

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority HR Committee
27 January 2009
Open for the purposes of FOI
Report of Director of Human Resources

Restructuring of the HR function

Recommendation(s):

- (i) For members to note the current position and consider any further action required at this time.

Introduction

1. A number of previous reports to the Committee have referred to the requirement to restructure the HR function of the Force. This report provides a position statement on that requirement.

Background information

2. As described in a number of previous reports to the Committee, there are a number of factors leading to the need to restructure the HR function of the Force. These include:
 - HMIC inspection conclusions of the need for the function to significantly improve
 - the general modernisation of existing arrangements, processes and practices
 - the need to reflect the people management requirements of the force to achieve the 2012 vision of becoming a top performing force, and
 - the need to contribute to the reduction in the number of police staff posts.
3. The report to the Committee on 19 September 2007 on the 'Key Issues Facing Human Resources in the Force' set out a number of objectives in reviewing the existing organisational structure of the HR function:
 - Greater consistency in the application of HR policies throughout the force
 - Line managers recognising and accepting their responsibilities for the management of staff and the role that HR plays in supporting them
 - An effective and valued HR function to support line managers and officers and staff
 - Greater efficiency in the delivery of central and local HR activities including exploration of collaboration and 'shared services'.
4. Work has taken place on each of these areas within the existing HR structure but the position has been reached that further improvement is reliant on a more substantial restructuring of the function. Developments in the collaboration and shared services field continue and will, if introduced, have structural implications in the longer term. In the shorter term, in-house restructuring is currently being planned to deliver a number of smarter processes leading to the required staffing reductions across the function as part of the initial phase of the Corporate Services Transformation (CST) project.

5. Once confirmed, as these changes are introduced, planning will take place on the subsequent phases of the CST project, which will provide the more substantial improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the HR function and the broader people management arrangements in the force. A separate report is provided to the meeting on the CST project.
6. Fuller details of the restructuring model will be provided when the current planning exercise has been completed towards the end of January. The approach being adopted to the restructuring is following latest good practice (and has been adopted in various forms by other forces and organisations) around what is often described as the 'HR business partner' model, which involves:
 - HR advisors or business partners to support local management
 - Automated administration and workflow processes
 - Centralised processes for economy of scale/consistency/control
 - Advice line for staff and managers
 - Central expert points of reference
 - Strategic HR management and policy.
7. An additional factor for the restructuring of the HR function is the organisational need to achieve a closer integration with other corporate service functions especially Finance and Resources.
8. Not all these elements can be introduced in the first phase, or all at the same time. A fundamental requirement is the transference of line management activity to line managers. This is in accord with their existing roles but has not been commonly practised by the force. A clear requirement therefore is to prepare line managers for this important part of their role.
9. Subject to the more detailed planning, the timetable for introducing the first round of restructuring is broadly:
 - End January – outline plans completed and agreed
 - February – detailed plans prepared for sequencing and preparation
 - End March – first changes introduced (likely to involve local HR units and a number of central functions)
 - End June – second round of changes introduced (local HR units, central functions, co-ordination with Finance and Resources function)
 - End September – final changes of first round (including the more substantial process and system changes).
10. Work continues on the restructuring on a number of fronts, including the detail of the first round of changes and the longer term restructuring resulting from the subsequent phases of the CST project. Further reports on the restructuring of the HR function will be provided at appropriate points or as requested.

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