

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES of a meeting of the **Devon and Cornwall Police Authority** held at Police Headquarters, Middlemoor, Exeter on **Friday 5 May 2006**.

Present:

Mr M I R Bull, Mr C Bulley, Mr J Currie, Mr I P A Doggett, Mr G Hicks, Mr M Hicks, Mr B C Greenslade, Mrs A Malcolm, Mr S M Malloni, Mr D Money, Mrs J Owen, Mr B Preston, Mrs A Talbot, Mr W D Thomas, and Mr C L Wallin.

P/1136 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Mr David Money was elected Chairman.

P/1137 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mr John Smith was elected Vice-Chairman.

P/1138 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Sir Simon Day, Mr T Evans and Mr John Smith.

P/1139 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman welcomed Mr Martin Harvey, Independent Member and Chairman of the Standards Committee. Mr Harvey was present at the meeting to give his briefing of the Standards Committee held on 25 April.

The Chairman also welcomed Becky Pollard, student of Plymouth College of Further Education to the meeting.

The Chairman announced that there was a need to consider part of the Resources Committee briefing in Part II.

P/1140 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

P/1141 ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

P/1142 OPEN MINUTES

The open minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2006 were signed as a correct record subject to one alteration as follows:

P/1126 Reports of Committees [PC/175] Attestations – Mr William Thomas had officiated at a recent attestation ceremony.

P/1143 CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

Deaths of Serving Members

It was with regret that Mrs Wallis reported the following deaths.

Chief Inspector Graham Bird was born on 30 September 1965 and joined the Constabulary in 1987. He served at Barnstaple and Exeter as a Patrol Constable, was promoted to Sergeant in 1995 at Crownhill, promoted to Inspector in 2000 where he worked within Custody and in February 2005 he was promoted to Chief Inspector. Most recently he held the post of Chief Inspector for Mid and East Devon.

Detective Constable Colin Fairbrother died in March following a courageous battle against cancer. Born in 1959, he joined the Constabulary in 1990 and during his career had served in Honiton, Exeter, Exmouth and HQ in patrol, and also held detective and Special Branch officer roles. Colin had helped to provide solace to families of victims of the Tsunami disaster in Thailand in 2005 during a secondment there and he was very proud of his achievements during that time.

Police Staff Delma Hawkey was born in October 1946 and originally joined the Constabulary as a shorthand typist in Truro in 1971. Postings in Newquay and Truro followed - her most recent post being that of administrative assistant in Newquay. Della's husband collected a posthumous long service award on her behalf at a Constabulary ceremony held on 26 April 2006.

Police Staff William Tate died on 3 April shortly after being diagnosed with cancer. Born in 1953, he joined the Constabulary in 1990 as a motorcycle traffic warden in Exeter. Most recently, he was stationed at Heavitree Road Police Station and held the post of Station Enquiry Officer.

Sergeant Paul Hutchinson died on 27 April following a road traffic collision whilst travelling to work. Born in 1969, Paul joined the Constabulary in 1996 serving as a Patrol Constable in Exeter, Ottery St Mary and Sidmouth. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2003 and served in Exeter Custody Unit before being posted as Neighbourhood Team Sergeant at Exmouth in 2005.

Members considered the report of the Chief Constable and were updated on a number of incidents noted in the report.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

Major Incidents and Policing Diary

The Major Crime Investigation Team – a team of 80 detectives specifically charged with dealing with major incidents and agreed by the Police Authority last year - was proving very successful. To date, it had not been necessary to extract any detectives from within BCUs to assist with these incidents.

Assaults on Police

There had been a slight increase in the number of assaults on police.

P/1143 CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT (CONT'D..)

Firearms

Incidents resulting in the deployment of armed officers had increased this year compared with last year, however last year had shown a reduction in numbers of this type of incident.

The two men charged with possession of a firearms without a certificate (at 1.26) had now been convicted and were awaiting sentencing.

There had been an incident involving a samurai sword in Tiverton on the morning of the meeting which had resulted in the deployment of armed officers.

Successes and Challenges – update

Police officer strength as at 31 March 2006 was 3517.2. This was a great achievement and the result of a 4 year programme of recruitment. The number of police staff was currently 2172.6, a modest increase on last year.

Members considered the figures for call handling performance. The problem of antisocial behaviour was also raised. Issues discussed during consideration of these topics included:

- The average wait for a call to the police switchboard to be answered was currently 5 seconds.
- Call handling was a subject that was raised regularly at Police Authority Liaison Meetings. Whilst it was accepted that the initial call was answered relatively quickly, people invariably complain about the length of time that they were subsequently put on hold for. The Police Authority and Constabulary are aware of this problem and more resources are being allocated to the Force Enquiry Centre to address it.
- Antisocial behaviour was a common complaint raised at Police Authority Liaison Meetings. The planned increase in Police Community Support Officers and use of restorative policing by Neighbourhood Beat Managers should help to address this type of criminality within communities.
- The Pathfinder pilot in Slade Valley, Ilfracombe had been very successful and good practice resulting from the pilot had been fed back to the National Team to form part of the National Standards for neighbourhood policing due for publication in March 2008.
- It was felt important that experienced and skilled Neighbourhood Beat Managers stay in post for as long as possible. The tenure for Neighbourhood Beat Managers is a minimum of 2 years.

Personnel

Members considered the personnel snapshot as at 31 March 2006.

Spotlight on Success

Members considered the letters of appreciated received by the Constabulary.

Assets to be recovered for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006

The amount that the Constabulary expected to recover from criminal activity during 2005 - as ordered by the Courts - totalled £911,953.01. The Constabulary had not yet received the entire amount.

RESOLVED to note the report.

P/1144 REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES

The Authority received reports of the Committee meetings that had taken place since the last meeting of the Authority.

1. A meeting of the **Corporate Governance Committee** was held on 22 March 2006.
Members noted the items discussed by the committee.
The Committee had considered forty-two topic areas for audits during 2006/07.
2. Meetings of the **Human Resources Committee** were held on 30 March and 12 April 2006.
Members noted the items discussed by the committee.
One of the key issues for the committee was the long term sickness profile. It was noted that sickness absence is being monitored closely and in addition that staff welfare is a priority for the Constabulary.
3. A Meeting of the **Planning and Consultation Committee** was held on 5 April 2006.
Members noted the items discussed by the committee.
4. A meeting of the **Performance Management Committee** was held on the 28 March 2006.
Members noted the items discussed by the Committee.
One of the key issues for the committee was user satisfaction and it was pleasing to note that the Constabulary Performance Enabling Practitioners Group was working on this issue.
The committee was impressed with the work of the Domestic Violence Unit in Plymouth and it is hoped that this can be replicated throughout the Constabulary.
5. A meeting of the **Professional Standards and Complaints Monitoring Group** was held on 26 April 2006.
Members noted the items discussed by the Group.
6. A meeting of the **Resources Committee** was held on 27 April 2006.
Members noted the items discussed by the Committee.
7. Members noted the decisions taken by the **Urgency Committee** since the last meeting of the Authority.
8. A meeting of the **Standards Committee** was held on 25 April 2006.
Members noted the items discussed by the Committee.

Attention was drawn to the need to expand membership of the committee. There was a substantive item later on the agenda for Members' consideration.

P/1145 STANDARDS COMMITTEE – COMPOSITION

At its meeting on 7 October 2005 the Standards Committee considered the approval of a Hearings Procedure and as part of their consideration discussed the composition of the panels to conduct hearings which would be drawn from the Standards Committee. This led to an agreement that the size of the Standards Committee at present may cause difficulty in convening a Hearing Panel with appropriate membership and that consideration should be given to increasing the size of the Committee.

It was recommended that membership comprise three independent members being appointed to the Standards Committee along with four Members of the Police Authority of which at least one person from each of the membership groups represented on the Authority. The Committee was currently carrying one vacancy following the end of term of office of Mr Mike Nevitt JP. Expressions of interest for membership to the Committee were received from Mr Carl Wallin JP (as a potential replacement for Mr M Nevitt), Cllr Mike Hicks and Cllr Bryan Preston. It was agreed that the person retained on the "reserve list" to be appointed should a vacancy occur before 31 December 2006 (Minute P/1115 refers) be officially appointed to the committee.

RESOLVED

1. that the composition of the Standards Committee be increased to 7 people (recommendation from the Standards Committee on 7 October 2005)
2. that the 7 members comprise 3 Independent Members and 4 Members of the Police Authority, which will include at least 1 person from each of the membership groups represented on the Authority.
3. It was confirmed that Mrs Jean Rossi (see minute P/1115) would be appointed for a fixed term of 4 years from 1 June 2006 as the third independent member along with Mr Martin Harvey and Mrs Anne Mayes.

P/1146 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

RESOLVED that the chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee receives an additional allowance of £2132.10.

P/1147 SPECIAL PRIORITY PAYMENTS 2006-07

Following consultation with the BCU Commanders and Departmental Heads, the qualifying roles for the Force's Special Priority Payment Scheme for 2006/07 were agreed at the Force Executive Board on 10th October 2005.

The decision had been taken to approach the Home Office with a request to increase the mandatory 40% ceiling for the number of officers eligible for a payment to 43% of the Force's strength which represents the absolute maximum that the Home Office would allow in any financial year.

Members considered the two models which outlined the qualifying posts allowing for an increase to 43% as well as a contingency at the 40% level should the Home Office decline the request.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Business cases for retention or removal of posts from the scheme had been discussed at length and relevant staff associations had been involved in these discussions.

P/1147 SPECIAL PRIORITY PAYMENTS 2006-07 (CONT'D...)

Mr J Currie requested that he be recorded as voting against this decision.

RESOLVED to accept the proposed Special Priority Payment Scheme for 2006/07 accepting that the 40% model will need to be implemented if the Home Office did not approve an increase to 43%.

P/1148 RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT

Members considered the Race Equality Scheme annual report which highlighted the achievements made by the Police Authority in relation to the duty laid out under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Police Authority had oversight of Race Equality issues within the Constabulary through their committee structure.
- There was an increasing trend where the ethnicity of offenders was unknown and Officers were uncomfortable about asking for details of ethnicity.
- Members requested sight of the Performance Management Review results when available.
- Due to a change in membership of the Cornwall Race Equality Council it was requested that another invitation to sit on the Race Independent Advisory Group be sent to them.
- Members requested details of the current membership of the Race Independent Advisory Group.

RESOLVED to note the report.

P/1149 DEVON AND CORNWALL CONSTABULARY HUMAN RESOURCES 3 YEAR STRATEGY AND BUSINESS PLAN 2006-2009

Members considered the draft Human Resources Strategy for 2006-09.

The draft Strategy had been thoroughly scrutinised and approved at both the Force Executive Committee and the Police Authority Human Resources Committee.

The three key themes and objectives of the strategy were to create leaders, improve standards and increase citizen and customer focus.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Members were pleased to see this document in light of the 2005 HMIC assessment of Human Resources.
- The document was dynamic and would continually improve.
- Police Authority scrutiny and monitoring of achievements against objectives was important.

RESOLVED to approve the Human Resources 3 Year Strategy and Business Plan 2006-09.

P/1150 FORCE ANNUAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS PLAN

The Head of Learning and Development had developed an annual Learning and Development Business Plan, a Learning and Development Strategy and a summary of the Costed Training Plan for the Authority's approval. The plan comprised two key documents, the structure of which followed strict Home Office guidelines and aimed to capture all training delivered by or on behalf of the Constabulary.

A working group, which included membership from the Police Authority, had scrutinised the plans thoroughly and the Force Executive Committee and Police Authority Human Resources Committee had also approved them.

A costed improvement plan would follow and would require further scrutiny.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Police Authority scrutiny and monitoring of achievements against objectives was important. A decision about which committee was best suited to take on this role would be taken in due course.
- It was pleasing to note that probationer constables were to get involved with communities as part of their training.
- Multi-agency training to improve citizen focus would be utilised in the future.

The Head of Learning and Development, Annie Broadbent, gave special thanks to the work done by the whole IPLDP team but particularly Sgt Steve Shelton, the IPLDP Project Manager and Jennie Johnson, the Community Engagement Manager.

RESOLVED that the annual learning and development business plan, the learning and development strategy and the summary of the costed training plan be approved.

P/1151 RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE DEVON AND CORNWALL CONSTABULARY

Members considered the Joint Integrated Risk Management Strategy and the integrated Risk Management Policy.

The risk management process was fully supported by Officers from the Authority who sat on the relevant groups within the governance chain (Force Risk Management Panel and the Force Risk Review Group). The Joint Strategy and respective Policy had been approved by the Force Risk Management Panel and, where possible, by the Force Executive Board. The Strategy was written as a joint document, inasmuch as it could be applied to either the Authority or the Constabulary. It had been supported by the Corporate Governance Committee and consequently was now presented to the Authority for approval. The Policy document was primarily intended for use with the Constabulary and therefore only required members to note its content.

RESOLVED

1. to approve the new Joint Integrated Risk Management Strategy of the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary and the Authority.
2. to approve the new Integrated Risk Management Policy for the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary.

P/1152 ARSON TASK FORCE

Government funding for the Arson Task Force had ceased in 31 March 2006 and the decision had been taken to disband the group. Arson Task Forces were originally set up to reduce deliberately set fires by 10% by 2010. The Arson Task Force was on target in this respect and following the decision to disband, good practice had been disseminated appropriately so that work to control and reduce deliberately set fires continued within the police and fire services, and also within other partner agencies.

RESOLVED to note the report.

P/1153 POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETINGS

Members noted the meetings held since the last meeting of the Police Authority.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- There had been some lively discussions at Police Authority Liaison meetings held recently; retired members of the police force were particularly keen to contribute.
- It was considered important that Chairmen of Police Authority Liaison meetings ensured that appropriate Council Officers attended their meetings to answer questions raised that were within their area of responsibility.
- The Police Authority welcomed comments and feedback from Neighbourhood Watch representatives at Liaison Meetings.
- Presentations on road safety and antisocial behaviour orders had been well received by the public.
- Antisocial behaviour issues, call handling and the police precept were issues commonly raised at the meetings.

RESOLVED to note the report.

P/1154 Closed Items - Exclusion Of The Press And Public

RESOLVED that the items detailed in the table below be considered as closed items:

Minute Number	Report Title	Relevant Act	Relevant section
P/1155	Closed minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2006	Freedom of Information Act	i. Section 43 - Commercial Interest (2) Prejudice the commercial interests of any person including the public authority holding it. ii. Section 22 – Information intended for future publication. iii. Section 43 - Commercial Interest (2) Prejudice the commercial interests of any person including the public authority holding it.

P/1156	Provision of Police Station in Devonport	Freedom of Information Act	Section 43.2 Commercial Interest (2) Prejudice the commercial interests of any person including the public authority holding it.
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P/1155 CLOSED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2006

The closed minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2006 were signed as a correct record.

P/1156 PROVISION OF POLICE STATION IN DEVONPORT

The Authority considered the provision of a new Type II Police Station for Devonport. Public consultation included a Police Authority Liaison Meeting held in Plymouth recently (26 April 2006).

It was necessary to formally waive Standing Orders for this particular proposal. Members were fully briefed, and formally agreed to, this course of action.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Standing Orders in relation to tenders and contracts.
- The Authority's involvement in the design and tender process, and future reporting procedures as the scheme progresses.

RESOLVED

1. to suspend Standing Orders in terms of the contract for the development of the Police Station in Devonport;
2. that the Heads of Terms as presented in the Report to the Resources Committee on 27 April 2006 are agreed;
3. that the Estates Department be instructed to formalise the legal position and acquire the site indicated in the Report as presented to the Resources Committee on 27 April 2006.

The meeting closed at 13:00hrs.