

CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

POLICING PLAN AND BEST VALUE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policing Plan and Best Value Committee held on Tuesday 18th October 2005 in Conference Room 1, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith commencing at 10 am.

PRESENT

Mr C S Moth (Chair)

Mrs P M Halfpenny
Mrs L Slavin

Mr W Smith
Mr R Watson

Also present:

Clerk and Chief Executive (Mr C R Alcock)
Treasurer (Mr D Thomas)
Assistant Chief Constable (Organisational Development and Partnerships)(Mr N Rhodes)
Head of Strategic Planning (Insp G Rutherford)
Performance and Planning Administrator (Mr L Richardson)
Deputy Clerk (Mr S Edwards)

PART 1 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Woolley.

28. ADMISSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items on the Agenda for which the press and public were to be excluded.

29. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

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

30. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14th September 2005 had been circulated with the Agenda. The Chairman highlighted a typographical error in Minute No.23, "Communication Centre Best Value Review – Final Report and Improvement Action Plan "- in the fifth paragraph the word "view" should read "review".

RESOLVED, that, with the amendment detailed above, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14th September 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

31. POLICE FORCE STRUCTURES – AUTHORITY ACTION PLAN

The Clerk and Chief Executive introduced a report which set out for Members the background to the review of Police Force Structures currently being undertaken, and appended to which were the timescales set by the Home Secretary for the process and the key actions for Police Authorities as identified by the Association of Police Authorities. He tabled a proposed action plan for the Police Authority which had been developed taking into account both the key actions identified by APA and the timetables set by the Home Secretary.

The Assistant Chief Constable briefed Members on the work undertaken to date by the Constabulary with regard to developing options for submission to the Home Secretary by 28th October. This work had included meetings held on a regional level, some of which had also been attended by representatives of the Police Authority. It was through this process that the initial range of options had been refined to those on which Forces and Authorities in the North West were focusing their attention as being the most viable on which to devote further work. There had been sound reasons for not taking forward those options which had been discounted, including the option of a regional force for the North West of England. He advised that other regions were going through a similar process to that being adopted in the North West, and it was possible that different regions would produce different alternatives, which would range from proposals for regional forces to stand alone options where forces within a region were of sufficient size for that to be an acceptable option.

In considering the action plan, reference was made to the challenging timescale within which the work was to be undertaken. The shortness of the timescale for undertaking the work meant that it was imperative that options which could not realistically be taken forward should not receive excessive attention or development work.

In response to a question from a Member concerning a regional option for the North West, the Assistant Chief Constable advised that some of the sub regional options within the North West would be bigger than some whole regions in other parts of the country. He felt confident, as a policing professional, that the options currently being considered for Cumbria represented the best options for the people of Cumbria.

The Assistant Chief Constable then outlined the process to be followed over the following week to develop the identified options for submission to the Police Authority on 27th October.

Members highlighted the importance of governance and accountability in the development of new structures and the need to ensure that the people of Cumbria received adequate representation on any new Police Authority and that appropriate structures were in place to ensure local accountability of any new police force.

With reference to the proposal in the action plan to ensure that Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships were aware of the proposals it was suggested that it would be appropriate for presentations to be made to CDRPs, rather than information being sent by e-mail or post.

RESOLVED, that the action plan developed to take forward the Authority's work on Police Force structures be agreed.

(Note: the Committee adjourned from 11.15am to 11.20am, at which point the Assistant Chief Constable left the meeting.)

32. ANNUAL POLICING PLAN - IMPROVEMENTS TO FORMAT

The Head of Strategic Planning submitted a report which put forward suggestions for improving the format and style of the Policing Plan, including reducing the size and complexity of next year's Annual Policing Plan; increasing its relevance and local flavour by including summaries of BCU plans; and involving BCUs earlier in the planning process, thereby contributing to better performance, greater corporacy and ownership.

The report had been submitted to the Constabulary's Chief Officer Group which had agreed to support it in principle.

The Head of Strategic Planning circulated a copy of Bedfordshire Police Authority's Annual Policing Plan 2005-06, which was seen as a good example of the revised format the Constabulary was suggesting.

All Members indicated their support for the proposed move to A5 size for the Policing Plan, which would fit the size of other similar documents, such as the Annual Report. However, in doing so, they noted that the smaller format did not lend itself to the presentation of the financial information which was required within the Policing Plan. Members also suggested that it would be appropriate to seek the Plain English Society's Crystal Mark to ensure that the Annual Policing Plan was produced in an accessible written style.

The Head of Strategic Planning undertook to keep Members informed of developments as the Policing Plan progressed.

RESOLVED, that, in principle, the Committee support a reduced size for the Annual Policing Plan similar in style and format to that produced by Bedfordshire Police Authority.

(Note: the Head of Strategic Planning and Performance and Planning Administrator left the meeting at this point).

33. POLICE AUTHORITY IMPROVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK – TIMETABLE

The Clerk and Chief Executive presented a report which proposed the adoption of a revised Action Plan to take forward the Police Authority Self Assessment and Improvement Framework (PASAIF) in the light of the work now being generated with regard to the review of Police Force Structures.

Members welcomed the draft Action Plan as submitted and considered that it would be appropriate to review the actions proposed at the Action Planning Day on 7th September in the light of the Force Structure review. Having considered all the factors, they believed that it would be appropriate to delay action on some items within the Action Plan.

Members then gave detailed consideration to each item included within the Action Plan, as identified and prioritised at the Action Planning Day on 7th September. In doing so, they came to the following conclusions –

- Police Authority Vision and Values – remains a priority and should be continued.
- Risk Management – has become a higher priority since early September and should be continued, with the establishment of a Police Authority Member Working Group to take forward this area of activity.
- Review of Budget and Planning Process – this would occur as part of the current budget process and should be continued.

Members concluded that the following issues should be put on hold until the outcome of the Review of Force Structures is known:-

- o Committee Structure Review
- o Revised Best Value Strategy/Policy Handbook
- o Review of Partnership Involvement
- o Consultation, Publicity and Profile
- o Members' communication needs

Members considered that their recommendations should be submitted to the Police Authority on 10th November for approval.

In making these recommendations, they emphasised the importance of continuing with the key elements of the Police Authority Self Assessment and Improvement Framework, and their continued commitment to the Framework. However, they believed that it was appropriate to amend the Action Plan in the current circumstances, with the Review of Police Force Structures requiring the immediate attention of the Authority and its Officers.

RESOLVED, That the Police Authority be RECOMMENDED to amend, as suggested above, the Action Plan produced as a result of the Action Planning Day on 7th September.

34. POLICE AUTHORITY IMPROVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK – VISION AND VALUES

The Clerk and Chief Executive presented a report which proposed a way forward for the work on Vision and Values, as requested by Members on 7th September.

Members noted that the Authority had already adopted Member and Lead Member roles and they considered that these should be re-endorsed by the Authority. They also considered that the Authority should be recommended to adopt the Vision for the Authority as set out in the report, as follows –

“Our vision is to help Cumbria Constabulary to be one of the country’s leading police forces, inspiring trust and confidence so that the people of Cumbria feel safe, satisfied and reassured.”

In considering the third element of this action, the Committee considered that was not appropriate, in the present circumstances, to continue with work to develop a Members’ Handbook as originally envisaged. However Officers suggested that it would be possible to produce a Handbook for Members using existing material such as the Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders. Members welcomed this proposal and asked that the Clerk and Chief Executive submit to the next meeting of the Committee a possible list of contents for the Handbook.

RESOLVED, that ,

- (1) The Police Authority be RECOMMENDED to adopt the following vision statement –

“Our vision is to help Cumbria Constabulary to be one of the country’s leading police forces, inspiring trust and confidence so that the people of Cumbria feel safe, satisfied and reassured.”;

- (2) The Police Authority be RECOMMENDED to re-endorse the roles of Authority Member and Lead Member as previously agreed by the Authority in March 2004.

The Meeting ended at 12.10pm

CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

POLICING PLAN AND BEST VALUE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policing Plan and Best Value Committee held on Wednesday 23 November 2005 in Conference Room 2, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith commencing at 10 am.

PRESENT

Mr C S Moth (Chair)

Mrs P M Halfpenny

Mrs L Slavin

Also present:

Treasurer (Mr D Thomas)
Head of Strategic Development (Ms J Davies)
Head of Strategic Planning (Insp G Rutherford)
Best Value Manager (Ms J Sauntson)
Strategic Planning Administrator (Mr L Richardson)
Deputy Clerk (Mr S Edwards)

PART 1 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr W Smith, Mr R Watson and Mr J Woolley.

36. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items on the Agenda for which the press and public were to be excluded.

37. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

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

38. MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that the recent resignation of Ms J Manners-Armstrong as an Independent Member of the Police Authority had created a vacancy on the Committee, and that this matter would be considered at the December meeting of the Authority. Members considered that it would be beneficial if this vacancy could be filled, even if only as an interim measure.

RESOLVED, that the position be noted.

39. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 October 2005 were submitted. It was noted that any references to the "Head of Strategic Development" in the Minutes should in fact refer to the "Head of Strategic Planning".

RESOLVED, that, taking into account the amendment above, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 October 2005 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

40. UPDATE ON LOCAL PRIORITIES

The Head of Strategic Planning delivered a presentation to the Committee, the slides for which had been previously circulated to all Members.

During the course of the presentation Members raised various matters which were responded to by the Director of Strategic Development and the Head of Strategic Planning.

Issues raised during the course of the presentation included the role of local authorities in Local Area Agreements; the National Community Safety Plan; the National Policing Plan Priorities; the PSU Assessment 2005 and the Baseline Assessment; the impact on front line policing of undertaking organisational development; and the emerging priorities. Detailed consideration was given to the development of local priorities and consultation currently being undertaken in Barrow. Considerable thought was also given to the priorities identified by the public, the police, staff and others. Concern was expressed that within the Baseline Assessment 2005 Human Resource Management had only been graded "poor" and Members considered that this was a matter which should receive further consideration by the Personnel Committee. It was noted that training and development, which had also been graded "poor", was already subject to regular reports to Personnel Committee.

Members made particular reference to the Partnership Conference held at Rheged on 28 October. They considered that the day had been very well organised and informal feedback indicated that the Partner Organisations invited to attend had found it to be most valuable.

In concluding it was noted that the emerging priorities were –

- Neighbourhood Policing
- Antisocial Behaviour
- Black and Minority Ethnic community confidence
- Reducing crime
- Drug related crime

- Structural Reform
- Auto crime
- Violent crime
- Workforce modernisation

This list would require further refinement over the coming months.

RESOLVED, that, the current position with regard to Local Priorities be noted.

41. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF USER SATISFACTION – FINAL REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

The Best Value Manager presented a report by the Chief Constable, appended to which were the User Satisfaction Best Value Review report and Action Plan together with supporting appendices.

The Review, the need for which had been identified from the Constabulary's Risk Management Assessment in 2004, had focused on how the Constabulary could cost effectively meeting the Quality of Service Commitment Standards for an acceptable proportion of user enquiries.

Analysis of the PPAF User Satisfaction Measures had shown that the Constabulary had performed well in this area, being first amongst its Most Similar Forces ranking and fourth in national rankings. Against this background the Constabulary had decided to focus the Review on the least satisfied users who had been identified as the victims of violent crime.

As a result of the Review non cashable efficiencies of £380,548 and cashable efficiencies of £7,155 had been identified. The opportunity cost of implementation was £10,305. A detailed breakdown of costs were contained in an appendices to the report.

The reports recommendations were as follows –

Recommendation 1

The Constabulary should ensure that enquiry counter staff have timely access to the information necessary to respond to requests from members of the public.

Recommendation 2

Amend the Volume Crime Policy to include individual responsibilities for keeping victims informed, in compliance with National Quality of Service Commitment Standards.

Recommendation 3

Adopt a customer-focused approach to initial contact information. Provide information to victims and witnesses to comply with the National Quality of Service Commitment Standards, and support the Constabulary's corporate image.

Recommendation 4

Civilianise police duties at Enquiry Counters to provide a more efficient and customer-focused service to the public and reduce bureaucracy for police officers.

Recommendation 5

Reduce unnecessary bureaucracy in the Home Office Road Transport process for production of documents

Recommendation 6

Procedures should ensure the proper issue of Home Office Road Transport forms to members of the public, to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy later.

Recommendation 7

Include User Satisfaction performance measures in the Performance Development processes on a regular basis, in order to raise the profile of user satisfaction within the Constabulary and maintain performance.

Recommendation 8

In order to maintain current performance levels, include quality of victim / witness contact in the inspection regime, where performance and risk analysis indicates this action.

Recommendation 9

Consider using Activity Based Costing to monitor performance in user service activities.

Recommendation 10

That further research is carried out into the cause of satisfaction levels of black and minority ethnic (BME) users being lower than that of white respondents.

The issue of feedback to users other than victims and witnesses was raised by Members and the Best Value Manager advised that the introduction of National Call Handling and Incident Standards would address this issue with callers being informed at the time they made their call of follow-up action, thereby addressing expectations at the first point of contact.

The Director of Strategic Development advised that the overall aims of the Review would be driven by the Quality of Service Commitment Action Plan .

It was noted that progress against the Action Plan would be reported to future meetings of the Audit and Performance Committee.

RESOLVED, that the Best Value Review of User Satisfaction Final Report and Action Plan be approved.

42. BEST VALUE REVIEW PROGRAMME OCTOBER 2005 – MARCH 2006

The Best Value Manager presented a report by the Chief Constable that outlined a proposed programme for Best Value and Improvement Reviews for the period October 2005 to March 2006. The programme had been developed based on risk and performance issues arising from an analysis and evaluation of the organisation, identifying areas for improvement and prioritising these according to policy. As part of the organisational analysis inspections and audits scheduled for the year had been assessed, and there were no areas of duplication with the proposed programme.

Members noted that Strategic Development was developing an approach to inspections which would co-ordinate with Best Value Reviews

In considering the proposed Best Value Review of Anti Social Behaviour Members raised the issue of ASBOs which could be issued by both the courts and local authorities. They asked that this issue be considered in developing the terms of reference for the Review.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) A Best Value Review of Anti Social Behaviour, the scope of which will be informed by the results of the Violent Crime and Criminal Damage Improvement Reviews, be approved for the period January – March 2006;
- (2) The Improvement Review Programme for the period October 2005 – March 2006, as outlined below, be noted –
 - Violent Crime Analytical Review
 - Criminal Damage Analytical Review
 - IT Improvement Review (due for completion December 2005)
 - Organisational Support (Collaboration with Lancashire)

43. POLICE AUTHORITY IMPROVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK – DEVELOPMENT OF A MEMBERS HANDBOOK

The Committee considered a report by the Clerk and Chief Executive, appended to which was a list of suggested documents for inclusion in a handbook for Police Authority Members.

With reference to the suggestion that the handbook include a document setting out the Constabulary structure, Members asked that this included information of which activities were undertaken in specific departments rather than a structured chart with only names and telephone numbers. The Director of Strategic Development undertook to produce such a chart for inclusion in the Members' Handbook.

RESOLVED, that the Clerk and Chief Executive proceed to develop a Members' Handbook including the documents identified in the appendix to the report.

The Meeting ended at 11.05am