



Cheshire Police Authority - Staff Committee

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 2 MARCH 2010 AT CONSTABULARY HEADQUARTERS, WINSFORD

Present: R McNeil, Chairman
A Arnold
D Cargill
P Findlow
B Maher
C Oliver
M Ollerenshaw
T Savage

Also in attendance: D T Bateman

<i>Authority Officers:</i>	<i>Constabulary Officers:</i>
M Sellwood, Chief Executive	G Gerrard, Deputy Chief Constable
M Eaton, Member Services Manager	C Barton, Director of Human Resources
	Detective Superintendent John Armstrong, Head of Professional Standards

Apologies: A Walmsley

55 CHRISTINE BARTON, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The Chairman reported that the Director of Human Resources, Christine Barton, was retiring at the end of March 2010. The Chairman expressed her appreciation to Ms Barton for her leadership skills in managing the Constabulary's Human Resources Department and the support given to Authority. The Chairman and Members wished Ms Barton a long and happy retirement and made a presentation.

56 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2009, be confirmed as a correct record.

57 COMPLAINTS AND MISCONDUCT MATTERS: QUARTERLY REPORT

The Deputy Chief Constable presented the quarterly report on complaints and misconduct matters for October to December 2009. It was reported that during the period 119 complainants had made 175 allegations, which equated to a 4% increase in complainants and a 24% increase in allegations, compared with the same period in the previous year.

The report contained information on the various categories of individual complaints; the number of referrals to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC); internal discipline cases; cases referred to the Crown Prosecution Service; complaints outstanding from previous years; statistical analysis of complaints; and performance indicators relating to complaints.

The Head of Professional Standards referred to the changes to be introduced by the IPCC to the recording, handling and resolution of complaints.

The Committee discussed the increase in complaints, the first increase since 2007, and the reason for the increasing trend in 'other neglect of duty' complaints. Members also discussed how the Constabulary managed breaches of the IT system; the reason for the decrease in the number of locally resolved finalised complaints; and how the Constabulary compared with its most similar forces. The Deputy Chief Constable advised of the role and work of the Counter Corruption Unit which targeted and investigated breaches of the Constabulary's IT system and the monitoring of internet usage and social networking sites. The Head of Professional Standards reported on the various mechanisms being introduced to improve the number of local resolutions which had increased to 37% since the last quarter with the aim of achieving up to 50%, and that the Constabulary compared favourably with its MSG.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

58 INDEPENDENT POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION (IPCC): REVISED STATUTORY GUIDANCE

The Deputy Chief Constable presented a report on changes to complaint recording, handling and resolutions arising from the Independent Police Complaints Commission's (IPCC) revised statutory guidance. The revised guidance effective from April 2010, provides detailed principles governing access to the complaints system; initial handling of complaints; resolving complaints; outcomes from complaints; and monitoring and development within the complaints system.

Members considered the new guidance, the changes in terminology and the inclusion of handling expression of dissatisfaction before complaints were formalised. The Deputy Chief Constable commented that the Constabulary was well placed to respond to dissatisfaction with the introduction of Customer Services Desks. The IPCC Regional Commissioner would be visiting the Constabulary in April to see the work being undertaken.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the implications of the IPCC revised statutory guidance, as set out in the Deputy Chief Constable's report, be received; and
- (2) the Lead Member for Professional Standards and the Head of Professional Standards review the statutory reporting and trend analysis of complaints post April 2010 and take the necessary action in consultation with the Chief Executive to amend the standard report format; and
- (3) future quarterly reports include information on any organisational learning for complaints; MSG comparative data; the number of appeals and outcomes; and the introduction of any trends in social factors.

59 PEOPLE STRATEGY 2009-12: THREE QUARTER YEAR REVIEW

The Director of Human Resources presented the three quarter year performance against the suite of performance measures contained in the People Strategy 2009-12; the quarterly staffing statistics; and an update on sickness absence, including causal factors and current initiatives to improve the management of attendance.

The average number of working days lost during the period for police officers and staff was 4.14 and 5.29 respectively, which represented decreases for both compared with the same period in 2008/09.

The Chairman congratulated the Director on the presentation of an excellent informative report. The Committee welcomed the continued reduction in sickness absence and discussed with the Director the measures taken to significantly improve sickness absence of PCSOs; and the management of secondees returning to work.

RESOLVED:

That the quarterly performance against the Policing Strategy be received and the continued reduction in sickness absence be welcomed.

60 WORKFORCE PLANNING: QUARTERLY REPORT

The Director of Human Resources reported on police officer, staff, PCSO and special constable recruitment including the number, gender and ethnic origin of new recruits and the number of vacant staff posts. The report also detailed the financial position in relation to recruitment levels; the projected outturn position; and expenditure on agency staff.

The Committee in considering the report, were advised that probationer trainers had been released to frontline duties due to the postponement of the March 2010 intake. Members discussed the impact on other staff due to the number of staff vacancies; and enquired about the use of agency staff, with the Director.

RESOLVED:

That the quarterly report on workforce planning be received.

61 DRAFT PEOPLE STRATEGY 2010-13

The Director of Human Resources presented the draft People Strategy 2010-13 for consideration. The final version of the Strategy, which provided strategic direction for human resources over the next three years, would be submitted to the Authority in April for approval.

Members considered the draft Strategy and made a number of comments for inclusion in the final draft document. The Committee welcomed the development of the performance scorecard and the work required to assess comparative costs and ensure value for money. The Chairman stressed that this would be a focus of attention for the Committee in the coming year.

RESOLVED:

That the comments expressed by Members be incorporated into the draft People Strategy 2010-13 and the final version be submitted to the Authority on 13 April 2010 for approval.

62 REPLACEMENT OF 30+ SCHEME

The Director of Human Resources submitted a report on the introduction of a new 30+ Plus scheme for police officers with effect from 1 April 2010. The report detailed the main changes to the former 30+ scheme and the benefits to the Constabulary and the officer. The Director advised that it was proposed that the scheme would only be used in exceptional circumstances and driven by operational need, and following consideration of a business case by the Chief Constable.

RESOLVED:

That the introduction of a new 30+ Plus scheme based on an exceptional circumstances and organization need, be supported.

63 URGENT BUSINESS
(There were no items of urgent business)

64 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as applied by the Police Act 1996, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:-

<i>Item</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
Review of Misconduct Issues: Quarterly Report	(2) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
Employment Tribunals and Grievances: Quarterly Report	(2) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
Medical Retirements: Quarterly Report	(2) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
Police Authority Commendations	(2) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

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

65 REVIEW OF MISCONDUCT ISSUES: QUARTERLY REPORT

The Deputy Chief Constable submitted a report on the number of written warnings, hearings and suspensions for police officers and discipline action against police staff during the period October to December 2009.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

66 EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS AND GRIEVANCES: QUARTERLY REPORT

The Director of Human Resources submitted a report on employment tribunals and grievances for the period April to December 2009.

Members discussed with the Director the reasons for the increase in the number of grievances; and the lack of monitoring information recorded to enable the identification of any trends. The Director confirmed that there were no underlying reasons for the increase and that some management decisions and unsuccessful appeals had led to grievances. The disclosure of the monitoring data by individuals was not mandatory, however, the Director agreed that there was scope to review the form layout to encourage greater voluntary completion and the future reports would show the outcome of the grievance.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received; and
- (2) the Director of Human Resources review the format of the report to show the outcome of grievances, be supported.

67 MEDICAL RETIREMENTS: APPROVALS

The Chief Executive submitted a report on three medical retirements (the granting of ill health and injury pension) that had been approved since the last meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

68 POLICE AUTHORITY COMMENDATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report which invited the Committee to consider the award of a Police Authority Commendation. Members were reminded that the Commendation was the highest internal award and was awarded for either 'bravery' where outstanding courage, dedication to duty and professionalism and the safety of others had been the main concern or for 'service excellence' where an individual had performed their duties to an exceptional standard, which included prolonged high standards achieved in work, top level performance leading to high value financial savings for the organisation and other exemplary examples of outstanding work.

The Committee considered details of two separate incidents where the Chief Constable considered that the actions of those involved were worthy of consideration for a Police Authority commendation.

RESOLVED:

That Police Authority Commendations for Bravery be awarded to Sergeant Graham Elliott and Constable Ian Hampson in relation to their actions involving a firearms incident on 17 August 2009.

69 DIP SAMPLING OF COMPLETED COMPLAINTS FILES

The Chairman reminded the Committee of its responsibility to undertake a dip sample of completed complaints files. The Committee discussed the need for time to be allocated at the start of the meeting specifically for this purpose.

RESOLVED:

That future Staff Committee meetings commence at 10.00am preceded by a dip sampling session at 9.30am.

Duration of Meeting: The meeting commenced at 9.30am and finished at 11.10am.

[Post Meeting Note: Prior to and following the meeting D Cargill, B Maher, C Oliver and T Savage undertook a dip sample of completed complaints files.]