

**Cumbria Police Authority  
Audit and Performance Committee**

**04 December 2006**

**Agenda Item No 15**

**Police Overtime Monitoring**

**A report by the Chief Constable and Treasurer**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report has been produced in response to members' request that monitoring information on overtime expenditure continues to be supplied to provide assurance that progress made to reduce overtime by 15% over three years, as part of the Police Negotiating Body scheme to improve 'work / life' balance, is continued following the conclusion of the formal scheme in March 2006.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

**3. Details**

- 3.1 To remind members, forces were required to reduce overtime by 15% over the three years ended 31 March 2006 as part of a national requirement set out by the Police Negotiating Board. This requirement was part of a wider series of reforms to police pay and allowances, originating from the Police Reform Act and was intended to promote a better work / life balance for officers. The three-year scheme ended at the end of 2005-06 and, as set out above, expenditure on 'relevant' overtime was £144k inside the prescribed target figure for the Constabulary.
- 3.2 Since the end of the financial year, efforts have been made to enquire how Constabulary overtime is to be monitored externally to ensure that the reduced reliance on overtime will be continued and that the gains from the last three years are not to be lost. Unfortunately, no formal guidance has been forthcoming as yet.
- 3.3 Recognising that the requirement to report to HMIC about overtime levels ended on 31 March, members expressed some interest in continuing to receive statements about force overtime and it was agreed that regular

reports would be prepared, albeit in a more simple format than those dictated by the national scheme which exempted a number of areas of overtime and which were resource intensive to produce and consolidate.

- 3.4 The data used in constructing this report has been extracted from the Constabulary's monthly management accounts process. Whilst the format is somewhat less detailed than the formal reporting requirements of the PNB scheme, the overall figures are broadly equivalent, showing details of overtime expenditure for each BCU and other departments including local operations, although it excludes additional payments for duties performed on Public Holidays, as was the position under the PNB regime.
- 3.5 The table below shows actual and forecast overtime expenditure in comparison with budget on a departmental basis as at the end of September, which incorporates overtime expenditure for the first five months of the year, as overtime is paid one month in arrears: -

	Revised Budget £'s	Actual Expenditure £'s	Forecast Outturn £'s	Variance £'s
North	365,114	187,556	365,114	0
South	219,186	144,462	235,000	15,814
West	138,240	90,717	190,000	51,760
Operational Support	106,963	60,453	147,914	40,951
Other	123,995	109,345	137,328	13,333
<b>Total</b>	<b>953,498</b>	<b>592,533</b>	<b>1,075,356</b>	<b>121,858</b>

- 3.6 The table in paragraph 3.5 above shows forecast overtime expenditure amounting to £1.075m, which is £122k above the revised budget for overtime of £0.953m and £34k higher than the figure reported at the end of July. As reported elsewhere on the agenda, additional commitments to police overtime have been made in some areas to cover police officer vacancies caused principally because there are different profiles for recruitment and retirement, and in particular where only the recruitment profile can be planned with any degree of accuracy. Other contributory factors for the variances revolve, in the main, around the cost of overtime supporting additional policing operations, and, in addition, on a non-recurring basis, additional costs of providing a visible police presence during the world cup.
- 3.7 It is possible to undertake a broad comparison of where the current projection of overtime as summarised above might sit if the PNB scheme had continued into the current year. It is broadly based, reflecting that a small value of overtime set out above would not have counted against previous target because it was funded from a variety of special external funds or was in relation to mutual aid. The comparison would be as follows. A target of relevant overtime for 2006-07, indexed from the 2005-06 figure would amount to about £1.32m. The actual projection for 2006-07, as set out above amounts to £1.075m, less an estimate of overtime which was previously not counted against the 'target', say £50k, leaving a net figure of £1.025m, which is £0.295m inside the 'target' figure and £122k less than forecast at an equivalent time last year.

- 3.8 Finally, and as a reminder to members, as set out above, the projections are based on only five months actual spending (as overtime is paid monthly in arrears), so there is time for the position to change, particularly as the figures do not include specific provision to meet any overtime costs arising from a major incident, which has the potential to significantly alter the whole shape of the projection.

**Michael Baxter**  
**Chief Constable**  
**November 2006**

**Douglas Thomas**  
**Treasurer**

**Contact point for further information.**

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