

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE POLICE AUTHORITY MEETING ROOM,**  
**BUILDING 8, FALCONERS CHASE, WYMONDHAM, NORFOLK**  
**ON WEDNESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2010**

**Present:**

Mrs F Anthony  
Mr R Chapman (ex-officio)  
Mrs V Jenkins  
Mr A Malhis  
Mrs E Ollier  
Mr J Perry-Warnes  
Mr D Reeve  
Mr T Tomkinson  
Mr K Turner – Chairman

**In Attendance:**

Mr S Bailey	Deputy Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Supt B Cartwright	Head of Professional Standards Department, Norfolk Constabulary
Mrs D Dring	Committee Administrator, Norfolk Police Authority
Mrs M Graveling	Head of HR Service Delivery, Norfolk Constabulary
Mrs J Hayes	Deputy Chief Executive, Norfolk Police Authority
Ch/Supt J Shiner	Director of HR, Norfolk Constabulary
Miss N Thatcher	Deputy Head of Legal Services, Norfolk Constabulary
Mrs K Walker	Deputy Head of Professional Standards, Norfolk Constabulary

1. **Apologies for absence received**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of Personal and/or Prejudicial Interests**

Mrs Ollier declared an interest in Item 10, albeit not personal or prejudicial, given her peripheral involvement with the PCT & Cawston Park Hospital.

3. **To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2010**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2010 were agreed to be a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters of Urgent Business**

There were none.

5. **Items for Decision**

There were none.

## 6. **HR Learning and Development (Operations) Update**

Chief Superintendent Shiner presented the Learning and Development for update report. Members were pleased that the department continued to save money on the external training costed plan.

A discussion ensued regarding the relatively high number of cancellations/non attendees on training events during the months of July and August, and queried whether this could be avoided. Chief Supt. Shiner advised that courses had been timetabled in line with training expiry dates and she agreed to provide Members with more detailed analysis to enable comparison with similar periods.

In response to a query regarding the need for individuals to update First Aid Certificates, which would be particularly important in view of the Olympics Games in 2012, Chief Supt. Shiner reassured Members that this was not generally an issue but there was a member of staff dedicated to follow up any slippage.

Following a Member's question, Chief Supt. Shiner advised that there had been a cultural change regarding access to courses and training was closely monitored and would be provided depending on operational need, skill requirement (using the Corporate Skills Matrix) and cost effectiveness according to the Costed Training Plan.

Chief Supt. Shiner agreed to clarify to the Committee the nature of the overspend by the Protective Services Dept within the External Training Costed Plan, the number of cancellations/non-attendees on events by Special Constables between April and September 2010 and in addition to investigate options for providing comparative data with previous years.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

## 7. **HR (Service Delivery) Update**

Chief Supt. Shiner advised the Committee that Police Officer strength was currently at 1616, against an establishment of 1646, which although 10 below forecast was expected to come in line with the predicted strength at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

With regard to Staff establishment, Members were advised that out of an establishment of 1235.8 posts, the Constabulary were running with 153.8 vacancies (12.44% below establishment). Chief Supt. Shiner gave reassurance that the effects of the unfilled posts were being managed through the Chief Officer Team and Force Delivery meetings. Members noted that the embargo on recruitment continued, with staff only being recruited on a 'temporary' basis and then only after the closest scrutiny by the Director of Human Resources.

The Deputy Chief Constable assured Members that with at least 500 PCSOs and Officers currently available at any time there was still scope to manage the Force effectively and that the numbers on response would not go below 380. He informed Members that, although vacancies in some areas had been deliberately kept open, this was not feasible in departments such as Vulnerable Persons Directorate. He confirmed that risk and demand was being actively managed and that overall performance was generally good.

A discussion ensued regarding the status of the Pension Reviews and the potential impact on long serving officers of 30+ years. Chief Supt Shiner assured members that these figures had been taken into consideration in the 4 year budget forecast. It was noted that some officers could take the decision to take their pension early after 25 or 26 years of service, however contingency planning was in place to effectively risk manage the situation.

Arising from consideration of the F & W RMG Lessons Learnt action list, Chief Supt. Shiner agreed to provide Members with a copy of the new promotions FPD.

In addition members questioned the improvements to Promotions Process which stated 'applicants to evidence ability to operate at higher/grade'. Members felt that it could be difficult to demonstrate work at the higher rank and that applicants would need to show the 'potential' ability. Chief Supt. Shiner was agreeable to change the wording and commented that the Constabulary provided opportunities for staff to act at a higher level as part of their development plan. Following further discussion the Chairman concluded that alternative wording such as potential would be preferable.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

**8. Dip Sampling Update**

The Deputy Chief Executive provided an updated report on progress, which although not as well advanced as intended, had included the drafting of a new protocol, which was being finalised with Constabulary colleagues. Members were advised that the 2 dip sampling champions would trial the new process with a view to rolling it out in early 2011.

Members discussed the process of dip sampling and difficulties experienced such as locating paper documents. In response to a Member's query, Supt. Cartwright advised that the Constabulary were moving towards all electronic filing, which should improve accessibility.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the oral report be noted.

**9. An overview of the Management of Obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2002 and Data Protection Act 1998**

The Deputy Head of Professional Development presented the report. She advised that in respect of Data Protection and in particular subject access the Constabulary, along with Suffolk, would be embarking on a pilot for ACPO Criminal Records Office to undertake the administration of these requests as well as the final response process. The pilot will run for 6 months with an evaluation at 3 months.

Members noted that although PNC requests had declined, other areas of disclosure had increased and continued to do so with the 2009/10 figure representing an 89% increase over the previous year. The increase had impacted on staff resources which had had to be diverted to the additional disclosure work and there would be

resourcing challenges in the near future, particularly as in 2010 a further increase was expected as court orders and housing disclosures would be taken on, which would increase income from fees by double what they were last year.

Members were apprised that Freedom of Information requests had become more complex and had increased by 17.5% but were being managed within the required time framework. Members were pleased to note that, to date the Constabulary had not been the subject of any complaints to the Commissioners relating to the disclosure of information.

The Head of Professional Standards advised Members that there would need to be a refocus of resources on statistics and audit work particularly in terms of managing the risk of inappropriate access to information. In response to a Members query she advised that there needed to be more clarity regarding where Freedom of Information and Data Protection would sit within the context of the BSR. At the request of the Deputy Chief Executive, she agreed that notification of future FOI review meetings would be extended to the Chief Executive's Office to enable staff to attend and share information as appropriate.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted

10. **Lessons Learned from Operation Meridian**

Superintendent Cartwright presented a report of the lessons learned from the review of Operation Meridian, an investigation into alleged fraud at Cawston Park Private Hospital by members of the Norfolk Constabulary MIT assisted by staff from the Constabulary's Hi Tech Crime and Economic Crime Units. She advised that it was usual practice at the end of a complex investigation such as this for a review to take place to identify any lessons that may be learned but having regard to the complaints made about the management of the investigation, an independent review had been conducted by D/Supt Henwood of Suffolk Constabulary. She said that the overarching conclusion was that the enquiry undertaken by the Constabulary was carried out appropriately; and whilst there was nothing to suggest the conduct of the investigation fell short of standards expected by the Police Service, there were lessons to be learned in relation to; the original referral process, the Senior Investigation Officer Policy logs; communication regarding hi-tech crime issues; and appropriate use of the communication and media strategy. These had been addressed by the Head of Protective Services.

Members requested to be kept informed of high profile cases such as Operation Meridian.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

11. **Overview of Complaints and Discipline Statistics**

Superintendent Cartwright provided an update in relation to complaints, misconduct and other matters for the period 1 July to 30 September 2010. Members were pleased to note that the number of complaints (allegations) recorded for the first quarter of the year had reduced by 9.35% compared to the same quarter last year

and that Norfolk Constabulary had a lower number of complaints (320) than the regional average for the period (462), but they were mindful that the introduction of a 'dissatisfaction' category had an impact.

Members were advised that there had been 250 'dissatisfactions' recorded for the 6 month period ending 30 September, but that the majority were examples of immediate service recovery which would previously not have required recording. Members asked for a further review of the method of recording dissatisfaction complaints with a narrative explanation provided where required to enable effective analysis to be undertaken.

Members noted the statistics on regional comparisons of complaints/allegations and the fact that Suffolk was not included. A Member commented that it would be more meaningful to provide the figures as a percentage. Supt Cartwright agreed to review the regional comparison information and how this is presented in the future.

There was a discussion regarding the complaints recorded by Response Hubs and SNTs, which although there was a significant drop in 3 main areas, Members noted that Thetford LRM & Breckland SNT complaints were disproportionately higher than others. Supt. Cartwright agreed to investigate the high level of complaints in the Thetford/Breckland area and report back to the Chief Executives' office.

Supt. Cartwright having updated Members on the collaborative work with Suffolk on the regional vetting system, advised Members that Len Jackson had been appointed the temporary Chairman at the IPCC; and went on to comment on streamlining initiatives which would see appeals being dealt with locally in future.

Supt. Cartwright said that the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) was functioning well and to date had received referrals of 184 officers and 85 police staff. In response to a Members question about the future of the PIU, the DCC said that whilst the unit was temporary its valuable contribution was recognised particularly in the current climate; and it would therefore continue to be monitored.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

12. **Dissatisfaction Update Report**

It was agreed that this item had been satisfactorily dealt with as part of the overview of Complaints and Discipline Statistics.

13. **Any Other Business**

None

14. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**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 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

15. **Exempt Items for Decision**

None

16. **Consideration of individual Complaints and Discipline matters for the period 1 July to 30 Sept 2010**

Members received a comprehensive briefing on specific cases including details regarding internal investigations and suspended police staff/misconduct hearings.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

18. **Overview of the Civil Claims and Employment Tribunal Statistics for the period 1 July to 30 Sept 2010**

The Deputy Head of Legal Services reported that 37 public liability claims had been received in the quarter, compared to 29 in the same period in 2009, there had been 4 files closed of which 1 had been settled and 3 were not pursued, discontinued or stayed. Miss Thatcher then commented on the number and nature of outstanding public liability claims.

It was noted that 1 employer's liability claim had been received from a police officer and 2 from police staff in the period, and that no files had been closed. It was noted that, as at 11 October 2010, 12 employer's liability claims were outstanding.

In relation to employment tribunal claims, it was noted that no new claims had been received from either police officers or police staff during the quarter. In addition, Members noted that the number of outstanding employment tribunal claims as at 18 Nov 2010 was 2; and received an update in respect of each.

Miss Thatcher presented the report in a simplified format which met with Members' approval.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

17. **Date of next meeting**

Wednesday, 9 February 2011 at 10.00 a.m.

(The meeting closed at 12.12 pm.)

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**CHAIRMAN**