

CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Community and Race Relations Committee held on Thursday 21 April 2005 in Conference Room 3, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith commencing at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

Ms J Lashmar (Chair)

Ms K E Brandwood

Mr R Watson

Also present:

Assistant Chief Constable (Operations)
Constabulary Race and Diversity Officer
Police Authority Performance Management and Policy Adviser
Deputy Clerk to the Police Authority

PART 1 - ITEMS TAKEN IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs C A Egan, Mrs L Slavin and Mr J Wooley.

37. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that under Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Agenda Item No. 12, Grievances, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Act.

38. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of any personal interests relating to any item on the Agenda.

39. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2004 had been circulated with the Agenda.

The Chair reported that presentations on “Stop and Search” were being made to all the Authority’s Police Community Liaison Forums, and she had seen the demonstration at the recent meeting of the Barrow Police Community Liaison Forum which had prompted a large number of useful questions from those present. She suggested that the presentation might usefully be given at sixth form colleges at a future date.

Another Member advised the Committee that she had seen the “Stop and Search” presentation at two different Police Community Liaison Forum meetings and it had been very well received.

It was noted that the Authority would be appointing a Lead Member with responsibility for “Stop and Search” at the Annual Meeting in June.

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2005 be confirmed as correct record and signed by the Chair.

40. FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY (CRE) INVESTIGATION

Members considered a report by the Clerk and Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to report the outcome of the CRE Investigation into the Police Service, the final report for which was published on 25 March 2005.

Amongst the items enclosed with the report was a full list of the recommendations contained within the CRE’s final report, together with a separate list of those recommendations specifically for Police Authorities.

With reference to recommendation 121, that “Police Authorities should ensure that race issues should be a standing item on the agenda for all Police Authority committee meetings” Members were advised that all reports submitted to Authority meetings under the name of the Clerk and Chief Executive now contained a specific paragraph highlighting the race and diversity and Human Rights Act implications of that particular report.

Members raised various other matters with the Officers during consideration of the report.

RESOLVED, that the report be received.

41. CONSTABULARY RACE AND DIVERSITY EQUALITY SCHEME - DRAFT

The Assistant Chief Constable (Operations) advised that this item had been withdrawn.

42. AUTHORITY RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

Members considered a report, appended to which was an annotated copy of the Action Plan resulting from the October 2004 revision of the Authority's Race Equality Scheme (RES). The purpose of the report was to enable Members to put forward any changes or improvements they would like to see incorporated in the next edition of the RES and to update them on progress against the Action Plan.

The Chair referred to the recently completed Cumbrian Attitudes survey and forth coming work commissioned by the Police Authority, Constabulary, County Council and others to be undertaken by IODA with the BME Community. The importance of consultation to all aspects of the Authority's activity was stressed, and the particular importance of consultation with BME groups in the area of activity covered by the Committee was paramount.

The question of impact assessment of the Authority's proposed policies, activities and functions was discussed, as was consultation on those strategies. It was noted that the test of relevance had to be applied to policies to decide the level of consultation required.

Other issues considered in relation to the Action Plan were the need for refresher training on race and diversity matters, and the frequency at which such training should occur. The availability of language line, or similar service, was also discussed.

The Assistant Chief Constable advised Members that the Deputy Chief Constable was to be designated as Force Race and Diversity Champion and he would remain as the ACPO Lead on race and diversity matters. When the Constabulary established its Equality and Confidence Group this would be chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and he would act as Vice Chair.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) progress against the Action Plan be noted; and
- (2) the Clerk and Chief Executive, in consultation with the Committee Chair, be authorised to incorporate any changes or improvements required in the Race Equality Scheme.

43. RACE AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Members considered a report by the Clerk and Chief Executive which informed the Committee of the publication on 25 February 2005 by the Home Office of the 2003-04 statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System. A

copy of an Association of Police Authorities Circular providing a summary of the main points was appended to the report.

RESOLVED, That the report be received.

44. STOP AND SEARCH

Members considered a report by the Clerk and Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to bring to their attention the role of Police Authorities in this area of police activity. Appended to the report were extracts from the Home Office "Stop and Search Manual".

Members noted that presentations on Stop and Search were currently being made to the Authority's Police Community Liaison Forums. Members asked that relevant minutes extracts be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee to enable them to get a feel for the views being expressed at the meetings.

The Chair reminded Members that the Committee received annual and exception reports on the use of Stop and Search within Cumbria.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the action already taken, as detailed in the report be noted; and
- (3) the Committee continued to receive annual and exception reports on the use of Stop and Search within Cumbria.

45. TRAINING

Members considered a report by the Clerk and Chief Executive which updated the Committee with regard to the provision of race and diversity training for Members, staff and volunteers.

Members were pleased to note that all 17 Members of the Authority had now received the race and diversity training provided by the Constabulary. They noted that arrangements would be put in hand to arrange training for any new Members appointed in May 2005 and the Assistant Chief Constable indicated his willingness to facilitate the provision of such training.

Members noted the position with regard to the provision of race and diversity training for Police Authority staff and volunteers.

RESOLVED, that the report be received.

46. MEMBERS REPORT BACK

The Chair reported to the Committee on her attendance at recent meetings of the Cumbria Joint Agency Group, the Force Equality Steering Group and at a presentation of "Action for Equality", a recently published North West Regional Assembly document.

With reference to the latter document some disappointment had been expressed at the presentation attended by the Chair that only one paragraph within the document referred to rural areas and that there was no reference to Cumbria at all. It was considered that unless these matters were addressed then the people of Cumbria would not be able to relate to this document. There was also some concern that a lack of any reference to Cumbria could make it appear that race and diversity was not an issue in Cumbria, which could foster an attitude which was itself problematic.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

47. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair advised Members that she had some difficulty attending the meeting of the Committee planned for 5 July and asked whether Members would be willing to amend the date.

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the Committee be held on 7 July 2005 commencing at 2.00 pm.

PART TWO - ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

48. GRIEVANCES

Members considered a report by the Chief Constable which provided information on the number of grievances lodged to date in the current year, and provided comparative statistics with those lodged in the whole of the previous year. These figures were broken down in terms of sex and race.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

Mrs K E Brandwood

The Chair informed Members that as Mrs Brandwood was not standing for re-election as a County Councillor at the forthcoming County Council elections she would cease to be a Member of the Authority, and therefore the Committee, in early May. She thanked Mrs Brandwood for her regular

attendance and valuable input to the Committee and wished her well in the future.

Mrs Brandwood thanked the Chair for her kind words and advised that she had enjoyed her time on the Committee which she felt was making a very positive contribution.

The meeting ended at 3.45 pm