

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Community and Race Relations Committee held on Tuesday 31 October 2006 in Conference Room 1, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith commencing at 10.00am.

PRESENT

Ms J Lashmar
Mrs L Slavin

Mr R Watson

Also present:

Acting Deputy Chief Constable (Mr G Sunderland)
Partnerships and Crime Reduction Manager (Superintendent T Thwaites)
Constabulary Race and Diversity Adviser (Ms P Bell)
Deputy Clerk (Mr S Edwards)

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

1. MEMBERSHIP

Members noted the membership of the Committee as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Police Authority on 28 June 2006, as follows –

Mr M Ash, Mrs C A Egan, Ms J Lashmar, Mr R Watson and Mr J Woolley. The Chairman and Vice-Chair (Mrs L Slavin) of the Authority were also ex officio Members of the Committee.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Ash, Mrs C A Egan and Mr J Woolley.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED, that Ms J Lashmar be appointed as Chair of the Committee until the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Authority.

4. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the

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meeting during consideration of Agenda Item No 12, "Grievances", on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Schedule 12A of the Part 1 to the Act.

5. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

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

6. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 April 2006 had been circulated with the Agenda.

The Chair referred to Minute 35, "Police Authority Race Equality Scheme Action Plan – Update", in which it had been proposed that impact assessment training might be provided to Members jointly with Lancashire Police Authority and that this might no longer be practical in the light of the abandonment of the amalgamation proposals.

The Chair also referred to the Streetsafe initiative referred to in Minute 39, "Members Report Back", and reported on her experience at the meeting of the Barrow Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

7. POLICE AUTHORITY RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN – UPDATE

The Deputy Clerk presented a report by the Clerk/Chief Executive, appended to which was a copy of the Police Authority's Race Equality Scheme Action Plan amended to reflect actions undertaken since the last meeting of the Committee. Progress against the Action Plan had been hampered over recent months due the impact of the amalgamation process with Lancashire Police Authority and recent, and ongoing, staff vacancies and sickness within the Authority.

It was noted that both the Scheme and Action Plan now required revisiting and updating to reflect changed circumstances since it had first been introduced. Members were anxious that a timescale for this work was agreed and they asked that this be developed for the next meeting of the Committee.

It was also noted that some of the work which would be required on the Authority's Disability Equality Scheme, such as baseline assessment and impact assessment, could be undertaken in tandem with undertaking similar work on the Authority's Race Equality Scheme.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

8. POLICE AUTHORITY DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

The Deputy Clerk provided a verbal update on the position with regard to the development of the Authority's Disability Equality Scheme. He advised Members that it might be necessary to convene an additional meeting of the Committee, prior to the end of November, to enable the Committee to approve the Scheme. He thanked the Constabulary's Race and Diversity Adviser for her assistance in the development of the Authority's Scheme to date.

RESOLVED, that the position be noted.

9. USE OF STOP AND STOP/SEARCH POWERS WITHIN CUMBRIA

The Acting Deputy Chief Constable presented a report by the Chief Constable that provided data on the use of stop and stop/search powers within Cumbria for the period April to August 2006. The report also contained a commentary on the use of the powers within the County. He thanked Superintendent Thwaites for his work on this particular area of activity.

Members noted that the use of these powers had remained relatively constant and the extent of disproportionality, based upon ethnicity of the person stopped, was low. Stop and search continued to be a valuable tactic to prevent and detect crime.

Superintendent Thwaites then provided Members with further detail with regard to the figures. At approximately 3,000 stops in a quarter, figures for Cumbria were relatively low.

In considering the report, Members noted the recent comment by the Standards Unit, based on a paper exercise, of whether the Constabulary's use of the powers on white people was sufficiently targeted. They noted that this was to be the subject of a further review during the next reporting period and that the Acting Deputy Chief Constable had asked the Standards Unit for an explanation of their finds. Members then queried whether the Standards Unit's comments had impacted upon the score awarded to the Constabulary for Citizen Focus. The Acting Deputy Chief Constable advised that this was another area in which he was seeking clarification from the Home Office.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

10. MEMBERS REPORT BACK

The Chair reported on her attendance at the Gender Agenda Two launch, a Consultation Workshop at Leeds and a recent meeting of the APA Race and Diversity Policy Group.

RESOLVED, that the report be received.

PART 2 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

11. GRIEVANCES

The Acting Deputy Chief Constable presented the grievance statistics report, which showed the number of grievances lodged in the current financial year and compared this information with those lodged in the previous two financial years.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

The Meeting ended at 11.10am