



**MINUTES OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE MEETING  
HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL 2018, 4.00PM  
AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CROESYCEILIOG**

**PRESENT:** Mr Martyn Evans – Chair  
Mrs Gill Mason  
Mr Gary Lucas  
Ms Laura Buchanan-Smith  
Mrs Caroline Herbert  
Ms Jennifer Deasington  
Mrs Eleri Thomas – Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner  
Miss Jessica Tippins –Scheme Administrator, OPCC  
Ms Michelle Vaisey-Baker – Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC

The meeting began at 4.00pm

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** **ACTION**  
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lisa Winnett, Mr Anthony Davies, Mr Ellis Park and Mrs Sian Curley.
- 2 DEPUTY POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER**  
The Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner (DPCC) welcomed everyone and expressed her pleasure at the opportunity of getting to meet the visitors, some for the first time following the recruitment last year. The DPCC wanted to express both her and the Police & Crime Commissioner's (PCC) appreciation to Scheme members, acknowledging how valuable their work is.
- 3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF 23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2017**  
The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record.
- 4 MATTERS ARISING**  
It was queried if there was an updated police dogs list. As nobody from the Dog Section was in attendance Jessica Tippins (JT) advised that she would liaise with PS Julie Pearse (JP) to request an updated list be sent out asap, ideally tomorrow. It was requested that this list be re-circulated to members whenever there was any changes to the Police Officers and Police Dogs within the Dog section. JT advised she would pass this request to JP too so that the OPCC are sent revised lists to circulate whenever this occurs. **JT/JP**  
  
**JT/JP**

## **5 OPERATIONAL UPDATE FROM DOG SECTION SERGEANT**

No operational update was provided as no representative from the Dog Section attended the meeting. JT advised that she would request that an update be provided in a written format by the Dog Section as a matter of urgency to circulate to the Scheme as soon as possible.

**JT/JP**

Gill Mason (GM) advised that she was unhappy that Scheme members had not been notified of the changed Police Open Day arrangements since the last meeting, she was informed by Crownbridge School that the date was different to that advised at a previous meeting and now would unfortunately not be able to attend. JT apologised that nothing had been sent out but that an update on the Open Day was actually to form part of the Scheme Update for the meeting today. The Open Day is now due to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. No information had been sent out by the OPCC as of yet as the OPCC were awaiting the final details of the agenda for the day in order to circulate the full information to all its volunteers on both the Independent Custody Visiting and Animal Welfare Scheme's for their awareness.

## **6 SCHEME UPDATE**

JT informed us that the OPCC have been undergoing a review since last summer. It was hoped that this review was near finalisation.

We were informed that as part of the Open Day the Dog Section would be participating with a display and that there would also be other displays e.g. a riot and containment demonstration and a tactical pursuit. It was going to be quite a big event with the agenda still being finalised, so JT could not advise of timings but believed it may run between 11am – 4pm. It is hoped that there will hopefully be some marketing material provided by Gwent Police to the OPCC. It was agreed that if any was provided to the OPCC, JT would send it out to members for their information / distribution as appropriate. Both Laura Buchanan-Smith (LBS) and Jennifer Deasington (JD) expressed interest in any flyers or posters if they became available. Michelle Vaisey-Baker (MVB) verified that if any could be obtained they would be posted/emailed to them. JT confirmed that Crownbridge School had agreed for their grounds to be used as part of the event together with the main Police HQ site. We were informed that the old County Hall site and over flow car park would also likely be used. It was queried where people were supposed to park if attending the event, JT clarified that parking would potentially be available at Llanyravon Primary School and a local church if permission was granted. Gwent

**MVB**

Police were currently looking into a resolution for the parking. Police Cadets and Specials would be co-ordinating traffic to assist in the volume of traffic expected in the area.

We were informed that with regards to Finns Law this was still going through the House of Commons and House of Parliament. Martyn Smith (MS) advised that one of the vets who originally looked after PD Finn originates from Monmouth so it had a local basis too.

JT informed us that all visits with the exception of one had been conducted since the last meeting. The one that was missed was purely down to adverse weather – snow. As such, there were no concerns in this respect.

## **7 WATERTON**

Following the concerns that were raised at the last meeting Gary Lucas (GL), Caroline Herbert (CH) and Elis Park (EP) all conducted the latest Waterton visit. GL advised that despite the concerns previously flagged all attendees kept an open mind for the visit. On arrival they were welcomed onto the site and taken around everywhere. There were no issues at all. The Waterton staff willingly showed them around all the kennels not just taking them to see purely the Gwent dogs, but all the dogs at the kennels. CH noted that whilst there was some dog mess in some of the cages there was no concern about this, as the staff cannot be constantly in each kennel picking it up, The kennels were cleaned at the earliest opportunity. We were advised that there was a dog arriving into the kennels when the visitors attended so the visitors also got to see that process during their time at Waterton. We were informed that there were roughly 7 dogs in the kennels in total, and that all the runs had water and clean bowls. All kennels were confirmed as being very clean and all the dogs looked in good condition.

It was noted that a couple of the South Wales dogs looked a bit leaner than some of the other dogs but it was clarified that those dogs were under treatment so the reasoning was fully explained and openly talked through. The staff in attendance were happy to explain any queries even if they related to dogs which were not from Gwent. CH advised that the visit had been very beneficial for her to know what to expect for future visits.

At the last visit to Waterton one of the issues raised was the behaviour of one of the dogs who appeared anxious at the time of the visit. We

were informed that there was a similar situation on this visit too with one dog appearing quite anxious when the visitors were in attendance, however when the visitors made some distance between themselves and the dog, when the dog was alone, his demeanour changed becoming quite calm and relaxed. This confirms the feedback that JP had given at the last Scheme meeting.

It was queried if the dogs were being walked. We were advised that there was not necessarily much walking required as it depends on the dog itself, as some handlers may not be ok with others walking them as this can cause the dog to have anxiety. As such, the kennels have to rely on the handler telling them what is best for their particular dogs.

We were informed that the visitors also got to see the feed room during their visit and that this was also all in good order. During the visit one officer was there washing their dog too. The visit was very positive, it had been unannounced and all staff were really open and friendly. GL advised that there was only one thing that he would potentially raise which was that the kennels could benefit from some form of food shelter to act as a retreat for the dogs on hot days. GL acknowledged however that this was likely a funding issue so may not be something that can be done. JT advised that this would be fed back to JP to liaise with Waterton on to see if there is an opportunity for this or not and will feed back to the Scheme on the outcome in due course.

**JT/JP**

## **8 WATERTON – NEXT VISIT DUE AUGUST 2018**

It was agreed that for the next visit to Waterton GL will again attend along with GM and JD. All three would liaise accordingly with JP on a convenient date to establish when Gwent dogs will be at the kennels.

JD informed us that she has been monitoring the Gwent Police Dog Section Twitter page and saw from this that Mark Porter and PD Taylor went to the Dog Trials this weekend, however noted that Taylor was withdrawn through illness. JT confirmed she would ask JP for feedback to be provided to the Scheme on what this related to and that she would pass on the Scheme's congratulations to Mark and PD Taylor for getting so far.

**JT/JP**

GM raised concerns that the Scheme no longer receive regular information on the dogs, it is purely now only ever on social media which not all members look at. It was queried whether members could have regular information provided to them regarding what the dogs

had been doing, as had been provided in the past. It was noted that members find these type of reports beneficial as it helps let them know what the dogs had been doing recently, especially when they were due to visit them as it gives an awareness of the nature of the dog and builds up a rapport. The consequence of not having any recent activity updates before meeting with the dogs can lead to a sterile visit. MVB advised that when this information used to be provided it was compiled by administration staff within the Dog Section but unfortunately the Dog Section no longer had any administration staff to compile this type of data so there are no resources in place to produce it. MVB also clarified that staff in the OPCC are also unable to provide this information as they do not have access to it, other than what is input on Twitter. The OPCC also do not have resources to compile all the text that is on Twitter and send it out in a different format. This was attempted once but was too time consuming and did not provide the same type of data that Scheme members were used to on the old style reports. GM flagged that volunteers need to be kept interested but with no forthcoming information the Scheme is not engaging to its volunteers. We were informed that the OPCC will flag the issue to the Dog Section as well as higher levels within the OPCC/Gwent Police but cannot guarantee anything would be provided given that resources were very limited.

**JT/JP**

CH proposed an option of whenever any visitor conducts a visit that they send an email update to the rest of the Scheme advising on how the visit went, this can keep all members engaged and informed. This was confirmed as a good idea and the OPCC verified if they were copied into these emails they can ensure hard copies were printed and posted to LBS who does not have access to email.

**ALL**

JT advised that there is potential for the Scheme to have a Chair, Vice Chair and a Secretary from the members on the Scheme who run the Scheme, this will hopefully keep it more focused on the members and keep all members more engaged. The OPCC were currently looking at this as a potential option for the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and feel that the Animal Welfare Scheme could also benefit from it to feel more involved. The OPCC would still be involved and oversee the Scheme but the main running and liaison of the Scheme would be done by the members. All agreed to consider this as an option but it would depend on if anyone was willing to do any extra work involved.


## **9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

LBS advised that the Celtic Manor no longer allowed dogs on their land, however wanted the Dog Section to be aware that this does not relate to Police Dogs, they were still permitted. It is therefore requested that JP make the Dog Section officers aware of this.

**JP**

**10 DETAILS OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next Animal Welfare Meeting has been scheduled for **4pm** on **22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018** in **Conference Room 1**. Please can all visitors note that they will be required to go to the main Police Headquarters reception to gain access to the meeting room. Attendance before 4pm is advisable as the main reception doors are locked from 4pm.

<b>Jeff Cuthbert, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent</b>	
I have monitored the Animal Welfare Scheme Minutes and am satisfied with progress.	
Signed 	Date 22/6/18
Contact Officer	
Name	Jessica Tippins
Position	Temporary Engagement Officer
Telephone	01633 642200
Email	<a href="mailto:Jessica.Tippins@gwent.pnn.police.uk">Jessica.Tippins@gwent.pnn.police.uk</a>
Background papers	None