

SCRUTINY & AUDIT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE NPA MEETING ROOM, BUILDING 8,
JUBILEE HOUSE, WYMONDHAM, NORFOLK ON
THURSDAY 18 MARCH 2010 AT 10.00 A.M.**

Present

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

In Attendance

Mr R Birtles	Assistant Chief Officer (Resources), Norfolk Constabulary
Ms A Campbell	Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Norfolk Constabulary
Ch/Supt S Hamlin	Head of CCR and Partnerships, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr M Hill	Assistant Chief Executive, Norfolk Police Authority
Ms A Parry	Client Manager, Norfolk Audit Services
Mrs L Savory	Head of Accountancy Services, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr R Summers	Treasurer, Norfolk Police Authority
Ch/Insp G Tempest	Problems Solving and Community Safety, Norfolk Constabulary
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 Iles, Mr P Wells and ACC S Bailey.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2010**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters of Urgent Business**

There were none on this occasion.

5. **Proposed future agenda items and review of the Terms of Reference of the Committee**

5.1 Members were reminded that in order to ensure continuous improvement, a review of the Terms of Reference and future agenda items would be undertaken on an annual basis. The Committee discussed Appendix A to the report, which contained

future agenda items for the Committee. After consideration, it was agreed that the NPA Corporate Plan would be added to the future agenda items for the coming year.

- 5.2 Following a query, Members were reassured that Lead Members and respective Officers of the Authority and Constabulary were able to request reports for future meetings. It was noted that the frequency of reports could also be changed as concerns or developments arose, which would ensure full accountability whilst minimising bureaucracy.
- 5.3 In respect of reducing duplication of effort, it was agreed that Mark Hill would liaise with the Chief Executive and Constabulary to ensure Members representing the Authority on Constabulary Boards could share key information with other Members.
- 5.4 The Committee then discussed the Terms of Reference of the Committee and agreed to include the scrutiny of the Corporate Plan as an additional item and to slightly amend the purpose of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To approve the Programme of Committee Business and Terms of Reference, subject to the amendments as discussed at the meeting;
- iii) That Mark Hill would liaise with the Chief Executive and Constabulary to ensure Members representing the NPA at Constabulary Boards could share key information with other Members.

6. Policing Plan 2010/11

- 6.1 The Director of Communications and Public Affairs introduced the draft Policing Plan 2010/11. Members were apprised that the plan would be in a web based format, with additional hyperlinks to other relevant sources of information. Members noted that although the statutory duty to publish the plan by the 31 March had been removed, the plan would be launched on this date and it would also be updated with the latest performance data, when it was received, in June. Members were asked to forward any comments or suggestions on the plan to the Director of Communications and Public Affairs as soon as possible.
- 6.2 The Assistant Chief Executive apprised the Committee that a Working Group had met on two occasions to consider the Targets and Objectives, and a separate Text and Design Working Group, which had been successful.
- 6.3 Members noted that the Plan had used the Constabulary's Vision, Pledge and Principles as the key framework and strategic guide for how to share information. It was noted that figures would be included in the plan, as well as percentages to add clarity to the data. The Treasurer advised that a Value for Money Statement would be included within the plan. A Member suggested that the financial savings created by Constabulary efficiencies could also be included within future Policing Plans.

- 6.4 A Member queried whether it would be possible for the public to comment on the plan and Members were reassured that a feedback route had been included in the web based version. It was noted that a paper copy of the plan and an easy read version were also under development, for those people unable to access the internet. It was reported that a marketing plan campaign would be launched to raise public awareness of the Policing Plan and to advise how the different versions could be accessed.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To agree the Policing Plan and the targets for 2010/11, subject to any final amendments and contributions which would be agreed by the Policing Plan Working Group before the 31 March and the final report containing the performance figures and VFM statement would be published in June 2010.

7. Norfolk Audit Services Proposed Internal Audit Plan 2010/11

- 7.1 Ms Parry, Client Manager for Norfolk Audit Services, introduced the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2010/11. The Treasurer informed the Committee that the Authority had to undertake sufficient audit coverage in accordance with statutory regulations. It was noted that the work undertaken by Internal Audit complements the work of the Audit Commission and adequate audit coverage was provided to the Authority.
- 7.2 In response to a query from a Member, clarification was provided regarding the tailored audit work of Norfolk Audit Services, in comparison to the more generic work undertaken by commercial audit providers.
- 7.3 Members were reassured that the 280 proposed audit days would provide good coverage for the Authority and additional days could be provided upon request.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To approve the 2010/11 Internal Audit Plan in accordance with the relevant Codes of Practice 2006 under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended 2006).

8. Review of Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

- 8.1 The Assistant Chief Officer (Resources) informed Members that the Contract Standing Orders were last reviewed by the Police Authority in December 2002, with minor amendments approved in 2004, and it was reported that a full review had recently been undertaken.
- 8.2 The significant proposed change to the Contract Standing Orders was to increase the contract sum threshold at which tenders need to be sought. It was noted that it was originally established at £30,000 in 1995 and it was now proposed to increase this level to £35,000 in order to reflect the changes in contract prices. Members

noted that the Constabulary had taken the opportunity to restrict the Contract Standing Orders and to remove areas of duplication, which would make them easier to follow.

- 8.3 The Committee noted that the Financial Regulations were thoroughly reviewed in 2006 and it was noted that the Regulations were reviewed on an annual basis. Members were apprised that no further changes were proposed to the Financial Regulations at this time, other than to reflect the threshold changes proposed within the Contract Standing Orders.
- 8.4 Members noted that exceptions from the Contract Standing Orders and following a query from a Member, it was noted that exceptions between £35,000 and £100,000 were reported to the Members via the Annual Procurement Report.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To endorse the amendments to the Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for final approval by the Police Authority.

9. International Financial Reporting Standards

- 9.1 The Treasurer informed Members that in March 2008 the Chancellor announced that the annual financial statements of Government departments and other public sector bodies would in future be prepared using International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The IFRS would be adapted as necessary for the public sector, in order to bring benefits of consistency and comparability between financial reports in the global economy, and to follow private sector best practice. It was reported that the IFRS was a statutory requirement.
- 9.2 Members noted the significant differences in accounting for the Authority when complying with the IFRS. Members were then apprised that failure to adopt the IFRS would have the following risks: Qualified statement of accounts, Reduced PURE score and Damage to reputation.
- 9.3 In response to a query from a Member, the financial costs to the Constabulary of implementing the International Financial Reporting Standards would be calculated and it was agreed that this information would be circulated to the Committee outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) That information on the costs to the Constabulary of implementing the International Financial Reporting Standards be circulated to the Committee, for information.

10. Update on Proposed Allocation of the BCU Fund for 2020/11

- 10.1 Ch/Insp Tempest informed the Committee that the Basic Command Unit (BCU) funding was allocated from the Home Office (via Go East) to Police Forces to support CDRP activity. It was noted that the fund was currently allocated combined with the Area Based Grant (ABG) and spending was aligned with Local Area Agreement (Safer) outcomes. It was reported that this approach has given the Constabulary a decision making position in relation to accessing £1,326,000 by combining the BCU Fund and also the Area Based Grant. Members were advised that Norfolk Constabulary's Community Safety Department worked with its partners to review spending priorities and performance evaluation of all initiatives funded by the ABG. It was noted that the Norfolk BCU fund allocation for the financial year 2010/11 was £375,000.
- 10.2 Ch/Insp Tempest apprised the Committee of the individual proposed allocations for the financial year 2010/11 and it was reported that other partner agencies also provided some contributions to these initiatives. In response to a query from a Member, it was reported that the County Strategic Group was involved in designating the funding and it was noted that the Mr M Hill, Mr R Chapman and Mr H Humphrey were also members of the group.
- 10.3 Ch/Supt Hamlin took the opportunity to reassure the Committee that the County Strategic Group took an evidence based approach, across the County, throughout the scrutiny process. Following discussions, it was agreed that Mr Hannah would meet with Ch/Insp Tempest to discuss in greater detail how the BCU funding had been allocated. Members took the opportunity to commend the Constabulary for their work in this respect.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) That Mr B Hannah would meet with Ch/Insp Tempest outside of the meeting to discuss in greater detail how the BCU funding was allocated.

11. Notes from the Value for Money Working Group meetings on the 16 February 2010

- 11.1 Members received the notes from the Value for Money Working Group which took place on the 16 February 2010. It was noted that the meeting had discussed the draft HMIC Profiles follow up letter and attachment, the high level working group report and the Fleet update on benchmarking and transport savings.
- 11.2 The Treasurer advised Members that the HMIC would be circulating updated profiles in the near future, which would be discussed at a future meeting. It was reported that the APA would be hosting a conference on Value For Money on the 7 April.
- 11.3 The Assistant Chief Officer (Resources) reported that the Constabulary would be receiving an HMIC inspection on Value for Money on the 6 May and was one of 5 forces taking part in a pilot scheme, which would be extended to all forces later in the year. It was reported that further work was continuing to take place on the high level Value for Money report and further information would be brought to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the report.

12. **Any Other Items of Business**

There were none on this occasion.

13. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 13 May 2010.

(The meeting closed at 11.05 am)

CHAIRMAN