

## **Devon and Cornwall Police Authority**

### **MINUTES**

A meeting of the **Corporate Governance Committee** was held on Tuesday, 8 November 2011 in the Conference Room, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10:00hrs.

#### **Present:**

Chair Ms J Norton  
Vice Chair Ms L Dunn  
Members: Lady Stanhope, Mr J Hart

Other Members in attendance: Mr D Money, Mrs J Owen, Ms L Price

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Police Authority  
Mrs J Hall-Williams (HR Advisor to the Force), Miss J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive), Mr D Walton (Treasury) Mr E Wardle (Head of Internal Audit) Mrs W Rowden (HR Policy Officer).

Mrs A Thorpe (Committee Administrator).

#### **Constabulary:**

Ms A Daveney (Head of Technical Accounting), Mrs S Goscomb (Director of Finance and Resources), Mrs A Poole, (Head of Performance and Analysis).

#### **Audit Commission:**

Mr M Bartlett (Audit Manager).

#### **71. Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was received from Mr D Percival

#### **72. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Mrs W Rowden, (HR Policy Officer) and Mrs A Thorpe (Committee Administrator).

#### **73. Chair's Announcements**

- The Chair gave her thanks to Mrs J Zito, Committee member and Mr T Burton, former Force Risk Manager for all their hard work in relation to the Committee.
- The Chair explained that Transition which was a standard agreed item was not on the present Agenda. These would be relevant items at the Seminar and Strategic Planning and Co-ordination Committee and the Full Authority. The Chair reassured the Committee that it was being dealt with robustly.
- The Integrity Review had not been completed at the present stage as they were still waiting for the HMIC report.

#### **74. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made in respect of any item on the agenda.

#### **75. Minutes Dated 7 July 2011**

- Members referred to Minute 56 and were informed that an update would be sent out shortly in relation to a proposed HMIC follow up visit concerning police visibility.
- Minute 58. Members were informed that the Protecting Vulnerable Working Party had rape as its main theme. Although the detection rate was rising it was still below the national average.
- Minute 62. Confirmation was given that the Risk Maturity Survey would be sent out later in November.

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on the 7 July 2011.

#### **76. Minutes Dated 28 September 2011**

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on the 28 September 2011.

#### **77. Assurance Report from the Professional Standards and Complaints Monitoring Committee.**

This report was presented by Mrs J Owen the Chair of the Professional Standards and Complaints Monitoring Committee.

- The Committee was informed that the Force was presently going through a period of change and was working to have a fully computerised compliant recording system.
- The Professional Standards Department were looking at organising a learning walk. The Chair of the Professional Standards and Complaints Monitoring Committee regularly met with Mr I Grafton, the Head of the Professional Standards Department to discuss issues.
- The chair of the Professional Standards and Complaints Monitoring Committee explained that the reason why it was taking longer to investigate complaints at the present time was partly due to Blueprint and the period of transition the Force was going through. However, the matter was in hand and would hopefully be resolved shortly.

**RESOLVED** That the committee accept this report as assurance that the Professional Standards and Complaints Monitoring Committee is acting appropriately and making suitable progress.

Mrs Owen left the meeting following this item.

#### **78. Interim Audit Report – Audit Commission**

The Audit Manager introduced the Interim Audit report. He explained that the report set out his findings from the interim audit in preparation for his work on the Authority's 2010/11 financial statements.

**RESOLVED** to note the content of the report

## **79. Audit Commission Summary Progress Report**

The Audit Manager introduced the Audit Commission Summary Progress Report.

- The Committee was informed that 8% rebate of audit fees for 2011/12 had been agreed. This had been deducted from the Police Authority's monthly payments.
- Invitations to tender for future audit services had been issued. 16 December 2011 was the submission date for tenders. The process would be managed at a national level.
- The District Audit Partnership would be submitting a bid.
- There would be a separate consultation for the Police Authority fees 2012/2013 in May 2012.
- Members were informed that it was expected that a set of accounts would be created, to include a note regarding the split between the Police Authority and Police and Crime Commissioner. However, guidance was still awaited.

**RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report

## **80. Annual Audit Letter**

The Audit Manager introduced the Annual Audit Letter. He explained that the report summarised the findings from the 2010/11 audit. The audit comprised of two elements a) the audit of financial statements and b) the assessment of the arrangements to achieve value for money in the use of resources. Issues discussed included:-

- The Committee were informed that the fees on page 9 related to 2010/11 audit.
- The document would go on the official Police Authority website.

**RESOLVED** to note the content of the report

## **81. Force Risk Register**

The Chairman informed the Committee that the paper was an open paper however, two of the risks on the paper were restricted and if necessary would be discussed in the closed session. Issues discussed included:-

- Changes had been made to the way that the Risk Registers were run. The running portfolio of registers was now owned at the Chief Officer level. However, there were no plans to change the structure or the appearance of the register.
- Risk 52. There were always lessons to be learnt regarding Vulnerable Victims. It was anticipated that this risk was on most Forces Risk Register.
- Risk 33. It was a difficult time to work in Partnerships due to the changing situation in the public sector. This resulted in the risk being higher.
- ACC Taylor was working to centralise the information regarding funding of Partnerships. It was intended that the data would be vastly improved for 2012/2013.
- Governance of risks would be reviewed and be linked to Assurance and the Corporate Risk Register. At the present time they were working with Internal Audit to identify areas of under and over assurance.

The Committee was asked to email the Assistant Chief Executive two risks by the end of the following week for discussion at the next meeting. It was noted that a Lead member at the Force may need to attend the next Corporate Governance Meeting to discuss the risks.

- RESOLVED** i) to note the contents of the report.  
ii) It was agreed that the Committee would discuss the Transition and Project Plan and Risk Register at the next Corporate Governance Meeting.

### **82. Internal Audit – Report on Recent Audits**

The Internal Audit Report was introduced by the Head of Internal Audit. He informed members that the report provided members of the Committee with a summary of findings from two internal audit assignments finalised during October 2011. Points raised included:-

- The first Audit Report on Treasury Management would be issued for information to the Resources Committee.
- Both recent reports relied on spreadsheets which were used to monitor and forecast cash flow and to record loans and investment activity. However, there were weaknesses in spreadsheets.
- Issues around the storage of seized property were highlighted.
- Concern was raised about seized property, including drugs and firearms and the need to have a clear audit trail.

- RESOLVED** i) to note the content of the report.  
ii) It was agreed that the Committee would revisit the issues regarding storage and seized property once the Force had the time to consider the recommendations for improving management information.

### **83. Strategic Review Final Update Report**

This report was presented by the Assistant Chief Executive who outlined the background to the report. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:-

- A trial had previously taken place of a Key Messages System at two conferences in Devon. This involved the distribution of a Briefing Sheet on a regular basis. However, the results of the trial showed that the system was not a product that people needed and as a consequence they have now decided not to use it.
- The Committee were informed that the intention to have a strategy available for the next SWPAJC on 4 November 2011 had now been covered.

- RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report subject to the Committee discussing Transition at the next meeting.

### **84. Community Safety Partnerships**

The paper provided a brief overview of the Community Safety Partnerships arrangements, their current priorities and their anticipated future. Issues highlighted included:-

- A property review had taken place in Devon which included all publically owned buildings.
- Most of the partnerships were looking at broadly similar issues implying that there was a shared agenda.
- Members were informed that only three of the eight community safety partnerships were currently providing feedback.
- Concerns were raised in relation to the possibility of resources going to more densely populated areas.

**RESOLVED**

- i) to note the contents of the report
- ii) It was agreed that the Community Safety Partnerships paper would be made available to all members and members would be reminded of the importance of providing feedback.

**85. Mid Year Report on Treasury Management**

This report was introduced by the Treasurer. Issues highlighted included:-

- Members were informed that credit and counter party risks were reviewed on a daily basis.
- The strategy had gone through a number of changes since it had been agreed in April 2011 and was now considered regularly in response to a fast changing global finance environment.
- The Treasurer informed the Committee that the credit rating levels used had been brought into line for in-house and external treasury management activities.
- It was highlighted to Members that the approved changes to the minimum credit rating levels contained within the Investment Strategy had taken place on 28 September 2011.

**RESOLVED** to approve the contents of the report

**86. Insurance Contract Update – Approval of Process**

This report was introduced by the Treasurer. Issues highlighted included:-

- Members of the Committee were informed that MARSH would be responsible for the procurement process.
- It was highlighted that the programme did not include the insurance of the Force helicopter which was covered by a national framework agreement.

**RESOLVED** to approve the contents of the report

**87. Corporate Governance Committee Workplan**

Members of the Committee were introduced to the latest version of the Workplan that had been updated to reflect recently undertaken work.

**RESOLVED** to approve the Committee Workplan and Risk Register.

**88. Members Briefing Sheets**

**i) Risk Management Update**

**ii) Annual Governance Statement – Half Year Review**

The Committee were referred to the briefing sheets which had been sent out prior to the meeting.

**RESOLVED** to note the contents of the reports.

**89. Consideration to Exclude the Press and Public**

**Closed Items** (Items which may be considered by the Committee with only members of the Police Authority, appropriate Officers and expert advisors present, on the grounds that exempt / confidential information may be disclosed)

<p><b>Recommended that the Agenda items detailed in the table below be considered as closed items</b></p>
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<b>Agenda item No</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Relevant Act</b>	<b>Relevant section</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>Inspection Reports</b>	Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (access to information) Act 1985	Schedule 12A, paragraph 7 information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of a crime.
<b>19</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>Assurance Report from the Human Resources Committee</b>	Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (access to information) Act 1985	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information )

### **90. Inspection Reports**

Issues highlighted during consideration of the Inspection report on Crime Recording included:

- The fall in recorded incidents and crimes in September 2011, with a reduction of 22.12%.
- Members of the Committee emphasised the importance of audit trails and the recording of crime.
- The Deputy Chair had attended the Gold Group that was currently looking at data quality.
- It was pointed out to the Members of the Committee that some of the difficulties in reporting crime arose through steam lining processes.
- It was highlighted that the recording of anti social behaviour was very important to the public.
- Concern was expressed over certain incidents being described as miscellaneous as there was no audit trail and therefore no identification of repeat callers of victims.
- Members of the Committee were assured that the Chief Officer Group took the reporting of crime seriously and making sure that this was done correctly was a priority
- Members enquired what risk identification was in place.
- Discussions took place on how learning was going to be identified and disseminated and if there was information missing from the risk register?

**RESOLVED** to note the content of the reports

### **91. Assurance Report from the Human Resources Committee.**

Issues highlighted by the Chair of the Human Resources Committee included:

- Problems caused by having no dedicated HR Policy Officer Support due to the difficulty in recruiting a suitably qualified individual.

- Delays and quality of reports for the Human Resource Committee making an impact on the decision making.
- Concern was highlighted over the capacity and capability of the Human Resource Function to deal with the large and unprecedented agenda it was presently dealing with.
- The issues caused by the increased workload of the Human Resources function as a result of the impact of the CSR within the Force and changes emerging from Blueprint.
- The importance of prioritising the Human Resource Committee work.
- The necessity of data quality being recorded on the risk register.

The HR Advisor drew attention to the general, but not exclusive, risks arising from:

- The consequences of the national 'test case' on A19.
- Problems arising from any challenges to redundancies made.
- Ensuring that DCPA decision making was not compromised by late and/or inadequate papers.
- Failing to ensure that the DCPA secured complete and timely feedback on action taken to remedy problems identified.
- The quality and 'currency' of employment matters within the force.
- The DCPA risk register not being current, complete and/or not used to inform the work of the HR Committee.
- A failure to ensure adequate management capacity and capability within the force – the HR function specifically and generally across the force.
- The timing of the implementation of reviews – specifically whilst the concepts may be regarded as sound from a business perspective. There could be risks in implementing radical change at this particular point in time. However financial drivers made this necessary therefore the consequences of implementation required careful and regular monitoring.

**RESOLVED**      i) to note the contents of the reports  
                           ii) The Chairman of the Human Resource Committee to present another assurance report in six months time

## **92. Force Risk Register**

The Committee referred back to the restricted risks on the Force Risk Register. Issues discussed included:-

- Contributions to Partnerships
- Diversity audits and human rights.

**RESOLVED**      to note the contents of the reports

The meeting closed at 13.10 hours.