

DEVON AND CORNALL POLICE AUTHORITY
Minutes

A meeting of the **Human Resources Committee** was held on 19 September 2007 in the Conference Room, Police Authority, Endeavour House starting at 10:00 hrs.

Present

Chairman Mr D Money
Members Ms J Norton, Mr B Preston, Mr M Nevitt and Ms J Owen

Officers in Attendance

Police Force

Miss C Ambrose (Human Resources Manager (Attendance)), Mr C Haselden (Acting Director of HR), Mr G Cooper (Head of Performance and Reward), Mr P Barton (Force Health & Safety), Ms A Leader (HR Communications Officer)

Police Authority

Miss J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive), Mr C Schofield (Police Authority HR Advisor) Ms L Crandon (Meeting Administrator)

HR/279 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sir Simon Day, Mrs V Pengelley, and Mrs A Malcolm

HR/280 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that Agenda item4 – Human Resources Committee Terms of Reference had been withdrawn.

The Chairman certified that having regard to the special circumstances pertaining in this matter – namely the need to ensure that Members fully understood the current situation of Human Resources function.. the chairman was of the opinion that despite its non-inclusion on the Agenda, the matter of "key issues facing human resources in the force" should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

HR/281 Declarations of Interests

The following declarations of interest were received.

NAME	Agenda Item	Minute No	Nature of Interest	Action
Mr Bryan Preston	Agenda No 6 - Police Staff Handbook	HR285	Personal – member of GMB	Spoke and voted on the item

HR/282 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2007 be confirmed as a correct record.

HR/283 Key Issues Facing Human Resources in the Force

The Authority's HR Advisor and the Force's Acting HR Director in consultation with the HR Committee Chair have been reviewing the key human resources areas to be addressed by both the Police Authority and the Constabulary.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) need to be developed for HR management

- The paper provides a useful starting point for developmental work in the HR function
- The complexities of managing the work planned and required, and how to monitor progress
- It is intended to develop a reward strategy during the next 12 months
- Equality Impact assessments
- Risk assessment policy

RESOLVED

- (i) that the committee receive reports as appropriate on progress in the following areas:
- Staff Handbook
 - Job and Grading Review
 - Review of the HR Function
 - Workforce Planning
 - Learning and Development
 - Sickness absence Management
 - Development of Key Performance Indicators.
- (ii) that the Committee request ad hoc reports on topics that they consider appropriate.

HR/284 Job and Grading Review

The Acting Director of Human Resources provided an oral update on the Job and Grading Review.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Chief Officers Group (COG) is developing a 5 year strategy and realises that the current construction of the Force workforce may need to be changed in order to deliver this.
- the name and branding of the new job and grading exercise was important. Discussion took place around the name of the exercise
- The process must address pay equality issues.
- The new process must not be seen as a re-run of the previous discredited Job Evaluation scheme.
- Any Job and Grading scheme needs to be tailored to fit this organisation and work is being undertaken on this.
- This Force is in dialogue with other Forces nationally to consult on how their job and grading processes have run.
- There is a need to establish budget and resources for the job and grading exercise
- Communications need to be effective, consistent and regular with all parties throughout this project
- The lessons of the reports into the previous job evaluation exercise had been learnt
- Key milestones and practices need to be defined in advance and reported to this committee

RESOLVED to note the update

HR/285 Police Staff Handbook

The Director of Human Resources provided an oral update regarding the Police Staff Handbook

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- A bulletin agreed jointly between trades unions and the Force had been issued to update staff on the current position.
- Discussions have taken place as to how the implementation of the handbook conditions will take place
- Staff will need to understand other implications of the implementation
- It was hoped negotiations would be finished by the end of October 2007, followed by a ballot in November 2007, with implementation, subject to acceptance, scheduled taking place in the early part of 2008 which will be backdated to 1 April 2007.

- There had been different interpretations over conditions relating to weekend working which needed to be resolved . This will be clarified before the ballot takes place.
- £1.6 million is allocated for this year with a similar sum built into future years. This amount had been carefully calculated to ensure it would cover the process.
- For staff with reduced entitlements there will be pay protection for up to 4 years when any change takes place.
- A briefing sheet will be prepared to be given to members.

RESOLVED to note the update.

HR/286 Attendance Management

This report provided the Committee with an update on absence levels within the Force for Police Officers and Police Staff for the period April to June 2007, detailing any significant trends or issues. In addition it outlined the steps that the Human Resources Department has put in place to improve all aspects of managing attendance.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- This report, for the first time, included information on short term absence and reflected the information that was used within the Force for attendance management.
- Comparisons of sickness absence with public sectors organisations such as the Health Service show slightly higher absence rates however they compare favourably with many other Police Forces.
- Policing is a 24 hour service and this needs to be remembered when considering the absence statistics.
- The report provided a year on year account and reflects statistics produced nationally
- The trend appears to be for increasing absence due to psychological disorders. This is partly due to increased diagnosis and is reflective of the environment in which staff work. The increase in the Force is comparative to the rise in other Forces. This is an issue for the Force to address.
- Particular causes for absence in call centres.
- Recommendations have been made for a stress audit to take place in the Call Management and Communications Department.
- The committee agreed the information contained in the report and the format its format was helpful.

RESOLVED to note the report

HR/287 Overtime Levels and Trends

This report provided an update on overtime levels for police officers for the first five months of the financial year 2007/08 (April to August). Comparison has been made with the same period in 2006/07 to identify areas of concern or improvement.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- The group were encouraged by the progress made to reduce overtime and interested to hear how the system was working.
- It was ascertained that overtime had to be approved by a supervisor in advance of it being worked.
- Major operations have resulted in a 24% increase in overtime in recent months within the Operations department.
- The possibility of adding a graphical demonstration of the hours people had worked, rather than just a financial comparison.

- Work is being undertaken to examine the shift patterns and demand across Devon & Cornwall Constabulary. This will inform consideration of new shift patterns.
- Long term rostering is a key issue. Regulations require rosters to be produced 12 months in advance; this can lead to overtime payments when short notice changes are required.

RESOLVED to note the report.

HR/288 Fairness at Work Policy Amendment

The Committee were asked to note the revisions in the policy which restricted the use of the Fairness at Work procedure to issues where there is not a specific appeals process. The policy is designed in line with the Employment Act 2002; the Home Office Guidance: "Fairness at Work Procedure" April 2004; the ACAS Code of Practice: Discipline and Grievance Procedures 2004; and ACPO Workforce Standard No: 2 Grievance Process 2006.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- There will be separate procedure for issues arising from the Job and Grading review

RESOLVED to note this change.

HR/289 Health and Safety Executive Inspection of Devon and Cornwall Constabulary

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspected the management of health and safety within the Force in January 2007. A Health and Safety Action Plan has been drawn up to address areas where improvements are required. A separate report was received at the same time covering an asbestos incident at Charles Cross for which a separate action plan was compiled. The action plans were presented to the Committee for information and the identification of any points requiring further action.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- Building controllers and Safety Fire Wardens have been identified,
- Adequate control over contractors was identified as a risk. Estates Department now issue a job order for each request that comes in.
- Police Station staff now know when work is going to take place prior to its commencement
- The Generic Assessment is due to take place at end of this financial year (07/08)
- Training co-ordinators have been asked to check records on all health and safety training taking place
- The Health and Safety Unit are working with all managers to ensure training is being carried out effectively

RESOLVED to note the report.

HR/290 Alcohol and Drugs: misuse and testing policy – update report

The Police (Amendment) Regulations 2005 introduced legislation enabling the testing for substance misuse of certain posts within the Force. A force policy, (D311), has been prepared following wide consultation. At this stage it applies to Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers only. The report provided an update on the progress made and a comparison with similar policies in use by other organisations.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- Testing for new intakes of Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers will take commence in October 2007
- Results are provided by the company 'Med Screen'

- It was clarified that PCSO's who are frontline, should be included in this process.
- Unions have specified that Police Staff not directed to frontline policing should not be included unless it is pertinent to their roles.
- If a test comes back 'unacceptable', there will be a zero tolerance approach taken.
- If staff approach Occupational Health voluntarily prior to discovery the matter will be dealt with as a non-discipline procedure.

RESOLVED

- i) to note the report
- ii) that an update report be provided to the Committee six months after implementation

HR/291 Best Value Review of Training and the Learning and Development Improvement Plan 2007– 8

It was agreed that agenda Items 12 Best Value Review of Training and Agenda 13 the Learning and Development Improvement Plan 2007– 8 would be taken together.

The reports provided progress updates on achieving specific improvement actions and objectives.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- the newly refurbished Learning and Development Centre had been well received

RESOLVED to note the reports

HR/292 Consideration to Excluding the Press and Public

Resolved that the Agenda items detailed in the table below be considered as closed items

Agenda item No	Minute No	Report Title	Relevant Act	Relevant section
14	Hr/293	Employment Tribunal Cases	Local Government act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information Act 1985)	Schedule 12A Paragraph 4 Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

HR/293 Employment Tribunal Cases

The report provided the Committee with information regarding employment tribunals.

Issues discussed during the consideration of this item included

- Police Officers are exempt from the requirement of first taking out a grievance and can go direct to tribunals.
- Managers have a responsibility to pick up and deal with issues
- 3 cases have been withdrawn

- Reported trends of employment tribunal cases across the country show an increasing number of cases relating to sexual orientation and sex discrimination
- The rules relating to protected disclosure
- The Human Resources Department have taken over responsibility for managing Employment Tribunals (from the Force legal department)

RESOLVED to note the report

The meeting closed at 13.00hrs