

**MINUTES OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE MEETING**

**HELD REMOTELY AND PARTLY IN PERSON AT CONFERENCE ROOM ONE, POLICE HEADQUARTERS ON 25th OCTOBER 2021 at 4:00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Martyn Evans – Chair - Animal Welfare Visitor (ME)

 Gillian Hathaway – Animal Welfare Visitor (GH)

 Anthony Davies – Animal Welfare Visitor (AD)

 Lisa Winnett - Animal Welfare Visitor (LW)

 Matthew Havard - Inspector - Roads Policing Specialist

 Louise Crawford - Animal Welfare Co-Ordinator, Dog Trust (LC)

 Emma Smith - RSPCA (ES)

 Nicola Warren – Scheme Administrator, OPCC (NW)

 Ceri Davis – Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC (CD)

**The meeting commenced at 4:05 p.m.**

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|  | **Notes and Actions** | **Action** |
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| **1.** | **Apologies** |  |
|  | Apologies for absence were received from Jennifer Deasington (JD) and Laura Buchanan-Smith. |  |
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| **2.** | **Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings** |  |
|  | The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.Action 5 update – NW advised us that twelve visitors had been recruited following a successful recruitment campaign and once the vetting process had been completed the induction training would take place. NW informed us that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had reviewed the scheme tenure and had decided to keep the tenure in place in order to offer a volunteering opportunity to new visitors and to retain the schemes impartiality.CD to circulate tenure expiry dates to all visitors.NW thanked the visitors on behalf of the PCC and his office for their continued professionalism and commitment to the scheme. Their excellent work in supporting the scheme was reflected in the high number of applications received during the recent recruitment process. Their support in training the new visitors and passing on their experience before their tenures ended to ensure continuity of the scheme was also appreciated.  | **CD** |
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| **3.** | **Scheme Update** |  |
|  | NW advised us that visits had been going well since they had restarted with only one issue being raised where two dogs had been visited twice due to unforeseen circumstances. NW reiterated that it was paramount that all dogs were visited at least once a year to ensure their welfare.  MH advised he would ensure the visitors were informed should the dogs scheduled for a visit not be available due to operational duties or unforeseen circumstances.MH advised the visitors should email both himself and Sergeant Pearse when coordinating visits.NW stated that visits should take place every three weeks once the new visitors had been inducted as opposed to once a month to ensure all dogs were visited within the year. It was also suggested that visits should take place with two experienced visitors and one new visitor to ensure all new visitors received training before the experienced visitors’ tenures came to an end. This suggestion was supported by all visitors.NW informed us that following the induction process, notification of the start date for the new visitors would be circulated along with a new rota. NW to contact JD once the start date had been confirmed. | **MH****NW** |
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| **4.** | **Operational Update from the Dog Section** |  |
|  | MH introduced himself and informed us that he became responsible for managing the dog section in June when the section merged with the Roads Policing Specialist Operations department.MH informed us that the dogs had been deployed eighty-four times in the past six weeks, with forty-eight arrests at twenty-five incidents with eleven positive tracks. We noted that the dogs were working a lot more closely with the road policing team and have had more successful results.LW raised her concerns that Police Dog (PD) Cody had been diagnosed with hip displacement but had returned to duty following veterinary advice.MH advised that PD Cody was not operational, and he was undertaking an extensive physiotherapy plan and his condition would be assessed in the coming weeks to ascertain if he was to be retired. NW asked whether dog kennels located at the handler’s homes were being inspected to ensure they were kept in good condition as it was expected these checks should be carried out annually. MH advised he was not aware that these checks were being carried out but would introduce them if this was not the case.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. LC to provide kennel check sheet to CD to forward to MH for completion.MH advised a small number of dogs and handlers would be attending the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow and the dogs would be housed in the Dogs Trust kennels.MH informed us that there had be a delay in getting PD Toby relicensed due to Covid, but he should be relicensed in the coming weeks.We noted PD Zena was on the checklist for a visit, but she had left the Force some time ago. The AW visitors requested a summary on any changes in circumstances in relation to the dogs and MH agreed to update us of any changes with the dogs retiring, leaving or if they had any health issues. CD to remove PD Zena off the list.LC advised that announcements were broadcast to all forces and services to inform them when the Dogs Trust had any suitable dogs available. They requested contact details of the most appropriate person to contact with this information and these details were provided during the meeting.MH advised us that a recruitment campaign had commenced to employ a further two dog handlers and was due to close in the coming months. The training course would then take place in January 2022. | **LC/MH****MH/CD** |
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| **5.** | **Any Other Business** |  |
|  | NW advised that AW meetings would remain as a dual meeting, both online via Teams conferencing software and in person at Police Headquarters. We requested that visitors notified CD via email prior to the meeting date if they were attending in person so that the necessary arrangements could be made. LW asked when visits to Waterton Kennels would resume as it was noted that a police dog had been housed there whilst his handler was recuperating. CD to contact the dog section Sergeant to establish if there are any Gwent Police Dogs scheduled to be housed there in the coming months.  | **All visitors****CD** |
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| **6.** | **Date of Next Meeting** |  |
|  | The next meeting will be held at 4**pm, on the 31st January 2022.** |  |

**Meeting concluded at 4:59pm**

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| **Actions from Meeting dated 25th October 2021** |  |  |  |
| **MinuteNumber** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Update** |  |
| **2.** | NW informed us that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had reviewed the scheme tenure and had decided to keep the tenure in place to offer the opportunity to new visitors and to retain the schemes impartiality. Tenure expiry dates to be circulated to all visitors. | **CD** | All visitors have been advised of their Tenure end date. | **Complete** |
| **3.** | MH advised he would ensure the visitors were informed should the dogs scheduled for a visit not be available due to operational duties or unforeseen circumstances. | **MH** |  | **Ongoing** |
| **3.** | NW informed us that following the induction process, notification of the start date for the new visitors would be circulated along with a new rota. NW to contact vice chair with date. | **NW** |  |  |
| **4.** | MH advised he was not aware that these checks were being carried out but would introduce them if this was not the case. | **MH** |  |  |
| **4.** | LC to provide kennel check sheet to CD to forward to MH for completion. | **LC** |  |  |
| **4.** | We noted PD Zena was on the checklist for a visit, but she had left the Force some time ago. The AW visitors requested a summary on any changes in circumstances in relation to the dogs and MH agreed to update us of any changes with the dogs retiring, leaving or if they had any health issues. CD to remove PD Zena off the list. | **MH/CD** | PD Zena now taken off the list. |  |
| **5.** | NW advised that AW meetings would remain online via Teams conferencing software to allow visitors to attend in person or online but asked that visitors notified CD via email prior to the meeting date if they were attending in person so that the necessary arrangements could be made.  | **All Visitors** |  | **Ongoing** |
| **5.** | CD to contact the dog section Sergeant to establish if there are any Gwent Police Dogs scheduled to be housed there in the coming months.  | **CD** |  |  |