

SCRUTINY & AUDIT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT JUBILEE HOUSE, WYMONDHAM, NORFOLK
ON THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2009 AT 10.00 A.M.**

Present

Mr R Chapman
Mr P Hardy
Mr H Humphrey - Chairman
Mr B Iles
Mrs V Jenkins
Ms J McKibben

In Attendance

Mr S Bailey	Assistant Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr P Best	Senior Analyst, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr R Birtles	Assistant Chief Officer (Resources), Norfolk Constabulary
Mr R Brown	Risk and Information Manager, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr B Docherty	Crime Registrar, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr M Hill	Assistant Chief Executive, Norfolk Police Authority
Mrs A Gilbert	Programme Manager, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr I Learmonth	Deputy Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr S Mellor	Director of Financial Services and Accountancy, Norfolk Constabulary
Ms A Parry	Client Manager, Norfolk Audit Services
Mrs K Stringfellow	Principal Management Accountant, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr R Summers	Treasurer, Norfolk Police Authority
Mr A Thompson	Chief Internal Auditor, Norfolk Audit Services
Miss N Wotton	Committee Administrator, Norfolk Police Authority

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mr B Hannah and Mr P Wells.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2009**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters of Urgent Business**

There were none on this occasion.

5. **Items for Decision**

5.1 There were none.

6. **Norfolk Audit Services Half Yearly Report for the period ended 30 September 2009**

6.1 Ms Parry, Client Manager for Norfolk Audit Services, presented the report to Members, which summarised the recent work undertaken by Norfolk Audit Services. Members noted that eleven final reports had been issued during the last 6 months, which relate to the 2009/09 Annual Plan and it was reported that action plans had been agreed with the Treasurer.

6.2 Members were pleased to note that the overall opinion regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of internal control and risk management with the Police Authority and Constabulary is 'Acceptable'.

6.3 Following a query from a Member, the Committee discussed the implications involved in aiming for a Level 3, rather than a Level 2 score and it was noted that a delicate balance was required in this respect. It was reported that a Risk Assessment would be carried out in this regard and that no Force was expected to achieve a Level 4 this year.

6.4 Members were apprised that an additional criterion had been introduced by the Audit Commission for further investigation, which was Sustainability. It was reported that a detailed report would be discussed at the forthcoming Capital Assets Committee meeting on the 18 November 2009.

6.5 Following a comment from a Member, it was agreed that relevant audit reports would be shared with Committee Chairmen, for information, in future. Ms Parry thanked colleagues from Norfolk Constabulary for their ongoing support and co-operation with Norfolk Audit Services.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) That relevant audit reports would be shared with Committee Chairs, for information, as appropriate.

7. **Treasury Management Performance Monitoring**

7.1 The Treasurer reminded those present that Treasury Management Performance monitoring information was presented to the Committee on a six monthly basis, to update members regarding cash flow management, investment performance and long term borrowing.

7.2 Members were reassured that current deposits were invested on the 'overnight' market only, in UK institutions with the highest credit ratings, however it was noted that returns were typically as low as 0.25%. The Committee noted that the

Treasurer would continue with this prudent strategy for the foreseeable future and was in regular contact with colleagues throughout the UK in this respect.

- 7.3 It was reported that Members had attended a Treasury Management training session yesterday and that a follow up session had been arranged for the 7 January 2010. In response to a query from a Member, it was noted that Norfolk Constabulary paid all creditors within 30 days and that this was rigorously monitored and enforced.
- 7.4 The Committee was apprised that the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) had recently issued a consultation on proposed changes to the Treasury Management Code. It was noted that a response to the consultation had been included with the papers from the Police Authority Treasurers Society, for information. It was noted that a revised Strategy would be brought for consideration and approval to a future meeting next year.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the report.

8. Joint Annual Report on Risk Management

- 8.1 The Treasurer introduced the Joint Annual Report on Risk Management to the Committee. It was reported that the Authority and Constabulary made sure that the risk management framework formally identified and managed risks, involved Members, officers and staff in the risk management process and mapped risks to financial and other key internal controls. In order to facilitate this, it was noted that the Risk Management Strategy and Guidance was reviewed on an annual basis.
- 8.2 Members were reminded that the joint strategy for risk management entitled 'Risk Aware, not Risk Averse' had been approved at the last meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee on 17 September 2009.
- 8.3 The Committee was reassured that internal audit had undertaken a full audit and follow up visits regarding Risk Management and all recommendations except one had been discharged. In response to a query from a Member, it was noted that plans were underway to discharge the final recommendation.
- 8.4 Members were apprised that Risk Management Training for Members of the Authority had taken place in September 2009 and that following the strategy review, training requirements had also been identified for senior officers and management, which was taking place in October and November 2009.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the report.

9. Annual Insurance Report 2008/09

- 9.1 The Director of Financial Services and Accountancy introduced the report and informed members that the current contract with Zurich Municipal for liability and motor cover was due to end on the 30 September 2009. It was reported that the Authority was part of a consortium with other forces for insurance arrangements,

known as the South East and Eastern Region Police Insurance Consortium (SEERPIC). It was noted that the contract had been due for re-tender, however there had been an unavoidable delay and consequently the current contract for all forces within SEERPIC was extended to the end of March 2010, with the intention that a new contract be awarded from the 1 April 2010. Following a query from a Member, it was noted that the delay in re-tendering would not have any financial implications in this instance. It was also queried whether the Force could operate outside of the consortium and the possible implications for the collaboration agenda were noted.

- 9.2 Members discussed the annual premiums payable for the three main classes of insurance cover – liability (employer and public), motor vehicles and property, and were pleased to note that the premiums had reduced considerably over time.
- 9.3 The Committee noted the number of claims occurring in each financial year per policy and were reassured that the majority were low level claims of under £5,000, which classified the Constabulary as a low risk organisation. The value of claims per financial year for each class of business were also discussed and it was reported that there was often a significant time lag between the claim being made and being finalised.
- 9.4 A Member commented on the low numbers of Employers Liability Claims which were made in respect of Stress/Anxiety and noted that sickness levels were a good indicator of the state of morale within the Force, following the recent restructure which had taken place.
- 9.5 Members requested further information on how many Public Liability Claims were dismissed and it was noted that this would be circulated after the meeting. It was noted that the Professional Standards and HR Committee received detailed information on the number of claims and the costs involved, as an exempt item, at all of their meetings.
- 9.6 The Committee also requested that the number of insurance claims made per year were compared to those within our Most Similar Forces (MSF) in the next report, with accompanying text, as appropriate.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) That the number of Public Liability Claims which had been dismissed would be circulated to Members for information after the meeting;
- iii) That the number of Insurance Claims made each year were compared to our Most Similar Forces (MSF) in the next report, with accompanying text.

10. **National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) Update**

- 10.1 The Crime Registrar presented the report to the Committee and reminded Members that a regular programme of audits was undertaken to monitor compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). Following the recent audits it was noted that there were four areas of concern: Criminal Damage, Violent Crime, Hate

and Disturbance. It was noted that significant improvements had already been made in all of these areas.

- 10.2 With regard to Criminal Damage, Members were apprised of the 'Non Permanent' exception rule, which had been introduced to deal with very low level anti social behaviour. The complexities of the different rules and exceptions were noted, as were the examples of compliance failures from previous audits.
- 10.3 ACC Bailey updated Members on the training programme for officers, to ensure all officers were aware of the rules and expectations of them. It was noted that work was continuing to explore and enhance capability and to ensure compliance was maintained at all times. The Committee was updated regarding the significant investment which had been made in improving officers' attitudes and behaviours, via training and raising awareness. It was reported that confidence levels had risen by 2.5% following the recent British Crime Survey, which was very encouraging. It was noted that vulnerable victims, persistent callers and repeat victims were monitored to ensure that they were receiving the correct support.
- 10.4 The Assistant Chief Executive reminded Members of the importance of this report and ensuring that data was correctly managed and recorded. It was noted that this was a key area of business, which had a significant impact upon public confidence, and the progress made to date was very encouraging. Members took the opportunity to congratulate the Constabulary on their work in this area.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the report.

11. Protective Services Command Update

- 11.1 Assistant Chief Constable Bailey apprised the Committee that the detection rate for Serious Sexual Offences was currently 25%, compared to a year end target of 37%. It was noted that although the target had not been met, the Force was the highest performing in the region for rape convictions and had the lowest attrition rate. Members were also reassured that an action plan had been developed to improve performance in this area and that only very small numbers of cases were involved.
- 11.2 Members were pleased to note that the current arrest rate for domestic abuse was 85.1%, which was in line with the Police Authority target of 85%. The Committee was updated regarding the June 2009 awareness campaign, which has resulted in a 25% increase in reporting during June and July.
- 11.3 It was reported that the Public Protection Unit (PPU) managed 591 registered sex offenders in the community and following the funding for growth within the department, the ratio of sex offenders per detective in the PPU was now 1:59 and in line with the NPIA and ACPO guidelines.
- 11.4 Members were informed that since the MIT collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary, the county of Suffolk had experienced an unusually high level of homicides. It was noted that the opportunity to dynamically deploy joint resources had been successful and positively received. It was reported that no cold cases were under re-investigation at the present time.

- 11.5 Members were apprised that the total number of Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) collisions for the year beginning 1st April 2009 was 168 against a target of 180, which equated to 7% below target. It was noted that the Roads Policing Department was fully embedded in the three bases of Swaffham, Wymondham and Acle, and was supported by the Force Briefing and Tasking System (BATS).
- 11.6 The Committee was informed that during the past 6 months, the Special Operations Unit (SOU) had completed 3 operations, compared with 10 in the previous 12 months. It was noted that the SOU also provided case building support to the Drugs and Serious Crime Squad (DASCS) to enable them to concentrate on their specialist covert policing tactics.
- 11.7 In response to a query from a Member, it was noted that the newly appointed Analysts had dealt with 720 information requests during the year and were in the process of focussing on the key business areas and hotspots in order to enable the force to become more reactive.
- 11.8 With regard to the Witness Protection Collaboration between Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, Members requested information regarding the financial contribution made by Cambridgeshire Constabulary in lieu of personnel. Members also requested information regarding the cost savings generated following the Norfolk CCTV Pilot scheme.
- 11.9 The Assistant Chief Executive reminded Members that the overall scrutiny of Protective Services issues came under the remit of the new Protective Services Board. Following discussions, Members requested that Detective Chief Superintendent Blazeby provide a report to the next meeting on the recent review and the resulting action plan for Protective Services.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To request information on the financial contribution made by Cambridgeshire Constabulary toward the Joint Covert Support Unit and it was stated that Members would be updated outside of the meeting;
- iii) To request information on the amount of cost savings generated by the Norfolk CCTV Pilot Scheme;
- iv) That Detective Chief Superintendent Blazeby provide a report to the next meeting on the recent review and the resulting action plan for Protective Services.

12. Performance Monitoring Second Quarter 2009/10

- 12.1 Members noted the streamlined report and the summary of performance provided in Appendix A. The Committee was pleased to note that recorded crime was 5.5% better than the same period last year and 2.3% better than target and it was reported that public confidence and satisfaction had increased by 2.5% and 4.5% respectively. Members noted that the target for Black Minority Ethnic recruitment

had not been met, despite ongoing work in this area by the HR Department. In response to a query from a Member, it was noted that there were no Beacon Forces for BME recruitment, however the Constabulary was liaising with other organisations to share best practice.

- 12.2 The Committee was apprised that the predictive calendar had been used to good effect this year, with additional cover being provided over Halloween and Bonfire Night, and incidents involving fireworks had been reduced in Great Yarmouth and Norwich by 40.5% and 35% respectively when compared to last year.
- 12.3 A Member queried the apparent rise in the number of woundings being reported in the Great Yarmouth area and it was noted that it had coincided with the recent Domestic Abuse awareness campaign, which had resulted in an increase in victims reporting incidents to the police. After further discussion, it was agreed that future performance reports would have the Violent Crime statistics broken down to show the Domestic Abuse component, with explanatory text, as appropriate.
- 12.4 The Committee congratulated the HR Department for their ongoing efforts in reducing sickness levels over time. It was noted that Police Officer sickness was 5.99 hours better than target, at 29.01 hours and Police Staff sickness was 2.63 hours better than target, at 26.48 hours. Members were apprised that the Contact and Control Room was reducing its sickness levels significantly and had recently achieved a 1% call abandonment rate and a reduction in the number of complaints received. Following a query from a Member, it was noted that the Constabulary had not been affected by Swine Flu as had been anticipated, and the virus was not following the predicted patterns, however work was continuing to raise awareness of health and hygiene issues in this respect.
- 12.5 A Member queried the poor performance on satisfaction levels of 'follow up'. It was reported that work was ongoing in this area involving the Customer Services Team and the Value Stream Analysis (VSA). Members were reminded that a visit to RAF Coltishall to visit the VSA work would take place shortly.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To request that in future performance reports, Violent Crime statistics be broken down to show the Domestic Abuse component, with explanatory text.

13. NPA Efficiency and Productivity Plan Quarter 2 position for 2009/10

- 13.1 Members were reminded that the Constabulary had been set the efficiency gains target of 10.3% of gross revenue expenditure to be achieved by the end of the third financial year (2011). It was reported that the Constabulary was currently on target to exceed that and would achieve 11.7% against the target.
- 13.2 Members discussed the traffic light system which had been introduced to assist with the indicative in-year monitoring. It was noted that there were many gradings within the Amber category and detailed monitoring took place in this respect. After discussion, it was agreed that an explanatory note be included for any forecasts highlighted in red, for further clarification and discussion.

- 13.3 In response to a query from a Member, it was noted that reductions in transport costs were unlikely, due to the increase in fuel costs and mileage for response policing. The benefits of the Norfolk Policing Model were noted, which included an increase in the number of officers on patrol and had consequently resulted in an increase in public confidence and satisfaction.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) That formatting changes for the appendix and an explanatory note be included for any future forecasts highlighted in red, for further clarification and discussion.

14. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A (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 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

15. **Collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary – Business Cases for the Collaboration of the Economic Crime Unit, Dedicated Source Handling Unit and Special Branch**

- 15.1 Members received the report on Collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary and the associated business cases.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the report and endorse the recommendations therein.

16. **Any Other Items of Business**

There were none on this occasion.

17. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 7 January 2010.

(The meeting closed at 12.10 pm)

CHAIRMAN