

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Personnel Committee held on Thursday 5 October 2006 in Conference Room 2, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith commencing at 10.00am.

PRESENT

Mr R Watson (Chairman)

Mr J Bland
Mrs M Johnson

Mrs L Slavin

Also present:

Clerk/Chief Executive (Mr C R Alcock)
Detective Chief Superintendent (Mr P Kirkbride)
Deputy Clerk (Mr S Edwards)
Police Federation Representative (Sergeant A Mason)

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

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Woolley.

17. URGENT BUSINESS AND EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

(a) Urgent Business

The Chairman indicated that he intended to take, as an item of Urgent Business, a report by the Clerk/Chief Executive entitled "Police Appeals Tribunal" as a decision on the subject matter of the report, which was only notified to the Authority on 28 September, was required by 6 October 2006.

(b) 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 meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs indicated of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act –

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Item No	Item	Paragraph
13	Police Staff Discipline	2
14	Grievances	2
15	Course Fees	1
16	Business Interest Policy	1
17	Police Appeals Tribunal	1

18. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of personal interests on any item on the Agenda.

19. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 July 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20. PERSONNEL DATA REPORT – SECOND QUARTER 2006/07

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride presented a report composed of statistics compiled from HMIC and Personnel Department data. The report covered various measurable aspects of the personnel function. The figures covered the period to 31 August 2006.

Highlighted in the report were the facts that during the quarter covered by the report there was an intake of 15 new officers, 5 of whom were male and 10 of whom were female. In addition, following a successful recruitment campaign, the first intake of new Police Community Support Officers for 2006/07 had taken place on 11 September 2006. Fifteen new PCSOs were recruited, 6 of whom were male and 9 of whom were female. This represented the first step towards the new Constabulary target of 105 PCSOs by 30 April 2007.

Following the introduction of the new promotion process, there had been a number of promotions to Sergeant during the period.

The Detective Chief Superintendent also advised Members that the Constabulary was on target for the recruitment of BME Officers during the year and that Chief Superintendent Collins had been successful in an application for a place on the Senior Command Course to take place in the autumn of 2006.

RESOLVED, that the report be received.

21. TRAINING FUNCTION SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride presented a report by the Chief Constable which outlined the progress made against the Training Function Service Improvement Plan and detailed new areas for development identified in the Baseline Assessment of Training undertaken in February 2006.

He informed Members that the Deputy Chief Constable had commissioned a review of the training function, as it was considered appropriate to take stock and regroup following the abandonment of the amalgamation process. In addition, he had spoken to the Force Training Manager asking how it would be possible to reprioritise and focus on achievable targets to take the function forward and improve services. The Authority's Lead Members for training would be involved in the review of the training function, the outcome of which would be reported to Committee in due course.

Members referred to the recent Baseline Assessment and queried the statement included within it that staff had little confidence in the Constabulary's PDR system, thinking that it was not worthwhile. They felt this to be a worrying statement and asked whether the Constabulary were challenging it with the HMIC. The Detective Chief Superintendent advised that he was not aware of the basis on which the statement had been made but indicated that he, personally, considered the PDR system to be both worthwhile and beneficial and that it represented an acceptable way for the Constabulary to ensure that Force priorities and those of individuals were aligned. He undertook to ensure that the issue was brought back to the Committee in due course.

Members also referred to the view of the HMIC that the Authority had to adopt a more challenging role in relation to the Constabulary's training function and that it was important for the Authority to respond to that comment. It was noted that the Authority now had two Lead Members for training and that they were having regular meetings with the Force Training Manager. The importance of documenting the Authority's involvement to ensure that it was recorded for future Baseline Assessments was stressed.

Finally, Members suggested that it might be appropriate for the Constabulary to contact those smaller Forces which had received a "good" assessment for their training function and ascertain what they were doing to achieve such an award. Separately, the Authority could then approach their police authorities to see what role they were undertaking in the process.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

22. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride presented a report by the Chief Constable that provided an update on the position and progress of health and safety matters within the Constabulary.

Members were pleased to note that the Constabulary had appointed a new Health and Safety Adviser with effect from 29 August 2006.

The Clerk/Chief Executive reminded Members that the Authority had an oversight duty with regard to health and safety matters. This meant that the Authority had a role in ensuring that appropriate health and safety measures were in place within the Constabulary and it was important that the Authority could satisfy itself that this was so. It was important to note, however, that there was no legal duty of care on the Police Authority for Constabulary staff.

The Detective Chief Superintendent advised Members that health and safety was an area that had a high priority within the Constabulary, and the priority afforded it was always increasing. Chief Officers were fully aware of the need to have appropriate resources and processes in place. The Constabulary's relationship with the Health and Safety Executive was good.

Members suggested that it would be appropriate for the Committee to receive an annual overview report on health and safety matters within the Constabulary. The Detective Chief Superintendent advised that he would arrange for such a report to be submitted to the Committee on an annual basis.

Members also noted that there was to be an HSE inspection of the West BCU commencing in early November and they suggested that it would be helpful for the outcome to be reported to the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) an overview report of health and safety within the Constabulary be submitted to the Committee on an annual basis.

23. EQUALITY LEGISLATION UPDATE: THE CONSTABULARY RESPONSE

The Detective Chief Superintendent presented a report by the Chief Constable which outlined the recent and future changes to equality legislation and the actions the Constabulary were taking in the light of those changes. The report also provided an update on the development of Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) across the Constabulary's area.

Members welcomed the report and asked for details of the membership of the IAGs. The Detective Chief Superintendent undertook to circulate IAG membership details to Members.

The Clerk/Chief Executive reminded Members that the legislation referred to in the report had implications for the Police Authority as an independent body in its own right. He updated Members on work being undertaken by the Authority to meet its responsibilities, including some joint working by the five police authorities in the

North West. Complying with the requirements represented a significant challenge and a considerable amount of additional work for the Authority's restricted staffing.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

24. PROMOTION PROCESS – CONSTABLE TO SERGEANT AND SERGEANT TO INSPECTOR

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride presented a report which provided Members with an update on the outcome from the Constable to Sergeant promotion process conducted in South Cumbria in July 2006, when of the 12 officers who attended the process 6 were successful. The report also detailed the need to identify appropriate Sergeants suitable to undertake the substantive Inspector roles that would be identified in the coming 12 months. Members were asked to note that the Wakefield process was no longer available to the Constabulary.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

25. RECRUITMENT OF POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSOs)

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride presented a report by the Chief Constable which provided Members with an update in relation to the recruitment of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the current targets for the Constabulary.

Members referred to the recent Baseline Assessment, which had highlighted the issue of managing and supervising PCSOs. Members also referred to the question of sickness levels amongst PCSOs, which had been the subject of a report to a previous meeting of the Committee. In noting that the Constabulary was intending to recruit an additional 93 PCSOs by the end of April 2007, Members raised the issue of the Constabulary's capacity to both train and supervise these new recruits.

The Detective Chief Superintendent acknowledged that the recruitment programme for PCSOs was more ambitious than that embarked upon for LPTs in 2003. He assured Members that appropriate processes would be in place within the Constabulary but undertook to take this matter to the LPT Board with a request that a paper on resource allocation be submitted to the Committee.

Members then referred to the issues of longer term funding for PCSOs and how their role would contribute to addressing the protective services gap recently identified by the Home Office. Members asked that in the report the Detective Chief Superintendent had indicated would be submitted to the next meeting, it would be appropriate to include information on the way in which BCUs would undertake the management and supervision of the new PCSOs it was anticipated would be appointed by April 2007, including how practical issues such as accommodation would be handled.

RESOLVED, that

(1) the report be noted; and

- (2) a further detailed report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

26. DRAFT MISCONDUCT AND UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES

The Clerk/Chief Executive presented a report, the purpose of which was to enable Members to comment on draft procedures for misconduct and unsatisfactory performance developed by the Police Advisory Board of England and Wales.

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride advised that he did not anticipate that the drafts which were now before Members would be changed significantly before the anticipated implementation date of July 2007. He advised that that key issues in the introduction of these procedures would be achieving consistency, both locally and nationally; ensuring parity for all those covered by the procedures; and training managers on managing performance, capability and other such issues. In addition, whilst efforts were being made to ensure that the system was less bureaucratic than at present, this was still something which had to be achieved in practice.

Members indicated their support for the proposed procedures, noting that they were broadly in line with those in place for both local government and the civil service.

RESOLVED, that the comments made by Members be noted.

27. PNB UPDATE

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride reported that negotiations at the PNB had broken down and the matter had now been referred to arbitration. The outcome would be reported in due course.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

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

28. POLICE STAFF DISCIPLINE

The Detective Chief Superintendent presented a report that informed Members of police staff disciplinary activity between 21 June and 20 September 2006.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

29. GRIEVANCES

Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride presented a report by the Chief Constable. The report detailed the number of grievances lodged in the current financial year and compared this information with those lodged in the previous two financial years. He advised Members that incidents of bullying were now dealt with

under the Constabulary's Bullying Policy, rather than the Grievance Procedure, and details were therefore no longer included within the report.

Members noted that, whilst the numbers were small, there were more reported grievances in West Cumbria than in the other two BCUs. The Detective Chief Superintendent advised that this matter had been addressed by the Professional Standards Department.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

(NOTE: Detective Chief Superintendent Kirkbride and Sergeant Mason left the meeting at this point)

30. COURSE FEES

The Clerk/Chief Executive presented a report which asked the Committee to consider and come to a view on whether or not to recover course fees paid to a former member of Police Authority staff.

After due consideration of the issues set out in the report and reported by the Clerk/Chief Executive, it was –

RESOLVED, that, in line with authority policy, the officer in question be required to repay 100% of the course fees paid to date by the Authority.

31. BUSINESS INTEREST POLICY

The Clerk/Chief Executive presented a report which asked Members to consider an application made under the Authority's Business Interest Policy.

RESOLVED, that the application be approved.

32. POLICE APPEALS TRIBUNAL

The Clerk/Chief Executive reported to Members on a request received from a former Police Sergeant, who had been required to resign from the Constabulary in July 2006. The request was for an extension of the 21 day period for the submission of an appeal to a Police Appeals Tribunal. The letter of request from the former Sergeant's solicitors had been received by the Authority on 28 September 2006. A decision had to be taken at the meeting on whether to grant an extension to the 21 day period for submission of an appeal, as the 21 day period expired on 6 October 2006.

Members gave careful consideration to the report submitted by the Clerk/Chief Executive and the advice given by the officer at the meeting.

RESOLVED, that an extension to the 21 day period for the submission of an appeal to a Police Appeals Tribunal be not granted.

The Meeting ended at 12.12pm