



Cheshire Police Authority - Service Improvement Panel

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2009 IN CONSTABULARY HEADQUARTERS, WINSFORD.

Present: R Hodson, Chairman M Darby
 A Doran, Vice-Chairman P Findlow
 A Arnold R McNeil

Also in attendance: J Ebo and M Chapman

<i>Authority Officer:</i>	<i>Constabulary Officers:</i>
M Sellwood, Chief Executive	B Simmons, Assistant Chief Officer
M Eaton, Member Services Manager	I Wiggett, Acting Assistant Chief Constable
L Lunn, Treasurer	K Watkins, Director of Performance Development
	K Brown, Head of Business Development Services

Apologies: D Bateman, M Ollerenshaw and B Silvester

9 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

10 CUSTODY TRANSPORT PROJECT: UPDATE

The Acting Assistant Chief Constable reported on the provision of custody transport services following the discussion by Finance Panel on 20 January 2009 (Minute 43), to provide the service internally. The report detailed the result of the transfer of 33 escort officers under TUPE to the Constabulary on 1 May 2009, the revised escort service that had been developed following further research of Targeted Patrol Team capacity and escort demands. Nine escort officers would provide an escort service at peak times, with all but one of the remainder redeployed to other duties within the Constabulary. The Panel was also briefed on progress in achieving the £750,000 'starred' budget saving in the 2009/10 budget. It was reported as a result of the revised service, £465,000 had been achieved in 2009/10, with £703,000 per annum from 2010/11 onwards.

Members discussed a number of issues with the Acting Assistant Chief Constable including the timescales and varying practices used for transporting detainees; delays in the processing/booking-in of detainees; the impact on the budget; and the potential impact on Targeted Patrol Team performance. The Acting Assistant Chief Constable agreed to report further on the issues raised as part of the Pre-Inspection Report and that a revised prisoner transport policy and handover procedure would be introduced as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the revised escort service and the arrangements for managing escort officers, as outlined in the report, be supported;
- (3) the 2009/10 budget savings of £465,000 be noted and the Constabulary report progress on managing this reduced level of saving to Finance Panel on 8 December 2009 as part of the mid-year review of the Efficiency and Productivity Strategy;
- (4) the full year savings in 2010/11 of £703,000 be noted in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and included in the budget preparations; and
- (5) the outcome of the post implementation review of custody transport, including details of TPT capacity, be presented to the Panel on 30 March 2010.

11 MANAGEMENT OF THE CUSTODY FUNCTION: INTENTION TO DECENTRALISE

The Acting Assistant Chief Constable reported on a proposal to decentralise the management structure of the custody function. The proposal aimed to reduce the number of Inspector and Custody Sergeant roles; provide a more effective and efficient custody service; and reduce detention times.

In considering the report, Members expressed disappointment about the lack of clarity and information in the report, to support the case. A number of important issues were discussed including the level of financial savings to be achieved; the measures introduced to ensure corporacy across the Areas and ensure standards are maintained; and potential problems of operating an Area based custody suite, with the Acting Assistant Chief Constable. The Panel stressed the need for a fully developed case to be submitted, including baseline data on performance and resources and the improvements to be achieved. Members expected savings to be captured to at least offset the savings not achieved elsewhere in custody services.

The Acting Assistant Chief Constable explained that further work was being conducted to deal with the issues raised by the Panel, and the report was early indication of the direction of travel, and details would be provided when the Constabulary had assessed the situation in more detail.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the proposal to decentralise the management of the custody function be noted at this stage, and the detailed assessment and financial implications be reported to the Authority on 15 December 2009, for consideration.

12 NORTH WEST REGION COLLABORATION ACTIVITIES: UPDATE

The Director of Performance Development presented an update on the collaborative activities being undertaken across the North West region. The report detailed collaboration activity in relation to forensic investigations; regional crime unit; witness protection; regional motorway unit; and air support. The report also commented on the content of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report published in June 2009 on 'Getting Together: A better deal for the public through joint working'.

The Panel discussed several issues arising from the report with the Acting Assistant Chief Constable and the Director of Performance Development and requested future reports to include further information about resources and performance measures to assess whether the collaboration is effective.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

13 OPERATIONS TRAINING PROJECT: UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Officer presented an update on the Operations Training Project -Tactical Training Centre. The report detailed the background to the project following the insolvency of the previous contractor; the progress made in the procurement process and tendering for works to complete the project by 28 February 2010; risk management issues; the financial implications to the Authority; and the public interest generated.

The Panel were pleased to note that the tendering and works to complete the project had recommenced and the final handover was scheduled in March 2010. Members discussed a number of issues with the Assistant Chief Officer including the reputational and financial risks to the Authority; the likelihood of recovering the performance bond; and the opportunities for income generation. The Assistant Chief Officer responded to the issues raised and advised that the proposals for income generation would be progressed at the next Board meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

14 MOBILE DATA PROJECT: UPDATE

The Acting Assistant Chief Constable reported on the final implementation of the Mobile Data Project and on the plans to realise the operational benefits of increased mobile data usage. The report detailed the roll-out process and the usage rates.

The Panel scrutinised the report and were critical of the low utilisation of the new technology and considered urgent action was required by the Chief Constable to ensure the business benefits of reducing bureaucracy and freeing-up officer time to increase community visibility were achieved. The

Acting Assistant Chief Constable was asked to reconsider the position urgently and take the necessary management and supervision action to ensure the benefits were realised. Members stressed the need for the comprehensive review to address their concerns and include data on who was using mobile data, when and what for, including trends in any groups/teams and issues.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the outcome of the comprehensive review of the use of mobile data against the business benefits in the original business case be submitted to the Panel on 5 January 2010, for consideration.

15 MANAGEMENT OF POLICE INFORMATION

The Director of Performance Development presented an update on action to comply with the national guidance on the management of police information (MOPI). The report detailed the update of the Constabulary's Action Plan; the current compliance level of 74.8%; the outcome of the Peer Review; the review, retention and disposal process.

The Panel welcomed the significant improvements made towards compliance with MOPI achieved by the Constabulary.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

16 ESTATES STRATEGY: UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Officer reported on progress in the preparation of a revised Estates Strategy. The report detailed the current property stock; the results of the review of the environmental impact and running costs of the estate; the opportunities for shared accommodation with partners; the review of the works contracting strategy for maintenance; and IT issues.

Members enquired about the reasons for the ongoing delay in the presentation of the review and discussed the need to ensure that the Estate Strategy was updated and reviewed before it was shared with partners.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposal to produce a comprehensive Corporate Estates Strategy, to subsequently be underpinned by individual strategies for each Area, be supported; and
- (2) the Corporate Estate Strategy be submitted to the Authority on 15 December 2009, for approval.

17 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: QUARTERLY REPORT

The Panel considered a report on the work of the four business development programmes – Public Safety; Sustaining and Improvement; Transforming Business Services; and People. The Assistant Chief Officer gave an oral update on the progress of the Safe Centre project and indicated that the project would now move to tender stage for the works.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS: PROVISION OF INVESTIGATIVE SKILLS TRAINING

The Assistant Chief Officer presented a report on a proposal to develop investigative skills training and the delivery of the Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme at the University of Chester's Padgate campus in Warrington.

RESOLVED:

That the progress being made to improve the capacity and capability of investigative skills training be noted and the further working with the University of Chester to assist in the delivery of this training, be supported.

Duration of meeting: The meeting commenced at 9.30am and finished at 11.50am.