

ALK
2/11**Hawkins, Virginia (APS - Committee Service)**

From: Gaynor Daniel [gaenor_ao@yahoo.co.uk]
Sent: 02 November 2005 10:27
To: Hawkins, Virginia (APS - Committee Service)
Cc: j.weston@wao.gov.uk
Subject: POLICE AUTHORITIES WALES, CONSULTATION, SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

DUE TO ILLNESS I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO SUBMIT AN EXTENDED RESPONSE TO THIS ITEM BUT I WISH THAT THIS BRIEF RESPONSE IS GIVEN THE ATTENTION IT DESERVES.

AS A VOLUNTARY WORKER WITH PRISONERS AND OFFENDERS IN TORFAEN, I HAVE BEEN URGING SINCE 1995 THAT THERE IS NO CONTINUITY IN STRATEGIES TO REDUCE CRIME. WITHIN THE LAST YEAR I BECAME INVOLVED IN A CAMPAIGN TO SAVE A LOCAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL ON A DEPRIVED, COMMUNITIES FIRST ESTATE. I TOOK AN INTEREST IN OTHER POLICIES THAT WERE BEING IMPLEMENTED AND DISCOVERED THAT THE LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT WAS INADEQUATE. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS NEEDS ASSESSMENT WAS BEING USED TO INFORM OTHER STRATEGIES. AT THE SAME TIME I HAD ONLY JUST MADE CONTACT WITH MR PAUL SYMES, DIVISIONAL COMMANDER, GWENT CONSTABULARY. I HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO DISCUSS MY CONCERNS WITH HIM. HOWEVER, I UNDERSTAND THAT MR JOHN WESTON, MEMBER OF THE PERFORMANCE TEAM, THE WALES AUDIT OFFICE, HAS BEEN TASKED WITH AUDITING THE HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING STRATEGY ACROSS WALES. HE IS WORKING SPECIFICALLY WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT INCLUDING TORFAEN. PART OF HIS REMIT IS "REVIEWING THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND HOW IT LINKS TO THE CORPORATE PLAN AND OTHER STRATEGIES".

I HAVE GRAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE EFFICACY OF PARTNERSHIPS WHEN I CONSIDER THAT THE LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT DOES NOT REFLECT THE TRUE DEPTH OF DEPRIVATION IN THESE COMMUNITIES. WITHOUT A TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL NEEDS POLICIES CAN ACTUALLY EXACERBATE EXISTING SOCIAL PROBLEMS. LOCAL POLICE NEED TO BE AWARE OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS WITHIN THEIR FORCE AREA, WHICH UNDERSTANDABLY MAY DIFFER FOR VARYING REASONS. I CONSIDER THAT TO AMALGAMATE CURRENT FORCES INTO LARGER AUTHORITIES AT A TIME WHEN IT HAS BECOME ALL TOO OBVIOUS THAT "TOUGH ON CRIME TOUGH ON THE CAUSES OF CRIME" HAS STILL LEFT DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES WITHOUT THE ASSISTANCE THEY NEED TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF OFFENDING WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

POLICE FORCES ARE EXPECTED TO PROTECT COMMUNITIES. THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT IS TO REDUCE THE NEED TO OFFEND. THE INQUIRY BY THE AUDIT OFFICE WILL INDICATE AND CONFIRM THE ANOMALIES I IDENTIFIED TEN YEARS AGO. I WOULD THEREFORE PREFER TO BUILD ON THE CONTACT I HAVE MADE WITH MY LOCAL FORCE IN ADDRESSING THESE LOCAL SOCIAL PROBLEMS WHICH COULD THEN BE SHARED WITH OTHER FORCES.

I WOULD THEREFORE URGE THAT UNTIL THE AUDIT OFFICE HAS COMPLETED ITS RESEARCH ACROSS WALES IT WOULD NOT BE ADVISABLE TO REORGANISE POLICE FORCES WHICH ARE CURRENTLY LINKED TO ALL LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY

02/11/2005

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