



# CHESHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

## BEST VALUE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2005 IN CONSTABULARY HEADQUARTERS, WINSFORD

*Present:* R Hodson, Chairman            Ms E Lam  
              Mrs G A Cousins                P Nurse  
              M D Darby                                Mrs S Proctor

*Also present:* P J Walker

*Authority Officers:*                                *Constabulary Officers:*  
M Sellwood, Clerk & Chief Executive    B Simmons, Assistant Chief Officer  
D Taylor, Deputy Clerk                        Mrs K Watkins, Director of Performance Development  
Ms L Lunn, Treasurer  
J Dean, Principal Auditor

*Also Present:* D James, External Auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers,  
                      G Parry, Audit Commission

*Apologies:* Mrs M Chapman, Mrs A Doran

#### 7. MINUTES

*RESOLVED:*

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2005 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### 8. EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S MANAGEMENT LETTER 2004/05

Mr D James of PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Authority's external auditors, presented the 2004/05 Management Letter which was required to be produced under the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice. The Management Letter provided information on the Authority's accounts; financial aspects of corporate governance; performance management; and the audit fee. The Auditor highlighted a number of issues, including the process involved in the closure of the annual accounts; and resource management issues and the need to consider how these might be used for performance improvement.

Members noted the report and raised a number of issues, including the level of savings to be achieved, and the process for finalising the Authority's accounts to which the External Auditor and Treasurer responded.

Members thanked the external auditors for their work on behalf of the Authority over the last few years, and hoped that the constructive relationship would continue with the Audit Commission.

*RESOLVED:*

That the 2004/05 Management Letter, be received.

9. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2005/06

The Principal Auditor presented a report on the progress and outcome of the reviews undertaken in 2004/05 and the progress to date against the Internal Audit Plan for 2005/06. The Principal Auditor reported that all outstanding work from the audit plan for 2004/05 had now reached the report stage and further details of that work were included in the report. The 2005/06 Internal Audit Plan had been agreed with the Constabulary and the progress to date, including work on payroll; purchase order process; police overtime follow-up; and asset management audits were detailed.

Members noted the report and raised a number of issues including the proposal for an establishment figure for police staff, and concern that this would limit flexibility; the business contract for travel; and the review of overtime and whether all actions had now been addressed, to which the Principal Auditor responded.

*RESOLVED:*

That the Internal Audit progress report 2005/06 be received.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY: UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Officer presented an update on the progress made in relation to the Risk Management Strategy. It was reported that the development of a revised risk register had been progressed by senior managers in the Constabulary and the development of a risk management approach to improve the contribution it made to the strategic planning process was now being considered. Details of these changes would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

Members noted the report and raised a number of issues, including the need to undertake a radical re-think of the strategy to highlight high risk areas, to which the Assistant Chief Officer responded.

*RESOLVED:*

That the update on the Risk Management Strategy be noted.

11. BEST VALUE PROGRAMME: UPDATE

The Director of Performance Development submitted a report updating the Committee on the main developments within the Best Value programme, including the status of the Organisational Support Review and progress against a number of the improvement plans that were still open.

*RESOLVED:*

That the report be noted.

12. BEST VALUE FINAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN: WITNESS AND VICTIM CARE

The Chief Constable submitted the completed improvement plan for Witness and Victim Care review. The Committee considered the improvement plan and noted that all the actions had now been completed.

*RESOLVED:*

That the completed Improvement Plan for Witness and Victim Care be approved.

13. URGENT BUSINESS

(There were not items of urgent business).

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC

*RESOLVED:*

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
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Best Value Review of Organisational Support: Summary of Findings	(11) Industrial Relations
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15. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Director of Performance Development presented the final report of the Organisational Support Best Value Review, which had been undertaken to consider the support services delivered from Headquarters.

Members noted the report and supported the comprehensive review which had been undertaken to look at introducing greater efficiencies into the support functions of the Constabulary, and acknowledged that this would provide a useful background for the current review of policing structures in Cheshire.

*RESOLVED:*

That the final report for Organisational Support Best Value Review be agreed.

Duration of meeting: The meeting commenced at 9.30am and concluded at 10.30am.