

Cumbria Police Authority

28 June 2006

Agenda Item No 31a

PCSO recruitment

A report by the Chief Constable

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Home Office have indicated their wish to accelerate the national recruitment of PCSO's in England and Wales. To that end, they have, very recently, set revised allocations that they hope Forces and Authorities will meet by April 2007. For Cumbria, this entails having 105 PCSO's in place by that date. The Constabulary currently has or is committed to recruiting 43 PCSO's.
- 1.2 The funding arrangements in respect of the latest offer allow PCSO's to be recruited at no cost to the Authority in the first year, although in 2007-08, individual Forces and Authorities are expected to meet 25% of the costs.
- 1.3 The Chief Constable has indicated his desire to take up the allocation of 62 PCSO's as indicated by the Home Office, although he has made it clear that members have a particular interest and responsibility in this matter. This is especially important in the movement towards amalgamation with Lancashire. To that end the Chief Constable's commitment is conditional upon support from members.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to support the proposal to recruit up to the target as set by the Home Office.

3. Details

- 3.1 The Home Office wrote to Chief Constables and Clerks on 10 May, setting out the impact of additional resources allocated to the Neighbourhood Policing Fund, which was set out in the Chancellor's budget statement. In essence, the Chancellor made £100m available to facilitate the accelerated role out of PCSO's so that they will amount to 16,000 by April 2007. This is part of the wider Government commitment to Neighbourhood policing, which the Government hopes to be in place, nationwide, by April 2008.

- 3.2 The package now being offered replaces a previous offer made as part of the Neighbourhood Policing Fund allocation 2006-07 and now includes an additional, one off sum, receivable in 2006-07, which can be utilised as a contribution to more general Neighbourhood Policing costs. For Cumbria this amounts to £110k. Members should also note that the commitment of the Home Office to fund 75% of the ongoing costs will change after 2007-08, when it is planned to subsume the specific grant into general police grant.
- 3.3 The Constabulary currently has or is committed to recruiting 43 PCSO's, through a variety of previous Home Office schemes. Attached at Appendix 1 is a schedule which shows the costs and external support of PCSO's both in terms of those in place / committed and those now being offered as part of the latest funding package.
- 3.4 The Chief Constable and Chief Officer Team share the view that PCSO's are now established as part of the policing 'family' and the application of PCSO's is an integral part of the Constabulary's Neighbourhood Policing strategy.
- 3.5 In accepting the commitment to recruit an additional 62 officers by April 2007, a 'milestone' target has also been set which requires 25 of the 62 officers to be recruited by 31 December.
- 3.6 Members may be aware that Lancashire Constabulary has accepted its equivalent target. This will take their planned number of PCSO's to 417 by the end of 2006-07.
- 3.7 In terms of the Constabulary's internal ability to recruit to the target set, the Director of Personnel and Development is content that the department has the capacity both to recruit and begin to train the new intakes. However, there is, of course, no guarantee that candidates of the right quality will be forthcoming. Indeed, the report to the Constabulary Chief Officer Group did highlight this as a particular risk. Home Office officials have been asked about the implications of forces accepting a local target and, despite best endeavours, not being able to meet it, although they have not been able to respond to date. They have, however, indicated that funding for PCSO's already recruited will not be withheld or withdrawn.

Michael Baxter
Chief Constable

Analysis of the Financial Implications of Recruiting Additional PCSOs**Current Commitment**

Funding Stream	No of Recruits	Recruitment Profile	2006/07 £000's	2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's
Expenditure					
Pre NPF Funding	6	Pre 2006/07	152,004	156,564	161,261
NPF 1	12	Pre 2006/07	304,008	313,128	322,522
NPF 2	13	Aug-06	224,250	337,909	348,046
NPF 2	12	Jan-07	102,240	311,916	321,273
Gross Cost	43		782,502	1,119,517	1,153,103
Grant					
Pre NPF Funding	6	Pre 2006/07	-76,002	-78,282	-80,631
NPF 1	12	Pre 2006/07	-228,006	-234,846	-241,892
NPF 2	13	Aug-06	-128,183	-253,432	-261,035
NPF 2	12	Jan-07	-118,323	-233,937	-240,955
Other Contributions					
Barrow Borough Council			-100,000	-100,000	-100,000
Respect			0	-20,000	-20,000
Total Net Cost to the Force			131,989	199,020	208,591

Additional Cost Based on Recruiting the Full Target of 105 PCSO's by 01/04/2007**Assuming Grant Funding at 75%**

Funding Stream	No of Recruits	Recruitment Profile	2006/07 £000's	2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's
Expenditure					
NPF 2	25	Aug-06	421,797	649,801	669,295
Accelerated Funding	37	Jan-07	274,124	961,706	990,557
Gross Cost			695,921	1,611,507	1,659,852
Grant					
NPF 2	25	Aug-06	-78,859		
NPF 2	25	Aug-06	-325,365	-487,351	-501,971
Accelerated Funding	37	Jan-07	-481,540	-721,279	-742,918
General NPF Grant			-110,000		
Additional Net Cost to the Force			-299,843	402,877	414,963

Notes to take into account

1. The average cost of a PCSO has been based on the information used to produce the budget for financial year 2006/2007.
2. The recruitment of the additional PCSO's would need to be confirmed and if the recruitment dates were brought forward from the dates shown above, this would increase the basic cost of a PCSO in 2006/07.
3. In the event that a surplus was created in relation to grant funding in 2006/2007, clarification would need to be sought on whether the surplus could be carried forward, to be offset against any deficit in the budgets in future years.
4. There is no guarantee that grant funding would be sustained at 75% in future years.

Costs not included in the scenarios above

1. Additional cost of travel and subsistence, i.e. if PCSO has to work elsewhere in the county.
2. Training costs of PCSO, or ongoing training whilst in force if necessary.
3. Overtime, included in the basic salary are Rostered Weekend Work and shift allowance.
4. If the post becomes vacant following initial recruitment the above does not include any additional recruitment cost for replacements.
5. The above does not include any additional equipment cost for replacements.
6. The above does not include any additional airwave radios required to furnish 105 PCSO's.
7. The above scenario does not include any additional supervision costs incurred by increasing to 105 PCSO's.