



**MINUTES OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE VISITING SCHEME
HELD BOTH REMOTELY ON TEAMS AND IN PERSON IN YEW MEETING
ROOM, POLICE HEADQUARTERS ON 24th OCTOBER 2022 at 4:00 PM**

PRESENT:

Tracey Leake-Jones – Animal Welfare Visitor (TLJ)
Helen Lawless – Animal Welfare Visitor – (HL)
Steve Lewis - Animal Welfare Visitor – (SL)
Louise Crawford – Dogs Trist – (LC)

David Davies - Sergeant - Roads Policing Specialist, Operations (DD)
Nicola Warren – Scheme Administrator, OPCC (NW)
Ceri Davis – Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC (CD)

The meeting commenced at 4:05 p.m.

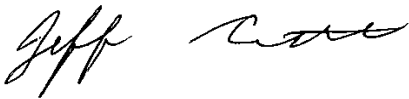
	Notes and Actions	Action
1.	Apologies	
	Apologies for absence were received from Inspector Matt Havard, Victoria Waite, Chloe Bradley-Thomas, Linda Mason, Kirsty Buckland, Andrew Watkins, Sarah Fowler and Caroline Herbert.	
2.	Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings	
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.	
3.	Scheme Update	
	NW informed the visitors there were currently eleven volunteers on the scheme and that sadly Nina Eysers had left the scheme following a successful interview to become a volunteer for Gwent Police. Unfortunately, due to a conflict of interest she was unable to continue in her role as an animal welfare visitor.	

	<p>NW advised the visitors that the tenure for Laura Buchanan-Smith, Martyn Evans and Anthony Davies had concluded at the end of August 2022. A letter of appreciation for their dedication to the scheme and a certificate had been sent to them on behalf of the Commissioner, his team and the scheme members and we wished them well for the future.</p> <p>NW informed the meeting that the visitors would need to undertake more visits now the number visitors had reduced.</p> <p>NW stated that there were visits conducted in April and June and the report forms had been received. There had been two missed visits in May due to difficulties in arranging a convenient time for three visitors (an experienced visitor and two new visitors) and due to sickness.</p> <p>NW advised that five dogs were visited in June which would cover the missed visits in May.</p> <p>NW asked visitors, to liaise with the other visitors without delay in an attempt to arrange cover if they were aware that they could not make a scheduled visit.</p> <p>NW informed the meeting that Emma Smith the RSPCA Inspector had kindly assisted by training visitors during a visit in September.</p> <p>NW advised us that a suggestion had been made with regards to the updated report forms, this was for the aide memoire to be listed at the bottom of the report form. NW to email visitors the revised form for feedback.</p> <p>NW informed the visitors that the new process for organising visits had been circulated to all visitors. The Single Point of Contact (SPOC) was currently Sergeant David Davies.</p> <p>NW advised the visitors that no issues of concern had been raised in the animal welfare visitor reports that had been submitted to the OPCC since the last meeting.</p>	NW
4.	Operational Update from the Dog Section	
	<p>Sergeant Davies introduced himself to the visitors.</p> <p>DD informed the meeting that there were sixteen dog handlers on the section, with sixteen general purpose dogs and ten specialist dogs.</p> <p>DD informed the meeting that the previous planned model whereby handlers were split over four shifts and a dedicated instructor on each shift had been reviewed due to an insufficient number of instructors for each shift. This was as a result of four handlers transferring to other forces.</p> <p>DD advised the meeting the new revised model would see two full time instructors, a Sergeant and a Dog Liaison Officer on each shift.</p>	

	<p>NW asked what would happen to the handlers' dogs who were transferring.</p> <p>DD informed the visitors their dogs were, Police Dog (PD) Bullett who was nearly eight years old and had some mobility issues, so a decision had been made to retire him and he would remain with his handler for retirement. PD Misty, PD Koba and PD Floyd would transfer to South Wales police force with their handlers. PD Ryker also had mobility issues and was almost eight years old, a decision had been made to retire him and he would remain with his handler. PD Tigra who was the oldest dog on the team had developed a limp in her rear leg, following veterinary checks, it had been confirmed as arthritis and Tigra may need to be retired.</p> <p>DD informed the meeting the section would be four dog handlers and four dogs short, and a recruitment process would be imminent to bring the number back up to establishment.</p> <p>We asked if there would be compensation from the other Forces for the loss of the trained dogs. DD confirmed a compensation cost would be received from the police forces the dogs would be transferring to which would assist with obtaining the replacement dogs.</p> <p>DD advised he would be the main point of contact for visitors when arranging a visit and would be covering the day shift.</p> <p>DD informed the meeting that an introduction day had been planned in November for the potential new handlers to attend and observe the work of the dogs and to receive a briefing. DD advised the visitors they would be welcome to attend.</p> <p>DD invited the visitors to attend an assessment day that was planned in December for handlers who had progressed through the recruitment stages as another observation opportunity.</p> <p>NW asked if there was any training the visitors could attend. DD advised us following the completion of the recruitment process a twelve-week training course would take place to license the new dogs to become operational. DD to advise NW of the training dates so the dates can be circulated to the visitors should they be available to attend.</p> <p>DD informed the meeting that PC Thomas's dog PD Ollie had sadly passed away and that the handler now had a new dog called PD Simba. DD informed us that Simba was currently on a drugs training course and was due to be licensed shortly.</p> <p>DD advised the visitors that four new dog handler vehicles had been purchased and a further four vehicles were on order.</p> <p>NW queried why there were no canine first aid kits in any of the vehicles and noted that many of the dog handlers had not received annual canine first aid</p>	<p>DD</p> <p>DD</p>
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	<p>LC confirmed that kennel checks should be carried out at least every two years but ideally every year and advised us that the Sergeant should complete a check sheet and submit it to the Animal Welfare Scheme administrator.</p> <p>LC informed the meeting that the Dogs Trust home kennel check form had been revised and would send out a copy of their form once it had been approved.</p> <p>DD advised the meeting that the dog handlers' policy had been revised and included home kennel checks every three years, but it would be amended to at least every two years based on the Dogs Trust recommendation.</p>	<p>LC</p> <p>DD</p>
5.	Terms of Reference	
	NW circulated the Terms of Reference to all visitors. The only change was the meetings are now taking place in person as well as online.	
6.	AOB	
	NW informed the visitors the visiting rota had been planned up until March 2023. It was hoped that all visitors would have received their training by March 2023, we noted there were five visitors still to receive training, and a new rota would be planned for the following year.	
7.	Date of Next Meeting	
	The next meeting will be held at 4pm, on 16th January 2023.	

Meeting concluded at 5:10pm

Jeff Cuthbert B.SC., MDIPD, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
<p>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.</p> <p>Any such interests are recorded below.</p> <p>The above request has my approval.</p>
<p>Signed</p> 
<p>Date</p> <p>07/02/2023</p>

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Contact Officer	
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Background papers	

