



## Somerset West Community Police Forum

### **Minutes of Somerset West CPF Public meeting held at 19H00 on Tuesday 19th<sup>th</sup> June, 2018 at the Somerset West Library Hall.**

**1. WELCOME**

Mr Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. OPENING PRAYER**

Warrant Officer De Ville opened the proceedings with a prayer.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Cllr Greg Peck and Ms Anelia Marais.

**4. CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS**

Mr Smith said that we should be aware that crime is happening out there. He said a perpetrator was caught in Johannesburg and was found to be out on bail for exactly the same crime. That questions our Justice Dept. Everybody tends to point fingers at our Police Officers, but if they don't have the support of the Justice, they are not going to be able to achieve anything.

Mr Smith welcomed and introduced our new Branch Commander, Captain Stuart, who is the head of the detectives in Somerset West.

Mr Smith heard from a member of the public that the Police are useless. He said the police are there between us and chaos. There are rotten apples in the police, but in Somerset West we don't have any rotten apples, and we have a terrifically run police station here. When he attends the cluster meeting and hears about figures from other areas, and hears about the problems there. He said people come to Somerset West from surrounding areas to get documents certified as the service at their own stations is poor. He said that we have one of the best run stations and one of the best commanders in our cluster. He said Col Williams is the one who gets up at two in the morning to go on patrol in our time when incidents are high. She is always on the scene if something major occurs. We, the residents of Somerset West should be very thankful for what we have got as far as the South African Police go.

## 5. STATION COMMANDERS ADDRESS

Col. Williams said that at the last meeting she told us that we had seen an increase in all crime categories and they had to change their methodology as to how they handled crimes, and that tonight, since the middle of May they can see the trend going down and have had excellent successes, especially at Knorhoek in Sir Lowry's Pass, where a suspect was arrested and they had witnesses who were prepared to go to court. Two weeks ago he was sentenced to 13 years imprisonment. If it were not for the public, they would not achieve these successes.

The farmers approached SAPS last year about the millions of Rands lost due to theft of grapes. So this year SAPS came up with a plan, and with the assistance of the Farm Watch, Constable Wessels and Sgt Langenhoven, and due to their hard work, not one case of theft of grapes has been reported this year.

She said that under the leadership of Ms Sue Buckland and Auntie Magriet in Sir Lowry's Pass had achieved much success. She said that they are always there no matter what the circumstances, to protect you.

Bridgewater had established their Neighbourhood Watch and together with SAPS and the Sector Commander, have made an impact on crime in the area.

The crime has moved to sector 2, and it looks like the crime is being displaced from sector 1 and 3 to sector 2.

She said a group from Mannenberg had been identified and young recruits of 16 or 17 take the rap for older members. They were re-arrested in Kuilsriver two weeks ago and they have been linked to cases in our area, unfortunately witnesses didn't want to go to court, and those cases were withdrawn. They were released and were again arrested in Thornton this morning for breaking in. Hopefully these victims will pursue to get justice done and perpetrators put behind bars.

She said burglars now use rented vehicles and dress nicely so as to blend in easily with the area. One of them said "Monday is Spur day – buy one, get one free", and they use that opportunity to break in. So they have a pattern that the use to work out when they move into an area. So now SAPS will plan accordingly. She said that April was targeted with house robberies and since the arrest, there have been no further house robberies. Residential crime was down. The only serious robbery case was at Vergelegen Plein.

There were two murders over the last couple of months in the CBD.

She said that two ladies of the night had been arrested, but one was a lady of the night and one was a pimp. It was not the lady who was dangerous, but the pimp. She warned females about certain men that take advantage of them by borrowing money for an emergency and then suddenly disappear, and before they realise it, they are not the person that you thought they were.

She said that much information is shared at the public meetings and that the people who attended them are really interested in what is going on and want to make Somerset West a crime free area and thanked them for their support.

She said that it was necessary to work at odd hours of the night because of changing crime patterns, and sometimes, when they worked incognito, are followed and pulled off by neighbourhood watches. She warned that neighbourhood watchers should not be acting alone and should be calling and informing the police. She warned police and neighbourhood watchers not to rush to a crime scene, but to stop and observe, as often these days, crime fighters are ambushed.

Mr Smith encouraged people to join their neighbourhood watches so as to share information about crime in the area, He introduced Captain Riffel who is head of the CPU.

## 6. General

Mr Norris questioned whether the CBD as a hotspot, had a strong and visible neighbourhood watch, to which Mr Smith answered no. He said that they did have CID who have a security presence.

Mr Sean Lester said that often small incidents are not reported to the police, and asked in there was any need to do so. Mr Smith said that this should be done, as it affects the staffing numbers at the police station. He said that Somerset West SAPS cover over 298 square kilometres of area. W/O De Ville said that a case can be made a week later – but the sooner a case is made, the more chance of success. The police are not allowed to try and get a person not to make a case, and if they do, they should be reported to senior management at the station.

There was a discussion on the calling of tow trucks to a scene of an accident by police officials. It was stated by Mr Smith said that this was illegal. Col. Williams said that it was the owner of the vehicle who decided who towed away the vehicle.

Warrant Officer De Ville asked Cllr Benedicta Van Minnen about how a house, which has been identified as a problem house, could have action taken against the owners. She gave a breakdown of how this gets handled. She said the difficulty is often that it has to be decided by courts and this can be a lengthy process.

In a discussion about refuse bins and handling them after they have been stolen, Mr George Kruger gave an outline of how this was handled in Victoria Park. Bridgewater Neighbourhood watch also gave an outline of how they handled it.

Mr Smith asked how the Bridgewater NW was doing and Mr McLachlan answered that they now had twelve patrollers and that it was going well. Mr Smith encouraged BWNW to visit VPNW and work and learn together.

## 7. The meeting closed at about 19H45



Bill Smith  
Chairman

The next meeting will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> August at 19H00.