

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES of a meeting of the **Devon and Cornwall Police Authority** held at Police Headquarters, Middlemoor, Exeter on **Friday 18 February 2005**.

Present:

Mrs J Owen (Chairman), Mr D Money (Vice Chairman)
Mr L D Brokenshire, Mr M I R Bull, Mr C Bulley, Sir Simon Day, Mr I P A Doggett, Mr M Hicks, Mr B C Greenslade, Mr S M Malloni, Mr M Nevitt, Mrs C J Ryan, Mr J Smith, Mrs A Talbot, Mr W D Thomas, Mr P Tregunna and Mr C L Wallin.

P/1005 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ms N Dendy.

P/1006 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

P/1007 ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

An additional item for part II was declared. There was a need to apprise Members on the ICT Managed Services tender.

P/1008 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2004 were signed as a correct record, subject to a minor alteration.

P/1009 MATTERS ARISING

[P/990] The constabulary had achieved a 'green traffic light' on its achievement of the National Crime Recording Standard. Members would be kept informed of any subsequent benefits in relation to future lighter audits following this achievement.

P/1010 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET REPORT 2005-06

Members considered a report setting out the key issues relating to the budget for 2005-06. Members were required to determine the revenue budget requirement, capital programme and council tax levels for 2005-06, along with the associated financing issues. A budget booklet setting out much of the detail and the medium term financial forecasts was presented for consideration.

Members were assured that Devon and Cornwall was well below the police authority average in terms of spending per head, council tax levels and number of police officers. The main thrust of the budget proposal was to maintain current services and to invest in 100 more front line police officers in order to improve policing and to achieve set targets. It was recognised that any proposals contained within the budget needed to be sustainable.

The Police Authority had consulted with the communities of Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by way of surveys and public meetings. 8000 households and 8000 businesses had been consulted by questionnaire. The results of the survey had shown a high level of support for extra police officers (93%) with over 90% wanting policing services to be maintained or even enhanced even if it would cost more than an inflation increase on the council tax. Public

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meetings had also been held throughout the two counties and on the Isles of Scilly where views had been mixed but overall had shown a groundswell of support for extra policing.

P/1010 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET REPORT 2005-06 (Cont'd..)

The government grant increase of 3.75% for Devon and Cornwall was higher than expected, but was the lowest increase in the country. The national settlement did not provide for any extra officers nor did it provide sufficient resources to cover inflation and existing commitments.

The police element of the Council Tax was very small in comparison with the total and the increases being considered would amount to only some 10 – 13 pence a week per average household.

The budget involved savings and resource redirection of some £5.4m. Finding yet more savings would be difficult. Nevertheless, more savings would need to be found to ensure that council tax was kept down and front line policing was delivered. The proposed budget assumed further savings of £5.3m with more in 2006/07.

There had been significant pressure on the major operations budget in the current and previous financial year. There was insufficient evidence as yet to suggest whether this growth would continue or how responsive it would be to management action. The major operations budget for 2005-06 had only been increased by inflation however reserves had been built up as part of the financial strategy of the Authority and this would allow a degree of flexibility to contribute a measured amount from reserves to support the revenue budget if required.

The capping rules had yet to be set by Government however it had been indicated that an average council tax increase of less than 5% was required. The Police Authority had consulted with all the local Authorities in Devon and Cornwall and had received support for the budget proposal. Based on this consultation, it seemed likely that the overall council tax increase in Devon and Cornwall would fall below the 5%.

In summary, the proposed budget

- gave the potential to put around 100 extra officers on the street
- met most of the known commitments and obligations
- made a modest provision for inflation
- took advantage of the Government's more relaxed rules on capital spending
- delivered significant savings and redirection of resources
- took a prudent but not excessive view on reserves and balances
- moderated increases in council tax

There had been considerable Member involvement in both the budget setting process prior to this meeting and also budget monitoring throughout the year.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The average number of police officers per head of population was significantly below average. It was not possible to match the national average however it was felt important to achieve the target number of 3500 police officers.
- There were concerns about the ability of local people to pay extra, particularly those on low or fixed incomes even though the police element was only a small part of the council tax. However, there was public support for additional police officers and the illustrative budget delivered 100 extra officers at an additional cost of less than 2p a day for the average household. This still left Devon and Cornwall police council tax as the lowest in the Southwest.

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- The implementation of Neighbourhood Policing was welcomed by Members, and had received positive feedback from the communities in Devon and Cornwall. Other recent achievements included use of Restorative Policing and improvements to call handling.
- It was an achievement that substantial savings had been made against a background of high service delivery in the face of unprecedented levels of major crime.

P/1010 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET REPORT 2005-06 (Cont'd...)

- There was a need for caution in relation to the threat of capping, however it was considered that the Authority had managed the 2004-05 budget extremely well and had prepared a deliverable and defensible budget for 2005-06.

The Chief Constable provided Members with a summary of successes during the last financial year, which included the implementation of the Neighbourhood Beat Policing Model and Restorative Policing. Critical incidents had risen in 2004-05 yet the Constabulary had coped well.

The Constabulary's performance against the policing targets for 2004-05 was good. In particular, burglary, vehicle crime and Road Traffic incidents had decreased. Performance in call handling and sickness had improved and the number of medical retirements had decreased.

It was important to have visible front line police officers. The additional officers would be allocated to posts which would prevent Neighbourhood Beat Managers being withdrawn from their posts. The focus would be on how police officers could be used to best effect.

The budget proposal was circulated. It was proposed that the budget requirement for 2005-06 be £243,711,293. This equated to a 4.5% increase on budget spend and a 5.49% council tax increase. The proposed budget would enable the Authority to achieve and sustain the target 3500 police officers but would require significant savings in 2006/07.

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority has a duty to ensure that the Force has the resources to provide the citizens of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly with an effective policing service. The Police Authority is committed to increasing the number of officers on the street. That is what the public want and the recent consultation process has shown that most people are prepared to pay a little extra to help meet these aspirations.

RESOLVED that

- i. The prospects of achieving the Authority's strategy of having 3,500 police officers in post and the consequential potential performance improvements be welcomed with a budget which delivers the capacity for 100 extra officers in 2005/06;
- ii. The results of the recent consultation exercise showing public support for additional policing even if this means a small cash increase in council tax be noted with the acknowledgement that such public support brings the responsibility to continue delivering service improvements and build on the improvements of the last year;
- iii. Thanks be extended to the Force and key finance staff for their efforts to deliver yet more significant savings which have helped reduce the impact on council tax, to moderate operational requirements and to demonstrate restraint especially in the aftermath of the recent spate of major incidents;

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- iv. The option to moderate the increase in contributions to police staff pensions by stepping contribution increases over 6 years be agreed to help reduce the impact on the council tax in the short term;
- v. That it be noted that the illustrative budget already includes a contribution of £1m from reserves to keep council tax down. In addition, a further £689,000 of reserves be used next year and, if possible, over the medium term strategy to help limit increases in council tax;

P/1010 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET REPORT 2005-06 (Cont'd..)

- vi. The budget requirement for 2005/06 (as calculated in accordance with Section 43(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992) be £243,711,293;
- vii. Subject to this and the figure for use of reserves, the budget amounts, provisions, reserves, balances and financing adjustments be approved as in the illustrative budget booklet;
- viii. The council tax for each of the eight property bands and the precepts on the billing authorities for 2005/06 be approved as in the attached sheets (pages 10 and 11)
- ix. The Treasurer's comments on the robustness of the budget estimates, the adequacy of balances and reserves and issues of risk be noted;
- x. The potential outcomes of the medium term financial plan be supported, including the number of officers, the treatment of provisions, balances and reserves and that future revenue spending commitments and the implications for subsequent years be noted;
- xi. The capital programme and funding for 2005/06 be approved as in the illustrative budget booklet;
- xii. The prudential indicators, including borrowing limits, in the Appendix to the budget report be approved with monitoring being delegated to the Resources Committee;
- xiii. The need for significant future savings be acknowledged and work begin immediately as a partnership between Force and Authority to monitor the savings currently identified and to identify new savings for 2006/07 and beyond.

P/1011 POLICE AUTHORITY ANNUAL POLICING PLAN 2005-06, POLICE AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-08

Members considered the final draft texts for the Police Authority Annual Policing Plan 2005-06 and Police Authority Strategic plan 2005-08. The draft documents complied with the National Policing Plan 2005-08, the Home Office Strategic Plan 2004-08 and the Statutory Best Value and Planning Guidance 2003.

It was proposed to publish both plans as web-based documents again this year. Requests for hard copy versions during 2004 had been minimal and the web format allowed easier updating and was cost effective.

The possibility of producing a summary of the Annual Policing Plan to highlight targets, priorities and key performance figures had been discussed and Members were asked to decide on this option.

The objectives and targets for 2005-06 included in the Annual Policing Plan were also considered.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The need for the police to engage with partners earlier than 2008 in relation to 'Safeguarding our Children' because Devon had the only pathfinder children's trust in the South West Region. It was requested that this fact be reflected in the plan.
- The format of the plans was considered much improved on last year.

Corrections to errors identified by Members would be made prior to publication and included minor alterations required to local priorities.

P/1011 POLICE AUTHORITY ANNUAL POLICING PLAN 2005-06, POLICE AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-08 (Cont'd..)

RESOLVED

- i. to approve the performance targets for 2005-2006 and formally sign off each plan.
- ii. to approve the option of a hard copy summary of the Annual Policing Plan, for publication in June.
- iii. that the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Planning and Consultation would agree the final amendments to the documents.

P/1012 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2005-06

As part of the approved Treasury Management Policy, the Treasurer presented a Treasury Management Strategy to Members for 2005-06.

Government guidance required an Annual Investment Strategy to be prepared before the beginning of the year and this needed to be agreed by the Authority. A section on investments was included in the Strategy to fulfil the requirement and this was presented to Members for consideration. Although it was expected that the Authority's surplus cash would fall during the year it was still considered viable to retain the services of the two fund managers. Ongoing services would depend on them achieving satisfactory returns.

Devon County Council was responsible for the day to day cash flow on behalf of the Authority. Cash levels varied daily, and on occasion there was the potential for short term investment or the need for short term borrowing. Members were advised that an opportunity for the Authority to invest funds directly with a UK bank or building society in the form of a specified investment at a fixed rate of interest may arise. It was proposed that the Treasurer, with prior agreement of the Chair of the Police Authority, be allowed to undertake such investments if he considered it advantageous to the Authority.

It was recommended that the fund managers be allowed to trade in supranational bonds subject to this being within the 30% limit for non-specified investments and that the Treasurer be advised in advance of any investments being made. It was also recommended that the maximum percentage of the portfolio that the fund managers could invest with any one institution be increased from 10% to 15%.

The proposed capital programme and associated funding included some £6 m of borrowing which incorporated £2 m potentially deferred from 2004-05. The borrowing would be undertaken during the year with due regard to current interest rates and progress on spending. Members were assured that the Authority's current borrowing was significantly lower than agreed limits.

The report included a note that a new three year contract for banking services with Barclays had been agreed from 1 April 2004.

RESOLVED

That the Treasury Management Strategy be approved, specifically in relation to :

- i. retaining the services of Investec and Morley to invest surplus funds on behalf of the Police Authority, subject to satisfactory performance;
- ii. retaining the services of Devon County Council to provide day to day cash management on behalf of the Police Authority;
- iii. allowing the Treasurer the flexibility to invest funds directly if this is to the advantage of the Police Authority, in consultation with the Chair of the Police Authority;
- iv. dealing in specified and non specified investments, within the parameters as defined in the strategy;

P/1012 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2005-06 (Cont'd..)

- v. undertaking long term borrowing in line with the approved capital programme and associated funding;
- vi. noting the use of Barclays as the Authority's bankers.

P/1013 CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

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

Mrs Wallis introduced Paul Hutton to members. Mr Hutton had recently filled the Head of Corporate Communications position with the Constabulary. Mr Hutton had taken the lead in the production of the Bill Board Magazine.

Major Incidents and Policing Diary

1.1 – 1.7 Members were updated in relation to the murders that had occurred in Ilfracombe, Newquay and Brixham.

1.10 – 1.12 Of particular note was the arrest of a female in possession of a loaded firearm by unarmed police officers.

1.13 There had been 15 fatal RTCs since the last meeting. Fatal RTCs were classed as major operations and therefore had significant resource implications.

1.21 – 1.22 Female located in River Otter and attempted drowning in Torbay - The Force helicopter had proved vital in dealing successfully with both of these incidents.

1.26 Hunting with hounds – The constabulary had published its policy for dealing with offences against the Hunting Act. The policy had been drawn up in consultation with the CSA, the RSPCA and the League Against Cruel Sports. The Act was a complex document and was anticipated to take some time to bed in. The Constabulary was adamant that Neighbourhood Policing Strategy would not be derailed by the Act.

Court Successes

1.42 Two men had received 10 year jail sentences for the kidnap of a Devon woman.

1.43 The killer of Alicia Eborne had received a 20 year jail sentence – 8 years more than the typical life sentence of 12 years.

1.45 A prolific burglar had been found guilty at Exeter Crown Court in January. He was found to have raided more than 100 homes.

Operational Priorities

2.3 Devon and Cornwall Criminal Justice Board had launched a multi-agency campaign to target defendants who skip bail.

2.6 In addition to Inspector Trethewey's meeting with the Prime Minister, Supt Rob Cooper had also visited to discuss the quality of service pilot in Plymouth and this had been very well received.

2.7 A small number of police officers had been deployed with the recovery operation following the Tsunami disaster. Deployment was to posts based at Heathrow and in Asia. Family Liaison Officers in Devon and Cornwall were assisting local families who had lost friends and relatives in the disaster.

P/1013 CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT (Cont'd..)

2.9 The school bus safety drive was a joint initiative with the Vehicle Operators and Services Agency.

2.13 Neighbourhood Beat managers from the North Sector of Plymouth went on tour to promote home security and send a clear message to potential criminals as part of a day long burglary reduction action plan in the run-up to Christmas.

Awards and Commendations.

A Commander's Commendation ceremony was held on 11 November with a total of 42 commendations being awarded to police officers, police staff and a member of the Crown Prosecution Service. Long service and Good Conduct Medals were also awarded.

Successes and Challenges – update

4.3 The number of Neighbourhood Beat Managers in post had risen to 346 with only 21 vacancies yet to be filled. BCUs were actively recruiting as a priority in order to fill these vacancies and were subject to central scrutiny to account for how Neighbourhood policing was being delivered whilst carrying such vacancies.

4.5 The current job evaluation project was nearing completion.

4.7 Call handling performance continued to improve. Members wished to place on records their commendation to Chief Inspector Emma Webber who had contributed to this success.

Personnel

Members considered the personnel snapshot as of 31 December 2004.

P/1014 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 **Human Resources Committee** was held on 27 January 2005.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee.

2. A Meeting of the **Performance Management & Audit Committee** was held on the 18 January 2005.

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Members noted the items discussed by the Committee.

Mrs Ryan commented on the significant debate around forensic science services. In particular, there were concerns regarding the implementation of new technology and increasing expectations from the Basic Command Units. This would lead to greater demand on the service which was unlikely to be met by an increased capacity to respond. Enquiries as to how this was going to be addressed were ongoing.

3. Meetings of the **Resources Committee** were held on 23 December 2004 and 8 February 2005.

The following recommendations arose from the committee:

P/1014 REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES (Cont'd..)

[R/404] FINANCIAL MONITORING 2004-05

RESOLVED

- (i) That officers be congratulated on the budget;
- (ii) That progress on managing the budget be noted;
- (iii) That the contribution to the Service Commitment Fund be increased by £500,000, to be found from interest receipts achieved in excess of budget;
- (iv) That the virement of £140,000 for capital expenditure financed from revenue be approved;
- (v) That in the event of a delay in the implementation of job evaluation, any underspend against the approved budget be carried forward into 2005-06 via the Service Commitments Fund;
- (vi) That the capital programme costs for 2004-05, as detailed in appendix 2, for those schemes noted in paragraph 9 of the report be approved.
- (vii) The position on overtime be noted.

[R/408] BUSINESS CASE FOR AIR OPERATIONS BUILDING

RESOLVED that the proposed business case to erect a new building to accommodate the operating crews of the Force helicopter and Devon Air Ambulance be approved in principle.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee.

4. A Meeting of the **Urgency Committee** was held on the 23 April 2005 to discuss this further.

Members noted the items discussed by the Committee.

P/1015 POLICE AUTHORITY LIAISON MEETINGS

Members discussed matters raised at the recent round of Police Authority Liaison Meetings.

At each meeting there had been a presentation in relation to the Policing Plan for 2005-06 which included policing initiatives achieved in the 2004. The audience was invited to give an indication of their expectations for policing in the year 2005-06.

P/1016 ROAD DEATH INVESTIGATION AND ROAD CLOSURES

Members received a presentation on road death investigations and the impact of road closures as a consequence to facilitate such investigations.

P/1017 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 and Paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the Act, being information relating to

- i. Any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.
- ii. Any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

The following items were considered in closed session by the committee with only members of the police authority, appropriate officers and expert advisors present, on the grounds that exempt / confidential information may be disclosed.

P/1018 ICT MANAGED SERVICES CONTRACT

Members were updated on the current situation of the ICT Managed Services Contract.

P/1019 OPERATION RALEIGH

Members were updated on the recent IPCC report regarding the shooting of Philip Prout in Lewannick.

P/1020 OPERATION FABER

Members were updated on the William Goad inquiry following the recent Panorama programme on the BBC.

The meeting closed at 13.00pm

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Council Tax and Precepts 2005-06

Police Budget to be met from Council Tax	£ 70,707,548
Less Net Surplus on Council Tax Collection from Previous Years	(615,406)
Total Precept Payable by Billing Authorities	70,092,142

Tax Base, Collection Variations and Precepts

Billing Authority	Tax Base used by Councils	Precept Payable by Councils £	Surplus / (Deficit) on Collection £	Cash Amount due from Councils £
East Devon	55,703.00	6,663,193	0	6,663,193
Exeter	36,048.00	4,312,062	(19,349)	4,292,713
Mid Devon	26,458.20	3,164,930	65,699	3,230,629
North Devon	33,446.42	4,000,861	4,235	4,005,096
Plymouth	73,552.00	8,798,290	111,403	8,909,693
South Hams	36,822.85	4,404,749	28,000	4,432,749
Teignbridge	47,276.00	5,655,155	46,407	5,701,562
Torbay	47,964.25	5,737,484	46,645	5,784,129
Torrige	22,088.35	2,642,208	65,981	2,708,189
West Devon	19,193.37	2,295,911	46,240	2,342,151
Caradon	30,448.64	3,642,266	7,933	3,650,199
Carrick	34,132.59	4,082,940	4,455	4,087,395
Kerrier	31,854.05	3,810,381	64,485	3,874,866
North Cornwall	31,895.14	3,815,297	58,480	3,873,777
Penwith	24,623.00	2,945,403	(20,595)	2,924,808
Restormel	33,205.86	3,972,085	98,087	4,070,172
Isles of Scilly	1,245.00	148,927	7,300	156,227
Total	585,956.72	70,092,142	615,406	70,707,548

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Police Council Tax due for each Property Valuation
Band

Valuation Band	Government Multiplier Ratio	Multiplier %	Council Tax by Band		per week pence	Increase %
			2005/06 £	2004/05 £		
A	6/9	0.667	79.75	75.59	8.0	}
B	7/9	0.778	93.04	88.19	9.3	}
C	8/9	0.889	106.33	100.79	10.7	}
D	1	1.000	119.62	113.39	12.0	5.49% }
E	11/9	1.222	146.20	138.59	14.6	}
F	13/9	1.444	172.78	163.79	17.3	}
G	15/9	1.667	199.37	188.98	20.0	}
H	18/9	2.000	239.24	226.78	24.0	}