Many of the successful operations were published on Twitter.

MS advised us that the recruitment for another dog handler would take place in the coming months, this would increase the number of dog handlers to seventeen.

	<p>MS informed us that in the future the section would use larger vans which would enable a dog handler and roads policing PC to patrol collaboratively as a team.</p> <p>MS confirmed that seventeen handlers would be full capacity. NW asked how this number compared to a similar size force.</p> <p>MS advised us that the size of the force compared to the number in the team was precise and as it should be as the geography allows handlers to be where required in a timely manner which enables positive operational results. In other more rural areas, the Force may require more dog handlers.</p>	
5.	Any Other Business	
a)	<p>ME asked how many new visitors would be recruited.</p> <p>NW advised the number would be determined by the amount of applications submitted and the decision of the Commissioner; whether to remove the scheme tenure or keep it in place. An update would be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>NW confirmed if the tenure was to be removed it would be the visitor's decision if they wished to remain on the scheme.</p>	NW
b)	NW advised us that the Chair or Vice Chair would be invited to assist in the interviewing process.	
c)	GH thanked NW for making arrangements to ensure AW visitors could attend the meeting in person.	
d)	<p>NW asked if there was still an issue sourcing PDs.</p> <p>MS informed us that the number of PDs were adequate now.</p>	
e)	<p>ME asked what happened to dogs that were unsuccessful at obtaining the required grades.</p> <p>MS advised us that it would very much depend on the circumstances behind the failure to qualify. The dog could be rehomed within the force or wider or returned to the provider. The dog would not be released without them being absolutely satisfied that the dog would be going to the correct home.</p>	
6.	Date of Next Meeting	
	The next meeting will be held at 4pm, on the 25th October 2021, to be held remotely via a Teams meeting.	

Meeting concluded at 4:44pm

Jeff Cuthbert B.SC., MDIPD, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
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I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct. Any such interests are recorded below. The above request has my approval.

Signed	Date
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16.08.2021

Contact Officer	
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Name	Nicola Warren
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Position	Governance Officer
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Telephone	01633 642200
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Email	Nicola.Warren@gwent.pnn.police.uk
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Background papers	None
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Actions from Meeting dated 19th July 2021

Minute Number	Action	Owner	Update	
3.	NW informed us that all police dogs should be visited within a twelve-month period in accordance the with Animal Welfare handbook and to ensure this requirement was met CD had inserted an additional tab on the Performance Framework Spreadsheet listing all sixteen dogs and the date the dog had been visited. To aid the facilitation of visits, it was agreed that the Inspector should also be sighted on the spreadsheet in addition to the visitors.	CD	Inspector has been added to the distribution list.	Complete
3.	NW asked all visitors to ensure their ID cards were up to date. CD to circulate the process for renewing ID cards.	CD	Process circulated to all visitors.	Complete
4.	MS advised us that Inspector Havard would be the new contact when organising the visits. CD to circulate Inspector Havard's contact details to the AW visitors. MS advised the visitors that he should be copied into all emails regarding the arranging of visits.	CD	Inspector Havards contact details circulated to all visitors.	Complete
5.	NW advised the number would be determined by the amount of applications submitted and the decision of the Commissioner; whether to remove the scheme tenure or keep it in place. An update would be provided at the next meeting.	NW		

