

DECISION NUMBER: PCCG-2013-097

MINUTES OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE MEETING
HELD ON 16th JULY, 2013
AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CROESYCEILIOG

Present: Mr E J HARRY (Chair)
Mr A Davies
Mrs L Buchanan-Smith
Ms G Mason
Mr M Evans
Councillor L Winnett
Inspector E Smith (RSPCA)
Sgt Maria Henry – Dog Section
Mrs Sian Curley, Scheme Administrator
Mrs Maria Chapman, Scheme Administrator
Ms Michelle Vaisey-Baker, Assistant Scheme Administrator

Apologies: Mr G Lucas
Superintendent Nigel Russell

The meeting began at 4pm

1 Introduction of New Policy Officer

ACTION

Mrs Curley introduced Maria Chapman as the new Scheme Administrator. Maria has been based in Gwent but working with all Welsh Police and Crime Commissioner's but as of 1st August will return as a Policy Officer to the Gwent OPCC and will add extra support to the Animal Welfare Scheme.

2 Minutes of last Meeting – 8th April 2013

The minutes were reviewed and agreed to be an accurate record.

We were advised that as part of her introduction to the scheme, Mrs Chapman is going to be arranging a visit in September to attend Waterton Kennels in Bridgend. As this may also be of interest to all the scheme visitors a letter will be circulated to everyone once a date is set to establish if anyone else wishes to attend at the same time.

MC

Mrs Buchanan-Smith was welcomed back with well wishes from the group as a whole.

3 Rotas

It was noted that recently two visits had been conducted in the same month. We were reminded to ensure that visits are conducted during the month that is on the rota, however if anyone is unable to conduct

visits for their allocated month can they please notify the OPCC who will assist in finding another visitor to conduct the visit instead.

4 Operational Update from Dog Section

PS Henry advised us that the new pup Charlie has been returned to the breeder as he didn't make the grade, he has been replaced by eight month old Fletch who has come from the same breeder, he is being brought on by PC Gareth Gwynne and will start his training properly around October / November time. PS Henry also updated us that PD Tex is developing well.

We were advised that PD Buddy is doing very well and has received a commendation from the Chief Constable. We were informed that during a warrant last week PD Buddy found a rucksack that was hidden under a boulder which contained Mephedrone (Meow Meow), which is a drug that the dogs are not trained in detecting due to the wide variety of substances that are used in creating it. It was noted that the use of Meow Meow is becoming a bigger issue in Gwent and that the Commissioner has given £5000 to a group in Blaenau Gwent to make a film highlighting the dangers of using Meow Meow. We were advised that the group who have received this funding are the same group who created the COW video that highlighted the dangers of using mobile phones whilst driving that went on to be a huge success. There are also discussions on-going in looking into testing for Meow Meow as part of the drug testing programme in custody.

PS Henry informed us that the Dog Section featured in an article in the South Wales Argus recently as one of their reporters spent a day with them in a trainee capacity. Mrs Curley advised that copies of the article would be circulated to all visitors for their information. It was also noted that there were a number of photographs on the Gwent Police Website following the Dog Sections School Visits that had been successful. We were advised that a week each year is set aside to do Junior and Infant school visits in each local policing unit area.

MVB

Mrs Curley mentioned that the Communications Department had an "Access All Areas" day in respect of the Custody Suite recently whereby they updated twitter throughout the day with all things related to Custody. It has been mentioned since then by a number of members of the public that it would be beneficial to do something similar in respect of the Dog Section. PS Henry advised she would look into the possibility of arranging something similar.

MH

We were informed that PC Gareth Thomas has now been trained to be a Dogs Legislation Officer alongside PC Paul Nicholls which will provide resilience to the Dog Section. This role relates to the identification of dangerous dogs / Pit-bull types. PS Henry informed us that a webpage has been created to assist in educating officers within the force on dangerous dogs, PS Henry is also in the process of providing a template

to guide officers on how to word a warrant in respect of the seizure of dangerous dogs, however it was noted that only the dog section will deal with any cases that revolve around banned breeds. We were informed by Inspector Emma Smith that the RSPCA don't have many issues with dangerous dogs in Gwent, whilst there has been some reported cases in Newport there is a big problem with dangerous dog fighting in Cardiff.

We were advised that the Summerhill Vet's contract ran out in April but that there was a clause in it that enabled it to run over for another year, after this point the contract will need to go out to tender. It was acknowledged that the service they provide is superb and if there is any opportunity to provide feedback during the tender process it would be looked into.

PS Henry updated us that PC North's dog Eddie is doing well however he is having to wear a muzzle to prevent him from eating anything that he shouldn't. We were also informed that PC Rabbitt's new dog Ouzo is doing very well and was well received at the recent school visits.

5 Any Other Business

Mrs Curley advised everyone that if any members of the scheme are interested in receiving any training or having any talks arranged for future meetings e.g. on dangerous dogs etc, to let the OPCC know and they will endeavour to organise as appropriate.

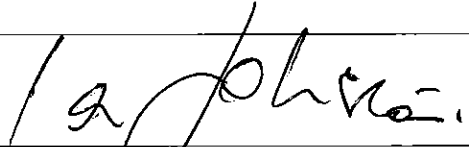
PS Henry advised us that she will be leaving the Dog Section as she has put in a request to have a more operational role. It is unsure when this will take place but there will need to have a handover period to whoever replaces her. We were advised that we would be kept updated in respect of this. Everyone thanked PS Henry for her support and hard work with the Dog Section and acknowledged she would be sadly missed.

6 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 14th October 2013 at 4pm in Conference Room 1 at Police Headquarters. Please can all visitors note that they will be required to go to the main Police Headquarters reception to gain access to this meeting room.

Ian Johnston QPM, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

I have monitored the Animal Welfare Scheme Minutes and am satisfied with progress.

Signed 	Date 26.7.18
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Background papers	None