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**MINUTES OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE MEETING**

**HELD ON 29 JUNE 2020, 2.00PM**

**REMOTELY**

**PRESENT:** Mr Martyn Evans – Chair (ME)

Ms Jennifer Deasington (JD)

Mrs Lisa Winnett (LW)

Mrs Caroline Herbert (CH)

Chief Inspector Martyn Smith- Dog Section (MS)

Sergeant Julie Pearse – Dog Section (JP)

Mrs Nicola Warren – Scheme Administrator, OPCC

Mrs Ceri Davis – Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC

The meeting began at 2.00pm

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| **1** | **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  Apologies for absence were received from Laura Buchanan-Smith, Elis Park and Gillian Mason. | **ACTION** |
| **2** | **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF 25th FEBRUARY 2020**  The minutes were agreed to be an accurate reflection of the meeting and all actions completed. |  |
| **3** | **SCHEME UPDATE**  In order to provide continuity of service NW informed the visitors that due to the impact of COVID19 a decision had been made to extend the tenures by one year for those whose tenure was due to expire in 2021, provided visitors were in agreement. This would allow time for the recruitment process to be undertaken and the relevant training to take place prior to their tenures concluding. The visitors in attendance agreed with the extension of the tenure. Confirmation to be sought from visitors not in attendance.    A discussion ensued in relation to visits resuming. NW informed the visitors that visits could resume providing the required risk assessments had been conducted and visits took place outside in accordance with social distancing guidelines and indoor visits would not be permitted. NW advised that the resumption of visits would also be dependent on the number of visitors who wished to resume visits and visiting should take place in pairs.  NW asked for the visitors to confirm in writing if they wished to resume visits. Provided there was sufficient capacity and the required risk assessments were completed, it was expected that visits could resume sometime in August. Email to be sent to all visitors to ascertain numbers, should there be sufficient numbers, a new rota could be collated and distributed to the visitors by the Chair.  NW advised us that the recruitment process had been delayed for the time being but would resume as soon as practicable.  Documentation from the Dogs Trust had been circulated to visitors and the Dog Section for review and was positively received. NW would look to reschedule the meeting. NW informed us that The Dogs Trust had been invited to the meeting to discuss their scheme to ascertain if they could offer any additional support to that of the RSPCA but due to COVID19 attendance of the Dogs Trust representative had been postponed.  CD informed us that the current RSPCA representative was off duty until further notice. Contact was to be made with the RSPCA to establish a new representative to attend the scheme meetings in their absence. | **CD**  **CD**  **JD**  **CD**  **CD** |
| **4** | **OPERATIONAL UPDATE**  JP informed us that due to Covid 19 change, training had been suspended which enabled more support to local policing areas. There had been a significant amount of work undertaken by the Dog Section as can been seen on Gwent Police twitter and their website.    With the suspension of training there are no new dogs being recruited therefore, JP’s dog who was due to retire would continue working for now.  JP advised us that three new dogs had joined the section, all of whom required new homes as they had come from All Creatures Great and Small. They were all showing potential to be good drugs dogs. Although training had been delayed, they were considering the services of a civilian trainer to help get back up to speed.  JP informed us that PD Eddy had retired and remained with PC Andy and was enjoying his retirement.  JP confirmed that there were currently fifteen dog handlers and confirmed that their fleet was to receive two additional vehicles which would help with flexibility of the team.  JP advised us that a visit to Usk had taken place to establish if it was feasible for the Dog Kennelling to return to Usk and for the team to be centralised. The kennels there were in need of some maintenance. A work demand review was due to take place which would give the Dog Section the ability to explore different locations with different options and opportunities.  MS informed the visitors that facemasks could be supplied should they require them. |  |
| **5** | **WATERTON VISIT**  It was agreed by all that visits to Waterton Kennels would cease for now.  NW informed us that an update could be obtained on the welfare or the dogs held in Waterton. JP advised us that there had not been any of Gwent Police dogs there due to the current situation with Covid19. |  |
| **6** | **AOB**  We discussed holding the meetings online going forward. NW advised that not all visitors had the technology to enable this and some visitors did not wish to call in using the dial in option. It was suggested that consideration be given to some visitors attending HQ to join the meeting online. NW agreed to consider the option but explained that the meeting would have to be accessible to all visitors. |  |
| **7.** | **DETAILS OF THE NEXT MEETING** The next Animal Welfare Meeting has been scheduled for 4pm on 26th October 2020 in Conference Room 1. |  |

**Meeting finished at 2:40pm**