

STRATEGY GROUP

Notes of the Meeting held on 21 June 2010, Conference Hall, HQ

Present:

Sara Thornton	- Chief Constable
Francis Habgood	- Deputy Chief Constable
Steve Rowell	- Assistant Chief Constable, Local Policing
Terri Teasdale	- Director of Resources
Amanda Cooper	- Director of Information, Strategy & Technology
Steven Chase	- Head of Human Resources
Andy Taylor	- A/ Assistant Chief Constable, Crime & Criminal
Dave Lewis	- BCU Commander, Berks East
Chris Shead	- BCU Commander, Berks West
Steve Kirk	- LPA Commander, Reading Borough
Paul Emmings	- BCU Commander, Bucks
Nikki Ross	- A/BCU Commander, Milton Keynes
Brendan O'Dowda	- BCU Commander, Oxon
Alan Baldwin	- Head of Crime Support
Sue Curtis-Davison	- Head of Corporate Information

Specialist Support:

Chris Allum	- Executive Coordinator
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Apologies:

Richard Bennett	- A/ Assistant Chief Constable, Operations
John Liversidge	- Head of Local Policing
Liam MacDougall	- Head of CRED

Attendance:

Item 2

Catherine Hemmings	- Crime Analyst
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Item 3

DCI Ray Howard	- Head of FIB
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Item 6

Supt. Andy Standen	- Head of Change
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27 – ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

28 - MATTERS ARISING

Collaboration

The areas had been agreed by the Chief Officer teams of both Forces and it was intended to present the business cases to the respective Authorities in July.

29- FORCE STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT UPDATE

The Force Strategic Assessment Review for March 2010 was presented by Catherine Hemmings who gave an update at the meeting. It was envisaged that it would continue to be updated by way of exception reporting.

The next update would be due in September and there was agreement that the Control Strategy Priorities would remain unchanged at this time.

It was requested that for the next report that it contained more information relating to intelligence and risk around areas highlighted in the report.

The update was noted.

It was agreed:

1. To note the update

Action: All to note

30 – FIREARMS LICENSING – NON VISIT POLICY

The A/ACC C&CJ presented a paper on a review of the Forces Non-Visit Policy in respect of Shotgun Renewals, Renewal of acquire only explosives certificate and variation of a firearms certificate.

The paper outlined the recommendation of the Cullen Report, HMIC Thematic Inspection in 2002 and ACPO Guidance arising from Chief Constables' Council decision.

The report presented five options with the considered advantages and disadvantages of implementing each option. A discussion took place around each option. It was recognised that the impact risk should there be a Cumbria incident would be high but the likelihood was low. It was also highlighted the visits are not the only method of assessing the renewing holder, background and intelligence checks were also employed.

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Given the current financial climate the ability to increase resources to meet the demand was not possible. There were some suggestions made on possible areas of work and practice that warranted further exploration and consideration.

It was agreed that the policy would remain having taken account of the likelihood and impact of the risks identified in the report, that further work be undertaken to examine the standardisation of approach to working practice and other opportunities i.e. annualised hours, use of rural Neighbourhood officers etc.

It was agreed:

1. That the policy remain (option 1)
2. Further work be undertaken to examine opportunities to alter the working practice to gain greater efficiency thereby increasing capacity to deal with the volume.

Action: 1. All to note

2. DCI Howard to examine opportunities to alter the working practice to gain greater efficiency

31 – CT EXERCISE

The DCC presented a paper for information on the planned joint Force CT live play exercise. It was intended to run the exercise over three days but unlike previous exercises and mindful of the financial position, it was planned to be a fixed length each day, rather than a 24 hour a day exercise.

Work was also underway based on previous exercise feedback to involve partners such as the LRF at an earlier stage in the exercise.

The report was noted.

It was agreed:

1. To note the update

Action: All to note

32 – STRATEGIC COORDINATING CENTRE - CLOSED under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – exemption 31 – Law Enforcement

33 – PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Forces current position on performance was discussed with the DCC providing a selection of figures on key indicators as at the morning of the meeting.

In respect of the Special Constabulary the Chief Constable tasked ACC LP to investigate the possibility of further increasing the strength of the Special Constabulary beyond the target, given the reduction on recruitment of Police Officers and PCSO's. ACC LP made reference to the limits on infrastructure and capacity within the Special Constabulary and in particular the tutors and supervision required to support any additional increase in overall numbers in the light of the recent growth to meet targets.

It was suggested that as part of the scoping, resources normally employed on Police Officer training i.e. PDU Tutors, could be assessed to see if they could be tasked to assist with the development of the possible further increase in the Special Constabulary.

There was some concern raised on the number of OCGs disrupted to date, it was felt that there may be some disruptions in the system to be signed off. D/Supt Baldwin was tasked with tracking down the paperwork and to seek sign off by the end of June.

It was agreed:

1. ACC LP to research the possibility of increasing recruitment capacity to accelerate the growth of the Special Constabulary. The research should identify the impact of any resourcing gaps / opportunities to support the increase. ACC LP to report back by the end of August 2010 with findings.

Action: 1. ACC LP

34 – WASTELINE AND BUREAUCRACY UPDATE

The meeting was presented with a paper highlighting some of the progress made on suggestions received via the Wasteline and feedback from the Sergeants Managing Resources course. Superintendent Standen advised the meeting that work was underway to strengthen the process in terms of recording and following up suggestions and feeding back the successes and the reasons why some were not pursued. The Chief Constable expressed a desire that the process needed to be transparent and feedback should be available on the intranet. The issue of disposal of electrical items was discussed and the ACC O was tasked to review the property policy and identify methods of disposal of electrical items that would see them recycled or redistributed acknowledging concerns over electrical safety.

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It was agreed:

1. To note the update
2. ACC O to review the policy on disposal of electrical items

Action: 1. All to note

Action: 2. ACC O

35 – FINANCIAL POSITION

The Director of Resources outlined the financial position at the end of May 2010. With greater scrutiny by budget holders and the previous year's productivity savings additional small under spends were emerging which at the end of May resulted cumulatively in a predicted devolved carry forward of £993,000.

Should the Government's Emergency Budget and future Spending Review outline harsher cuts, there would be costs to the organisation in terms of redundancy payments etc which would have to be found from within existing budgets. The DoR informed the meeting that she proposed to recommend to the Authority at their meeting on 25th June that the identified carry forward be transferred to a reserve to assist with any restructuring provision and easing the financial burden of any future reduction in numbers.

It was agreed:

1. To note the financial position

Action: 1. All to note

36 – HOME OFFICE REQUIRED IN YEAR SAVINGS

The Director of Resources presented a paper outlining the proposed in year savings following the Home Office's announcement of the reduction of funding of which Thames Valley's share is £3.4m.

The paper contained the same information that would be presented to the Police Authority later in the week.

The proposals are a mixture of bringing forward already identified, the benefits of the NSPIS contract renegotiation and some cuts in particular devolved overtime. Some of the headlines include:

- 5% reduction (£529k) in police officer overtime with a considerable proportion of that coming from the central major crime budget.

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- The change to the method of calculating mileage for claims in private vehicles has reduced the cost to the organisation in excess of the budget reduction already taken – a further £240k can be saved.
- The successful redeployment of staff from SDUs and CIMUs has increased the saving for this year and reduced redundancy costs by £350k.
- Changes to the use of agency staff will reduce the budget by £500k.
- The continued review of vehicle fleet will reduce costs by £260k.
- From 1 January 2011 Thames Valley will reduce the percentage of budget spent on Special Priority Payments (SPPs) from 3% to 2%. This will mean savings of £335k this year and a further £1m next financial year. TVP has paid one of the highest allocations of SPPs to help retention, but most forces now pay 2% of budget or lower and there is a possibility that they will be removed in future years. How individual SPPs are affected by the reduction will be determined towards the end of 2010 but this year's payments will be honoured.
- The spending profile for the PCSO budget for this year means that £210k can be saved – this does not affect total PCSO numbers.
- A reduction in the Learning and Development budget of £110k.
- The remainder will be found from various centrally held budgets including uniform, NSPIS contract, consultancy etc.

The Chief Constable reiterated that again, these savings and cuts had not been easy to find and whilst meeting this reduction in funding has not resulted in any direct loss of posts it could not be ruled out in the future.

It was agreed:

1. To note the required in year savings

Action: 1 All to note

37 – VALUE FOR MONEY STATEMENT

The most recent version of the Value for Money Statement was introduced by the DCC. This version which had been updated since the last meeting would be going to the Police Authority on the 25th June.

There were still some figures to be finalised and checked and those would be updated as they became known.

It was agreed:

1. To note the Value for Money Statement

Action: 1. All to note

38 – UPDATE ON HMIC INSPECTION OF BERKSHIRE EAST BCU

The report presented by the DCC highlighted the outstanding challenges relating to the 15 HMIC recommendations following their inspection in March 2009 of Berkshire East. The paper gave the details on the initial recommendations and actions to address those. Since the original inspection, a review have been undertaken in November 2009 and a further review in April 2010.

The DCC was please to report that in his opinion all bar one could be closed at this time and he was confident that action to address the remaining recommendation was well in train and closure was expected in October 2010.

Although the BCU had further ground to make to improve its position in its family of BCU's, the improvement against its own performance figures in the last few months was significant. The process and cultural changes required in the HMIC report had now been undertaken and the prospects for further improvement were good.

It was agreed:

1. To note the report

Action: All to note