

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Human Resources Committee** was held on 27 January 2009 in the Conference Room, Police Authority, Endeavour House, Pynes Hill, Exeter, starting at 10:00hrs

Present

Chair Mr D Money
Members Mrs L Price, Mrs L Dunn and Mr G Hicks.

Officers in Attendance

Police Authority

Mrs E Zoestbergen (Policy Officer), Mr C Schofield (HR Advisor to the Police Authority)

Police Force

Mr C Haselden (Director of Human Resources), Mr A Cornish (Representative of the Disability Forum), Mr P Tucker (HR Strategy Manager) and Mr G Cooper (Head of HR)

HR/375 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms J Norton (vice chair), Mr J Rowe and Supt I Grafton.

HR/376 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made in respect of any items on the agenda.

HR/377 Disability Support Group

The Chairman introduced Insp. Cornish, who attended the meeting on behalf of the Disability Forum in order to give a short presentation on the work of the Forum. It was agreed that in order to minimize his waiting time agenda item 5 would be taken now and the meeting would then return to Chairman's announcements and minutes after the presentation.

The Presentation outlined the aims and objectives of the Forum.

Issues discussed during the presentation included:

- Consultation - for example, absence management policies.
- Understanding of the term 'reasonable adjustments' (The Director of HR provided an update as to the difference between a 'DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) declaration', which is a voluntary declaration by the employee and a 'workplace adjustment' which is a management activity to make reasonable adjustments for the employee.)
- Providing support to colleagues (which included a general discussion on the Employee Assistance Programme provided by Care First, which is available to all staff including their relatives)
- Identification and challenge of discrimination
- Recognition of good work

The Director of HR added that there is a standard monitoring process for recruitment by way of an Equality Monitoring Form, which allows candidates to make a voluntary declaration about (amongst other things) their disability. This is still a sensitive category as is sexual orientation and religion or faith, as many people decide not to disclose for a variety of reasons, one of which is a lack of confidence. This can be addressed over time by showing employees that there are positive benefits of declaration.

The Chairman thanked the representative of the Disability Forum for the interesting presentation and for taking the time to attend the HR Committee meeting.

RESOLVED To note the contents of the presentation

HR/378 Chairman's Announcements

- The Chairman informed the meeting that he attended the open part of the Gay Police Association's (GPA) meeting in Truro in December and added that he also now met the new Force Medical Officer.
- He went on to discuss the Reg A20 process, which is the statutory process discharged by the Police Authority for medical retirements of police officers. A small group of Members and officers met to discuss the process and way forward and their views will now be pulled together in a report which will come to this committee in due course.
- The Chairman also informed the meeting that Mrs V Pengelly would no longer be a member of the HR Committee due to a clash of her commitments as Leader of Plymouth City Council.
- The Chairman provided an update to the meeting about the Diversity & Equality working group which has now been set up. This group is now designated as a stand-alone group, although the Chairman noted the HR interest in their remit and acknowledged there are clear common grounds in the HR and Equality & Diversity business areas.

With this in mind, he discussed a recent e-note received from the GPA with regards to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. As Devon & Cornwall Constabulary is not mentioned in their list of top 100 employers, the GPA requested that this is discussed and appropriate action taken.

The Director of HR mentioned that the Index is a reasonable good and long-standing measure on how employers improve their workplaces for lesbian, gay and bisexual staff. The 100 organisations listed have scored the highest in a 20 question survey that covers 9 policy and practice areas and was designed to sample workplace culture. The Director of HR highlighted that the Force did not take part in the survey but conceded that this is an issue that should be considered in a wider diversity context.

The Chairman agreed to write to the Chair of the Diversity & Equality working group to ask him to consider this issue on behalf of the Police Authority within the remit of that group.

- The Chairman asked the Policy Officer to provide an update on the issue of local employment targets. The Policy Officer explained that this had been mentioned in the recent Green Paper. This is expected to be done in consultation with the Force, Staff Support Groups and the local communities. This has to be considered in the wider context of the Equality Standard, the Equality & Diversity Strategy and the Equality Bill. These are not yet in place, but implementation is expected in the following 3-4 months. It seems therefore sensible to monitor the implementation and its impact in the following months and take action as considered necessary. It is important to highlight that although there is no local employment target in place at the moment, issues around recruitment are monitored and scrutinised by the Police Authority.

The Chairman agreed that this is an important issue that should be carefully monitored and asked Mrs L Dunn, who is a member of the target-setting workgroup, to consider this issue on behalf of the Police Authority within the remit of that group.

- Finally the Chairman highlighted the work undertaken in relation to the JAG (Job & Grading) Review. Legal opinion is currently being sought, as and until that information is available the Authority is unable to meaningfully contribute to the process. The Chairs Committee decided that a small task & finish group should look at this issue to ensure there is full engagement of the Police Authority. Once legal opinion is received the task & finish group will start its work and will report back to the Police Authority via its Chairs Committee.

HR/379 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2008 were considered. Due to the changeover of lead officer, it was agreed to present all members of the meeting with the suggested changes to the minutes, as these had not been incorporated yet.

The HR Advisor to the Police Authority provided an update on the subject of Member appraisals and informed the meeting that video conferencing would be installed which would assist with the appraisal process in the future. Not all members were persuaded of this approach. It would be undertaken in a broad context, as the Police Authority is keen to combine undertaking appraisals with developing members' skills.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2008 be confirmed as a correct record subject to incorporating the amendments as discussed during the meeting.

HR/380 Senior Women in Policing Conference 2009

The Director of HR introduced an update report informing members of the current position regarding the progress made on the SWiP Conference 2009, which is hosted by the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary at the University of Exeter from 30 March until 1 April.

He stressed that it is an important event, which will show the Constabulary's and Authority's drive and commitment to improve the current gender under-representation in the areas of recruitment, retention and progression. The theme is women's contribution to policing in the 21st century, which will be considered on three different levels: individual, organisational and national. The number of delegates that have registered has now risen to 201 of a possible 350 and the event will be webstreamed live to increase accessibility.

The Committee requested that any positive feedback from the delegates should be captured. The Chairman of the HR Committee and the Policy Officer have already committed themselves to attending this conference. It was agreed that the Policy Officer would contact all Police Authority members to establish if any more members would like to attend.

RESOLVED To note the current position

HR/381 Alcohol and Drugs: misuse and testing policy

The Head of HR introduced the update report on the Alcohol & Drugs: misuse and testing policy. He explained that the Police (Amendment) Regulations 2005 introduced legislation enabling the testing for substance misuse of certain members of the Force. This initially applied to police officers only but after lengthy consultation with the trade unions random testing will now be extended to police staff of management grades.

The Director of HR added that this service has been outsourced to an external service provider via the procurement process. This means that the necessary indicators are in place and it is a cost-effective service.

The Chairman asked if during the recruitment process, all officers now provide a DNA sample for entry on to the Police Elimination Database. The Director of HR confirmed that this is indeed the case, but that there is a still a gap as far as earlier recruits are concerned. This is now being addressed.

RESOLVED To note the current position and request an update in a year's time.

HR/382 HMIC Inspection of the Constabulary's Human Resources

The Director of HR provided a verbal update on the HMIC inspection of the HR function. He explained that HMIC carried out a baseline assessment in 2006, which included an inspection of the HR function. As the HR function received a 'poor' rating, HMIC recommended a re-inspection of the HR function in 2008, as well as keeping oversight of the improvement programme with the necessary action plans.

In November 2008 HMIC re-inspected the HR function. The Constabulary is still waiting for their report. The Committee was informed that HMIC has indicated that significant progress has been made and recognised. Some of the initial deficiencies have been resolved, although there are some that are still outstanding and need to be progressed, for example, workforce planning. Action plans are in place and the HR business plan is linked to the corporate business plan.

The Director of HR informed members that it is not clear yet whether there will be a re-grade as the HMIC inspection regime has changed and different standards are now in place. (A Constabulary either meets the standard or not) Hopefully this issue should be clarified in the HMIC Inspection Report. HMIC has clearly stated that it expects all deficiencies addressed and rectified. There will be another inspection in 2009, followed by the (national) Workforce Inspection in 2010. This has as its theme 'Workforce Capability'.

The HR advisor to the Police Authority explained that the Chairman of the HR Committee and himself had met with HMIC team in November 2008. It provided an opportunity to give HMIC the Police Authority's perspective of HR management in the Constabulary, as well as a consideration as to how the Police Authority is fulfilling its monitoring and scrutiny role.

- RESOLVED** (i) To note the verbal update and
(ii) Request a report is prepared for the next committee meeting, which will specifically highlight gaps in HR performance. This would include a consideration of how these gaps will be addressed and how the Police Authority can monitor progress.

HR/383 People Strategy

The Director of HR introduced an update and progress report on the People Strategy. This is a key component of the overall 2012 vision to become a top performing Force. It is the 3 year vision for people management in the Constabulary and will have to be developed and agreed by the end of March 2009.

The Committee requested that the list with bullet points (section 8) should make reference to the welfare needs of staff and that an Occupational Health element should be added.

The Director of HR highlighted the benefit of Police Authority input as a key stakeholder in this process. Members' feedback can then be incorporated into the final draft. This would need to take place before the end of March 2009, possibly by way of a seminar.

- RESOLVED** (i) To note the current position and
(ii) To agree to extend the next HR Committee meeting, to be held on 24 March 2009, in order to consider the People Strategy in more detail. It was agreed that an invitation would be sent out to all members of the Police Authority to allow them to take part in and contribute to this important debate.

HR/384 Restructuring of the HR function (open session)

The Director of HR introduced a report which provided a position statement on the restructuring of the HR function, including the relevant timelines and direction. He explained that this is part of a process of radical restructuring that the organisation is aiming to achieve. Of the 196 disestablished posts, 150 have been realised and 46 will roll over into the next financial year. These last 46 will be removed by the end of June from the staff headcount. In 2009/10 there will be an additional 101 police staff posts disestablished. This will reduce staff headcount across the three functions of ICT, HR and Finance & Resources. The organisation is well aware of the personal impact that this will have on staff and this process is still in its early stages. There is appropriate engagement with the trade unions and staff in order to allow for full and proper consultation.

HR/385 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
10	HR 386	Restructuring of the HR function	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/386 Restructuring of the HR function (closed session)

Issues discussed during consideration of the item included:

- The impact these proposals have on individuals' personal and professional lives.
- The number of posts affected in the various business areas.
- Collaboration opportunities and shared services, together with potential repercussions
- Budget implications.

RESOLVED to note the report

HR/387 Reconvention of Open Session

RESOLVED for the meeting to reconvene in open session.

HR/388 Corporate Services Transformation Project

The Director of HR introduced a report on the Corporate Services Transformation project to inform members as to its current position. It forms a critical part of the 2012 strategy for becoming a top performing force. The precise scope of the project is yet to be confirmed, but the aim of the project is to create and put in place efficient and effective HR, Finance & Resources and ICT corporate services to support and enable operational policing. There are 4 phases as highlighted in the report. The Force Programme Board has recently agreed the high-level governance structure for the project. Assistant Chief Constable (Crime & Operations, ACC Simpson) will be the project executive.

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Chairs' Committee and HR Committee would both have scrutiny and oversight responsibilities. Members of the committee requested an update and progress report for the September meeting of the HR Committee.

RESOLVED (i) To note the Report and current position.
(ii) To agree that an update report would be prepared for the HR Committee in September detailing the progress and benefits of the project.

HR/389 Workforce Modernisation

The Director of HR introduced the report which provided members with an update on the current progress to dis-establish 196 police staff posts, move 200 police officer posts to the frontline and place 200 police officers into these front-line roles by 31 March 2009.

The Constabulary has worked very hard to find alternative employment opportunities for police staff members but have been unable to secure a post for 19 members of staff out of the 3 tranches. They are now in their 90

days' notice period. The Constabulary will write to them again once there are 20 days left to ascertain if they need any further support. External support has been provided to these members of staff by Penna.

The Director of HR also provided an update on the crime investigators training programme. There have been 124 applicants and the training is now designed in such a way that it takes into consideration applicants existing skills, learning and accreditation.

The HR advisor to the Police Authority added that the HR function has worked very hard to keep redundancies to a minimum, which should be acknowledged by the HR Committee.

RESOLVED to note the report and current position.

HR/390 Leadership Training

The Director of HR introduced the report on Leadership Training. He explained the different strands and components that make up this programme of training and reiterated that the '7 habits' training should be seen as providing the groundwork and general management philosophy. Every manager in the Constabulary will have received this training by the end of March 2009. The idea is then to consider individual roles and their leadership and management requirements at which point other 'more advanced training can be built on top of this if required. This part of the programme will need to be carefully prioritised within the current financial constraints.

The HR Advisor to the Police Authority asked whether a review mechanism for establishing effectiveness was in place and how this would be reported to the Police Authority. The Director of HR informed members that review mechanisms will be built into the various components of the Leadership Training, although he acknowledged that this has to date not been fully developed. There are however other ways of obtaining some of this feedback, for example through the staff survey.

The Chairman stated that in addition to this training, it is of vital importance for the organisation to identify future leaders to serve both locally and nationally. He requested a paper to be brought to the meeting at some stage that would consider how this is being done in the Constabulary.

RESOLVED (i) To note the report and current position and
(ii) To agree that another report should be considered by the Committee in 6 months' time.

HR/391 Performance Indicators for Human Resources (KPI's)

The Chairman introduced the report on the performance indicators, which provides an overview of performance for Human Resources management in Devon & Cornwall Constabulary. He explained to Committee members that the HR Strategy Manager and the Police Authority's Policy Officer meet in advance of HR Committee meetings to discuss and agree a process for the content and production of this report. This allows for a greater level of analysis and scrutiny to be undertaken to inform Committee members of the various issues. Implementation of this process will continue through the remainder of the financial year.

The Director of HR invited feedback on the contents from all members but reminded them that this is very much 'work in progress', and that it will need some time to settle. The HR Advisor to the PA advised the Committee to focus on two issues in particular: firstly, sickness absence (although he explained that there has been a lot of work undertaken to reduce sickness levels, he advised the HR Committee to keep a watching brief on this particular issue). And secondly, the recruitment of minority ethnic groups needs to be kept under scrutiny. Members agreed that more information is needed on ethnicity and recruitment as well as around progression, retention and internal processes like disciplinary procedures. The Policy Officer requested that this information should cover all strands, where such information exists, rather than just focusing on race and gender.

Other issues raised with regards to the KPI information pack were in relation to:

- Overtime expenditure, which although reduced, appears still to be high
- Selection procedures of transferees
- PDR process – the number of staff receiving 'exceptional' ratings appear disproportionately high

The Director of HR informed the Committee that the HR department is aware that there is an under-representation of certain groups and that it is working to address this in different ways, for example through positive action and mentoring initiatives. He reiterated that the HR function can provide the HR Committee (or the Diversity & Equality work group) with more information around positive action, mentoring programmes, available support mechanisms for under-represented groups if required.

RESOLVED

- (i) To note the current state of development in creating a HR performance report, in particular the presentation of Sickness Absence Data and Attendance Management.
- (ii) For the Diversity & Equality work group to look at the ethnicity statistics in more detail

The meeting closed at 13:40hrs