



Agenda Item No 19

CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

INSPECTIONS WORKING GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting of the Inspections Working Group held on Monday 17 February 2010 in Conference Room 2, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith, commencing at 1.15 pm.

PRESENT

Mrs L Shaw (in the Chair)

Ms E Barraclough

Mr A Barry

Mr R Cole

Mrs C Egan

Mr P Everingham

Mrs J Maes

Also present:

Deputy Chief Executive (Mr S Edwards)

Policy and Performance Officer (Ms N Brooker)

Committee Services Officer (Mrs J Head)

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received as all members present.

8. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of personal interest in relation to any item on the Agenda.

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on the working group held on 1 February 2010 had been circulated with the agenda.

Members were anxious that the meeting room at Durrhill was booked as soon as possible for the scene setting meeting with the Inspectors.

It was noted that the Authority would have no discretion as to which Members were interviewed or would participate in focus groups. It was likely that every Member would be seen by the Inspectors.

In relation to the action sheet members raised and discussed the following:

- Councillor members to speak to fellow members on the County and District Councils appraising them of the work of the Police Authority to ensure understanding. A basic script could be provided to ensure a corporate message was given.
- The Authority was preparing a statement for partners which identified the difference that the Police Authority has made.

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- How the Authority can illustrate the 'golden thread' that links all its committee and working groups and the work that they and the Authority as a whole carries out.

These issues were discussed more fully when the inspection action plan was considered.

- RESOLVED,** that, the
- (i) minutes of the meeting of the working group held on 1 February 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chair; and
 - (ii) meeting room at Durranshill be booked for scene setting meeting with Inspectors

10. POLICE AUTHORITY INSPECTION REPORT

The Deputy Chief Executive provided members with an update regarding the inspection of Cumbria Police Authority. The inspectorate had confirmed that the 5-day-on-site inspection phase would take place week commencing Monday 21 June 2010 and it was noted that the Authority's Annual meeting was to take place on 22 June 2010. A timeline for the inspection process had been created and was appended to the report.

A survey would be sent out to a representative group of police authority stakeholders. The Authority would need to provide the inspectors with a list of its stakeholders by Friday 19 February. All police authority members had been contacted and asked for representative groups and contact details to be provided to officers to include in this list. Members discussed some additional stakeholders who could be contacted such as the Youth Alliance and Connexions for young people.

Members were advised that prior to the inspectors visiting the Authority they would be collating the information gathered from the stakeholder survey and speaking to agencies such as the IPCC, Home Office Regional Director, Audit Commission lead manager. This would then provide the inspectors with a somewhat rounded view of Cumbria Police Authority.

The Police Authority was due to have a Strategic Planning Event on 17 March 2010. This would provide an ideal opportunity for the Authority to commence the refresh of its Corporate Plan and assist all members to understand the intricate and interlinked work of each of its committees and working groups. There would also be a session regarding the inspection for all the members to advise them of what was happening and provide support and assistance to members regarding the inspection process.

In relation to Embedded Governance the members confirmed the view that this should not be progressed until after the inspection process. Members had been appointed, and were in fact, attending Constabulary Board meetings which provided them the opportunity to gain reassurances of the Constabulary's decision making processes. Although at present there was not a real opportunity for Authority member's to raise questions or challenge decisions.



Following the inspection process and any identified issues by the inspectors, the Authority would then review and possibly streamline its own governance structure. Members were though in agreement that a finance mechanism should be introduced into the Authority as soon as possible to enable the Authority to have a greater influence and involvement in the budget process from the beginning of the financial year. A report was to be presented to the full Authority at its meeting in March.

11. INSPECTION OF CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

Following the last meeting of the working group Authority officers had updated the Inspections Action Plan illustrating the key areas of activities required to be completed by members and officers.

Members were concerned that feedback from meetings attended and issues raised at the Authority's Community Liaison Forums was still not being provided by all members. It was agreed that the report back form would be updated to include from the Police Authority's partnership guide the 7 reasons why the Authority engaged. Currently an email was sent to members on a weekly basis providing them with all the report back forms received. It was agreed a notation would be put on the email reminding members that authority officers would assist members in completing these forms if required.

Members felt this was an important area of work which would identify the benefits the Authority provided and gained from partnerships. If it was not a statutory partnership and the Authority did not benefit then it would need to look closely at whether to continue attending such partnership meetings.

It was agreed that those members who were to be interviewed by the inspectors should be offered some mock interview training near the time of inspection. They would be asked questions, similar to those to be asked by the inspectors, to provide a greater knowledge of the process and identify any areas where member's knowledge would need to be refreshed. The Policy and Performance Officer advised that the Constabulary's Strategic Development Department could provide some content to the mock interviews from past experience of Constabulary inspections.

(NOTE: Mr R Cole left the meeting to attend another meeting at this point)

The members discussed the case studies that would be compiled and presented to the inspectors to showcase the work of the Police Authority. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that Authority officers would provide assistance in the writing of such case studies if members could provide examples. Members agreed not to at this point create a slogan for the case studies but to concentrate on the overall message they wanted to portray to the inspectors.

It was agreed that the case studies would be divided into the 4 themes of the inspection. Members discussed some of the examples they could present and these would be provided to the Deputy Chief Executive.

(NOTE: Mr A Barry left the meeting to attend another meeting at this point)



In response to a question, the Policy and Performance Officer indicated concern regarding the identified gap between the anticipated efficiencies of the Structures Review and the actual identified efficiencies. Should the efficiencies not be realised then this could lead to a department cuts across the whole force.

In relation to Protective Services the members were advised that the Chair of the Authority was meeting with Assistant Chief Constable Skeer on 22 February to discuss the specialist performance criteria which could be developed to enable the Authority to measure performance in this area of work. It was essential that the Authority monitored this performance as it could amount to 25% of the whole force budget.

(NOTE: Mr P Everingham left the meeting at this point)

A member questioned the benefits to be gained from member development and when would these be realised. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that by understanding member requirements would ultimately lead to a better performing member and police authority. The benefits would be seen following a full year of the process.

Members felt that the action plan should be risk assessed which would then allow the Authority to decide what it intended to do and provide reasons for those actions it would not progress. The Deputy Chief Executive agreed to go through the action plan and assess the workload and capacity of the Authority officers reporting back to the next working group meeting.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Inspections Working Group would take place on Tuesday 30 March 2010 at 2.00 pm. Members would be advised of the venue.

The meeting ended at 3.55 pm.