

**Devon And Cornwall Police Authority  
Minutes**

A meeting of the **Corporate Governance Committee** was held in the Conference Room, Police Authority, Endeavour House, on the 17 May 2006, starting at 10:00hrs

**Present**

Chairman ..... Mr M Bull,  
C Bulley Mr G Hicks and Mr C Wallin

**Officers in Attendance**

Deputy Chief Constable N Arnold, Mr J Glasby (Treasurer), Mr R Hutchins (Deputy Head of Internal Audit, Miss J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive), Mr C Papworth (Head of Finance), Mr A Rutter (Interim Finance Manager) and Mr E Wardle (Internal Audit).

**CG/29 Election of Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Mr Mike Bull be elected Chairman.

**CG/30 Election of Vice - Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Mr Craig Bulley be elected Vice-Chairman.

**CG/31 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies of absence

**CG/32 Chairman's Announcements**

Agenda Item 14 does not need to be taken in closed session and would therefore be taken in the open part of the meeting after Agenda Item 12 - "External Auditor"

**CG/33 Declarations of Interest**

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

**CG/34 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2006 be confirmed as a correct record.

**CG/35 The definition of the Term " Corporate Governance" and the Role of the Committee**

The Committee had a discussion about the definition of the term "corporate governance" and the role of the Committee.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Future workload for the Committee when the Home Secretary's announcement regarding the future structure of policing is announced;
- The potential timing of the initiation of the workload referred to above;
- The Terms of Reference of the Corporate Governance Committee and the tasks which need to be done;

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- Accountabilities of Police Authority Members and Officers and also of Police Officers;
- The need for clarity in decision making at all levels and the oversight role of the Authority;
- The need for the public to know that the Authority is undertaking its monitoring and scrutiny role effectively

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That this topic be revisited when the Home Secretary's decision is made regarding future policing structures.
- (ii) to submit a paper to the full Authority meeting regarding the meaning of Corporate Governance and the prospective role of the Committee.

**CG/36 The Composition of the Corporate Governance Committee**

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The number of Committee members that is needed in order for the Committee to be both viable and effective;
- The work of the Corporate Governance Committee and the possible conflict of interest that the Chairs of other Committees may have if they sit on the Corporate Governance Committee.

**RESOLVED to recommend to the Authority**

- (i) that the committee size is increased to 7; and
- (ii) that representatives from all groups (councillors, lay justices and independent members) are on the Committee; and
- (iii) that the Chairs of the Authority's Committees, the Authority Chairman and Authority Vice-Chairman should not be eligible to be members of the Committee, (but they would be welcome to attend meetings of the Committee).

**CG/37 Corporate Governance**

The report presented the Committee with an opportunity to reflect on the importance of effective corporate governance and used a case study of another Authority, where matters had gone seriously wrong, to illustrate what can happen.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Human Resources - planning recruitment processes and managing staff numbers;
- The role of the Police Authority regarding the appointment and holding to account of senior police staff;
- Leadership;
- There is no role for complacency, continuous improvement is essential.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that the committee recognises the importance of effective corporate governance;
- (ii) that the messages on the importance of effective corporate governance be shared with all Members and senior officers in the Force and Authority;
- (iii) that during 2006/2007 work is undertaken to produce a Code of Corporate Governance for recommendation to the Police Authority to formalise and codify the good work that is already in place and to suggest improvements where necessary.

### **CG/38 Statement of Internal Control**

The Authority is required to make a Statement of Internal Control as part of its annual accounts and a draft statement was presented to the Committee for consideration.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The role of the Chief Constable in relation to financial matters and the Statement of Internal Control
- The development of an active corporate governance culture

**RESOLVED to recommend to the Authority that the Statement of Internal Control 2005/2006 be approved (subject to the amendment of sections 9, 27 and the signature page as suggested by the Committee) and included in the Statement of Accounts for 2005/2006**

### **CG/39 Internal Audit Report on Bank Reconciliation**

Devon Audit Services reviewed the systems pertaining to the bank reconciliation in January 2006. An opinion was formed based on the evaluation of system controls and the supporting documentation. The Committee received and considered the overall Summary Opinion and the Assurance Opinion for each of the reviewed control objectives.

No matters of concern were raised that required any further action to be generated by the Committee.

**RESOLVED** to note the report

### **CG/40 External Auditor**

The Committee considered a letter from the Audit Commission regarding the appointment of a District Auditor as the External Auditor for the Authority.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- the value of having an external auditor who understands the public sector.

**RESOLVED** that there are no objections to the extension of the appointment of a District Auditor from the Audit Commission as the external auditor of Devon and Cornwall Police Authority to cover the audit of accounts for 2006/07.

### **CG/41 The Decision Making Process for Property Matters**

The Chairman of the Property Sub Committee had raised concerns regarding the lack of clarity in the decision making process concerning the acquisition and disposal of property.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Delegated powers to committees;
- Committee Terms of Reference
- The lack of a formal Police Authority constitution contained in one document.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) to note the issues raised by the Chairman of the Property Sub Committee
- (ii) to review the issue if a single document constitution following the Home Secretary's decision regarding the future policing structure for the South West

**CG/42 The Authority's Processing of Matters Concerned with the Work of Regulatory Bodies**

The Chairman explained the importance of the Authority receiving the reports and recommendations from regulatory bodies such as HMIC and then monitoring the implementation of such recommendations.

**CG/43 Annual Internal Audit Report 2005/2006**

The annual report for 2005/2006 identified and outlined the nature of internal audit work undertaken during the year, summarised work not previously reported and gave an overall opinion on the adequacy of the control environment.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Paragraph 3.1 of the report–  
"..... the majority of systems and areas examined generally have well developed and sound control processes in place and staff are committed to ensure that suitable processes and procedures are followed."
- The Deputy Head of Internal Audit said that there were no areas causing concern and that the Committee needed to be made aware of.
- The complexity of the risk management process and particularly the scoring mechanism used by the Force

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

**CG/44 Closed Session - Consideration to Excluding the Press and Public** (Items 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 have been discussed)

**RESOLVED** that the items detailed in the table below be considered as closed items:

Agenda item No	Minute No	Report Title	Relevant Act	Relevant section
15	CG/45	Response to Internal Audit Report on Firearms	Freedom of Information Act 2000	S 22 Information intended for future publication

**CG/45 Response to Internal Audit Report on Firearms**

The Head of Finance provided the Committee with information regarding the implementation of audit report recommendations on Firearms Asset Management. The computer system will be fully installed and "live" by 30 June 2006; the planned implementation date for officers to start using the system is 10 July 2006 with all 140 officers to have completed their training by 30 September 2006. The Current internal controls are working and the computerised system will complement the existing systems

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The training programme

**RESOLVED** to note the report

The meeting closed at 11:59 hrs