

SCRUTINY & AUDIT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE NPA MEETING ROOM, BUILDING 8,
JUBILEE HOUSE, WYMONDHAM, NORFOLK ON
TUESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 10.00 A.M.**

Present:

Mr P Hardy
Mr B Hannah
Mr H Humphrey – Chairman
Mr B Iles
Mrs V Jenkins
Ms J McKibben
Mr A Malhis – substitute
Mr P Wells

In Attendance:

Mrs K Abrahams	Principal Analyst, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr S Bailey	Deputy Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr R Birtles	Assistant Chief Officer (Resources), Norfolk Constabulary
Mr R Brown	Risk and Insurance Manager, Norfolk Constabulary
Miss S Bryant	Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Administrator / Research Officer, Norfolk Police Authority
Ms M Buttery	Accountant, Norfolk Constabulary
Mrs A Campbell	Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Norfolk Constabulary
Mrs D Dring	Committee Administrator, Norfolk Police Authority
Mr S Mellor	Director of Financial Services and Accountancy, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr R Summers	Treasurer, Norfolk Police Authority

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mr R Chapman. It was noted that Mr A Malhis was attending the meeting as a substitute on this occasion.

The Chairman congratulated Mr Bailey on his successful appointment as Deputy Chief Constable for the County, a sentiment which was echoed by Committee Members. The Chairman also welcomed Mrs Diana Dring to the meeting and advised those present that Mrs Dring was recently appointed as Committee Administrator for the Chief Executive's office.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2010**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters of Urgent Business**

The Treasurer reported that the Audit Commission had recently been notified that they would be abolished by the end of 2012. It was noted that, until such time, it would be 'business as usual' and then there would be the option for the Authority to choose its own Auditors.

5. **Target Setting for 2011/12, Corporate Plan for 2011/12, and Policing Plan for 2011/14**

The Principal Analyst reminded the Committee of the work involved in the successful planning round for 2009/10 and advised of the opportunities to build on such successes, with greater emphasis on the relationship between financial and operational strategies. Those present acknowledged the importance of underpinning the future 3 year plan to specifically reduce the cost of policing whilst continuing to deliver a quality service to the community, particularly in light of recent political and financial developments.

The Committee were advised that key stages in the forthcoming planning round included the completion of the Strategic Assessment (to inform the target setting process) and a target setting workshop on 3 November 2010 (to debate performance and priorities for the year ahead). It was also noted that Anne Campbell would retain responsibility for drafting the Corporate Plan 2011/12 and Annual Policing Plan 2011/14 in conjunction with a small working party of Members. It was agreed that the small working party be formed as proposed at item 3.1 of the report.

A discussion ensued regarding the importance of highlighting such planning issues into discussions with the Joint Statutory Committee, particularly given the volume of business proposed to be undertaken collaboratively with Suffolk Police Authority/Constabulary. The Deputy Chief Constable undertook to consider such implications in conjunction with the relevant Suffolk lead and make proposals as necessary.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the contents of the report be noted;
- ii) That a small working party to liaise with Anne Campbell on the production of the Corporate Plan 2011/12 and the Annual Policing Plan 2011/14, be approved;
- iii) That the Deputy Chief Constable consider (with Suffolk) the implications for target setting in the context of joint working and the forthcoming Joint Statutory Cttee meetings.

6. **Income Generation Update**

The Director of Financial Services and Accountancy reminded the Committee of a report to Full Police Authority in June 2009 outlining a number of new income generation activities being implemented/considered and apprised those present of the outcomes of such initiatives. It was noted that such activities were now embedded within the normal operations of the Constabulary and should continue to generate fairly constant levels of income, subject to any policy change.

The Committee were then advised of the successful Home Office grant obtained (£75,000) towards the capital costs of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Norwich and noted that, since publication of the report, 2 additional grants had been received relating to bids which had been put together on behalf of partners.

The Director of Financial Services and Accountancy then advised Members that the Income Generation Unit had been actively pursuing funding streams from the European Commission that addressed core policing issues. It was noted that the bid process for such funding tended to be very slow and involved seeking partners from other EU countries. In response to a query, it was noted that any costs involved in participating in the bid process were offset within the bid itself.

The Committee were then provided with details of other opportunities to assist departments with specific cost reduction measures (such as a reduction in the headline commission rate with an agency staff provider and reduced rates for recruitment advertising) and details of new initiatives to generate other income. Those present were also advised of other projects on hold or not being progressed and the reasons for this. A discussion ensued regarding the development and future marketing of Balanced Scorecard and it was noted that, whilst Norfolk would still have the software to use, the market within which to sell this was not there in light of the current financial situation.

The Director of Communications and Public Affairs then apprised Members of income generation initiatives within the CPA department including the sponsorship of the NOSCAS annual event, the SafeScout DVD and a new customer service DVD. Those present were also advised of the potential sponsorship by Blackberry for production of Children's books written by a PCSO from Norfolk. The Committee were pleased to note such initiatives and requested an update in 6 months time, for information.

The Director of Financial Services and Accountancy reported that, by the end of the 2 year fixed contract period for staff members within the Income Generation Unit, it was anticipated that the unit would have delivered an ongoing annual income of around £130,000 and one off grant income of at least £83,000. It was noted that, due to current financial constraints, the level of future commercial activity available to the Constabulary was expected to be limited and therefore it had been decided not to renew the Head of Unit's contract when it expired in October 2010. Those present were advised that the remaining member of the unit would have their contract extended until the end of March 2011 so as not to lose momentum in relation to such positive work. It was further noted that, by extending this contract, consideration could be afforded to collaborating in this area with Suffolk Constabulary.

Members were then reminded of the range of fees and charges offered to the public, most of which aligned to statutory or ACPO advised rates. A discussion ensued regarding the potential to increase those fees and charges where the figure was an ACPO advised rate, particularly in light of the tough financial decisions to be taken by the Authority in the upcoming months. It was noted that ACPO were keen to achieve consistency in charges across the Country however Members requested that the option of exploring any opportunities where it would be possible to increase fees and charges so as to maximise income wherever possible, be pursued. Discussion ensued regarding fees for street closures and registration of overseas students and the Director of Financial Services and Accountancy undertook to update relevant Members via the Chief Executive's office outside of the formal meeting process.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the contents of the report be noted;
- ii) That the fees and charges outlined in Appendix 1 of the report be agreed subject to advice to Members regarding opportunities to increase ACPO recommended charges to maximise income;
- iii) That an update in relation to the ongoing work of the Corporate Communications Department in relation to income generation be provided to the Committee in 6 months time;
- iv) That Amjad Malhis (via the Chief Executive's office) be provided with additional information regarding fees for registration of overseas students;
- v) That Brian Hannah (via the Chief Executive's office) be provided with further information regarding fees for street closures and police presence.

7. Performance Monitoring 2010/11 – 1st Quarter

Members received a comprehensive briefing on Performance Monitoring for the first quarter 2010/11. Members were pleased to note that reported crimes had been reduced by 12.2% in comparison with the same 3 month period last year, which was 10.9% better than the quarter target of no more than 12,551 crimes.

The Principal Analyst reminded those present that Robbery had been previously raised as an area of concern and it was noted that in response to this, analytical products had been commissioned and an action plan developed. Members were advised that, as a result, the Robbery detection rate was 46.9% during the quarter, 24.6% points better than the same period in 2009/10.

With regard to serious violent offence detections, the Committee was advised that the detection rate for the first quarter was 58.3%, an increase of 1.4% points compared to the same period last year. The Principal Analyst further reported that the target rate for this indicator was currently 6.7% points below target however a Serious Violent Offence Board was undertaking action planning in order to address this.

The Principal Analyst reported that the serious sexual offence detection rate for the first quarter of 2010/11 was 37.9% which was an increase of 12.4% points compared to the same period last year, however it was noted that this was 3.1% points below the new performance target.

In relation to Public Confidence, the Committee were reminded that the new Home Secretary announced the removal of the national target; however it was noted that Norfolk Constabulary continued to focus on this area. Members were pleased to note that performance for the 12 month period ending March 2010 was 54.1% with a confidence interval of 4.8%. It was further noted that this was an increase 0.6% points compared to that reported in the last quarter.

With regard to Public Satisfaction, the Principal Analyst advised that the 12 month rolling period ending 30 June 2010 showed satisfaction to be 75.4% (with a confidence interval of 1.2%). It was noted that this performance was 3.3% points better than 12 months ago.

A discussion then ensued regarding Anti-Social Behaviour incidents and the actions being taken by the Constabulary to tackle such incidents in the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk District. Members were pleased to note that analytical work continued to be commissioned which resulted in targeted patrols of key locations during peak time, along with partnership working and increased community engagement. In response to a query regarding the involvement of other agencies (such as the Council) in addressing Anti-Social Behaviour, the Deputy Chief Constable apprised those present of a new Operational Partnership Team being trialled in the Breckland area and undertook to invite relevant staff to a future meeting in order to provide Members with more information on the subject.

A discussion then ensued in relation to restorative justice data and it was agreed that future performance monitoring reports include such information for Members' scrutiny.

The Committee were pleased to note another positive quarter in relation to performance figures and praised the Constabulary for their proactive work. It was noted however that continual improvements seen in the past year may not be sustainable, not least because of pressures on resources in the coming year.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the contents of the report be noted;
- ii) That R Jackman and B Mason (via DCC) be invited to provide a presentation to Committee Members in relation to a new Operational Partnership Team operating in Breckland, particularly in relation to ASB initiatives;
- iii) That performance data in relation to Restorative Justice be contained within future Performance Monitoring Reports for the Committee.

8. NPA Efficiency & Productivity Plan 2010/11 – 1st Quarter position

The VFM Accountant provided a comprehensive overview of the efficiency planning regime, with particular focus on the quarter 1 2010/11 position. It was noted that any future Home Office efficiency planning regime beyond 2010/11 was currently unknown however it was expected that greater levels of efficiency savings and cost reductions would be required as a means of balancing the budget.

Members noted that overall the Constabulary was expected to over exceed the 10.3% year target by the end of the financial year along with further in-year non pay savings of £1.488m. It was further noted that all such ongoing savings would be removed from the 2011/12 base budget and counted as efficiencies for that year.

With regard to performance links and validation, the Committee were pleased to note that the Financial Services Department liaised with the Business Performance Team for updated details of progress on performance for the period and it was noted that this provided reassurance that cashable values had been achieved without any detriment to service delivery.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

9. **Norfolk Police Authority/Norfolk Constabulary – Corporate Risk Register**

The Risk and Information Manager provided with an update regarding the Norfolk Police Authority and Norfolk Constabulary very high level corporate risks.

It was noted that, since publication of the agenda papers, a further review had been conducted of the risk relating to the Abnormal Loads Management System and as a result of the controls in place, the overall risk rating had been reduced. Members noted that this risk was therefore no longer considered to be classified as “very high” and it would therefore drop off the Corporate Register.

The Treasurer reminded Members that this register was circulated to them regularly for reference and should there be any queries, these should be directed to the Chief Executive’s office for response.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

10. **Annual Insurance Report 2009/10**

The Director of Financial Services and Accountancy provided information regarding performance during 2009/10 in relation to premium levels, the number and value of claims settled and, the type of claims. It was noted that the report demonstrated a sound claims history for Norfolk Constabulary and that settlements had been made against the self insurance element with costs being contained within budget.

Members were reminded that the Constabulary was a member of the South East and Eastern Region Police Insurance Consortium (SEERPIC), which undertakes insurance on a collective basis, arranging contracts for insurance cover, brokerage and fund reviews. It was noted that a new contract for liability and motor cover had been awarded from April 2010 for a period of 3 years with the option to extend for a further 2 years. The Committee were also advised that each force within the consortium was able choose a preferred excess and, in consultation with the Treasurer, Norfolk chose to stay with excess levels of £250,000. It was noted that such a decision was based on the fact that Norfolk’s claims history indicated that the force would self insure most claims at a level of £100,000 and therefore the risk of staying with the higher excess was offset against the lower premiums obtained.

In response to a query regarding an increase in motor claims settled during 2009/10, the Director of Financial Services and Accountancy advised that this was due to prolonged periods of bad weather during the year along with the increased mileage being undertaken by response teams. The Deputy Chief Constable reported that the Transport Standards Group monitored all police vehicle and driver collisions / incidents and such data was reviewed by senior officers to ensure appropriate action or intervention was taken.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

11. **Data Quality Update Report**

The Risk and Information Manager provided an update regarding implementation of necessary Data Quality requirements. It was noted that, as a member of the Eastern ACPO Region Data Quality Tool Procurement Group, the Constabulary had now approved the purchase of the Infoshare Clearcore data quality tool and was working with suppliers on a project plan for delivery of the system.

Members were provided with an overview of the project objectives, noting that these would be achieved through the establishment of 2 temporary Data Quality Officers to work alongside the business Area leads and by putting in place processes for data matching and providing a best view of a nominal.

A discussion ensued regarding the benefits of this work, particularly the greater accuracy of data and greater efficiency for the analysts. Discussions also focused on the ability to share information with other agencies and the means by which this was undertaken.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

12. **Notes from the Value for Money Working Group meeting on 17 August 2010**

Members received the notes from the Value for Money Working Group which took place on the 17 August 2010. The Treasurer highlighted the importance of Value for Money, particularly in light of the current financial climate and it was noted that this would be a key area for the future.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

13. **Any Other Items of Business**

There were none.

14. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 11 November 2010.

(The meeting closed at 11.55 am)

CHAIRMAN