

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Human Resources Committee** was held on Tuesday 24th March 2009 in the Conference Room, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10:00hrs.

Present:

Chair: Mr D Money
Vice Chair: Ms J Norton
Members: Mrs L Dunn, and Mrs L Price.

Officers in attendance:

Police Authority

Mrs E Zoestbergen (Acting Deputy Chief Executive, Police Authority), Mr C Schofield (HR Advisor to the Authority), Mrs G Clifton (Administrator).

Police Force

Supt I Grafton (Head of Learning & Development), Mr G Cooper (Head of HR), Mr P Tucker (HR Strategy Manager).

HR/392 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Rowe, Mr G Hicks, Mr C Haselden.

HR/393 Declarations of Interest

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

HR/394 Chairman's Announcements

- A Seminar to include other Police Authority members was scheduled for the afternoon to look at the Draft People Strategy;
- It was agreed that to assist members' travelling arrangements all future meetings of the Police Authority's Human Resources Committee would start at 10:30hrs and not as currently scheduled, 10:00hrs.

RESOLVED that future meetings of the HR Committee would start at 10.30 hrs

HR/395 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2009 were, with some minor amendments, agreed as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising:

- Agenda Item HR/378 (second bullet) - The paper outlining the suggested changes to the A20 process on medical retirement of Police Officers would be brought to the first committee meeting after the summer in order to seek Members' views. In addition, as the number of members with A20 training was diminishing; members would be asked if they wish to undergo this training once any new arrangements for the Regulation A20 process had been agreed. Under the constitution A20 members must sit on the HR Committee, this would sought to be changed (in order to extend it to all Police Authority members) at the first meeting after the Authority's AGM.
- Agenda Item HR/378 (last bullet) – The Head of HR was working on a Business case for the Project Initiation for the Job & Grading review project. This would take two to three weeks as legal advice has been sought and is still awaited.
- Agenda item HR/383 – A specific date would be set for production of the final report on the People Strategy following the afternoon's Consultation Session.

HR/396 Proposed Restructuring of the HR Function

The head of Human Resources introduced this item and the following points were discussed:

- They had consulted with staff, trade unions, customers and the Corporate Services Transition Board (CSTB) over the proposals.
- The remainder of the staff savings in 2008/09 would be carried over to 2009/10, making total staff savings of 101. No staff in HR will be served notice of redundancy until the end of June. There was a need to maintain and build on the 'fit for purpose' HR function as HMIC had given an improved grading of 'Fair'. When the technology was available a self-service, self-help process would be introduced.
- It was intended that the new structure would have a general proportion of one manager to eight staff as compared with the current complex management structure. There was a need to encourage staff to talk to their line manager before involving HR.
- It was intended to centralise elements of HR, which is currently spread over a number of functions. Policy would be separated from guidance to make the format more understandable.
- By including a "PDF" application on the Constabulary website for job advertisements it was hoped to cut down the considerable workload in sending out forms; paper copies would still be available for those without access to a computer.
- A number of risks had been identified within the project. Although on track with the timetable, economic impacts and accommodation had yet to be fully resolved. There was a risk that some of the posts being removed might need to be re-introduced at a later date should the new arrangements not prove wholly effective.
- All current training courses had been categorised into:
 - (a) – legally necessary;
 - (b) - required by HMIC or ACPO to avoid withdrawal of licences or other serious sanctions;
 - (c) – all other training which is desirable but does not fall into the first two categories. Such training would concentrate on leadership, induction and crime investigation. The induction of new police officers would still include the opportunity to experience other organisations.
- The restructuring has started before getting the new technology in place. The joint finance/HR technology package continued to be researched. When installed there would be further improvements as people data would only have to be entered once to be available across all systems and there would be one point of contact for example for pay queries.
- Cultural overdependence on HR rather than 'managers managing' was being addressed. HR staff were working with managers to encourage them to take full responsibility for their staff. This was part of the 2012 agenda, all managers were having leadership training and 'management tools' would be available on the intranet.
- All identified risks would be allocated 'owners'. The risk management would be overseen by the Corporate Governance Committee.
- Members' comments would be fed back to the Project Board. Future reports would include key milestones and qualitative indicators of the effectiveness of the HR function during the changes.
- Members expressed their anxiety about the speed and scale of the restructuring, as redundancies are to take place before the new technology has been put in place, and sought reassurance that the number of posts being disestablished would not result in preventing the HR, and indeed the Finance and IT departments, from being able to carry out their functions and responsibilities. The Head of HR reassured the members that the effectiveness of the functions affected by the restructuring would be monitored during the proposed changes.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That, as part of the further report to the next meeting of the Committee on the staff and service impact of the changes to the HR function, the Director of Human Resources identify:
 - (a) Key milestones in the first and subsequent phases of the Corporate Services Transformation (CST) project as it affects the HR function, progress against which will be reported to the Committee at future meetings;

- (b) Any specific 'outcome' measures/indicators (preferably of a qualitative nature) that might be introduced to assist the Committee in monitoring the effectiveness of the HR function and HR management in the Constabulary during the implementation of the CST project, which would also be reported to the Committee at future meetings;
- (ii) That, in addition to the above, the Committee receives regular reports on the effectiveness of the management of the risks in implementing the proposals as identified in the Report.

HR/397 Performance Indicators for Human Resources

The HR Strategy Manager introduced the Report. The expanded commentary and analysis section is more detailed and allows members to see the main changes. The following points were discussed:

- The Performance Development Review (PDR) completion rate referred to those that should have been completed last June and numbers had dropped since the previous year. There were several reasons for this including moving jobs, sick leave, paternity leave and the priority afforded to PDRs by managers. PDRs for 2008/09 are due to be completed by the end of May 2009; progress on these would be reported to the September meeting. Members agreed that completion of the PDRs was crucial to the 'managers managing' process.
- Members asked for a report on the numbers of sickness absences and sickness abstractions for the next meeting.
- Recruitment and retention of BME officers and staff was improving albeit too slowly. This issue would be discussed at the Equality and Diversity Group on 7th April. It was not clear what impact the fact that not all employees completed the BME monitoring form had on numbers, but as pointed out, individuals could not be compelled to state their ethnicity. Exit interviews were held for those leaving but were not always that enlightening.
- Accidents had been caused by manual handling. Training was currently provided through an e-based learning product that could be completed at one's own pace.

- RESOLVED**
- (i) to note the contents of the report
 - (ii) that a report on sickness absences and sickness abstractions would be brought to the next meeting;
 - (iii) that a report on PDR completion rate would be brought to the September meeting.

HR/398 Police Authority Members' Training Programme

A member gave a verbal update of the programme. Seventeen of the eighteen members of the Authority had taken part in this review. Seven members so far had had their one-to-one interview. All members were asked to provide feedback on the experience. Responses so far indicated that it was of benefit. It allowed an opportunity to share views and discuss training needs. The remaining one-to-ones would be completed by 16th April 2009. There would be a further report to the committee once feedback had been received.

- RESOLVED**
- (i) the report be noted
 - (ii) that a further report would be brought to the May meeting.

HR/399 HMIC Inspection of the Constabulary Resources

The Head of HR presented the report:

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) had carried out a follow up inspection of the Constabulary's Human Resources' function. All areas of HR had been reviewed excluding Learning and Development (which was subject to separate inspection) and a grade of "Fair" was awarded, an improvement on the previous 'Poor' rating. This means that HR is now considered to be at a basic acceptable standard. Members commented that this was a considerable achievement especially at a time of transformation. A national thematic workforce inspection was planned for 2010 looking at the overall organisational management of people.

- The Police Authority would undergo inspection in the future and needed to focus on what was involved. The Chairman was tasked to write to the Chair of the Police Authority and Acting Chief Executive to ensure that the issue was being satisfactorily addressed.

- RESOLVED**
- (i) that the report be noted
 - (ii) that a further report would be presented to the next meeting with the Force's initial response to the Report
 - (iii) that the Chairman would write to the Police Authority's Chairman and Acting Chief Executive over the issue of the Authority's forthcoming inspection

HR/400 Workforce Modernisation

The Head of HR presented the report:

- 200 new police officer roles on the frontline had been created, with named officers filling these roles by 31 March 2009.
- Action has been taken, e.g. additional recruitment intake, to cover an increased turnover in order to achieve the full uplift in frontline numbers by June.
- 146 of the required reduction of 196 police staff posts would be achieved by 31 March 2009, with the remainder being achieved in 2009/10. The reduction to date had resulted in only nine compulsory redundancies so far. Staff had shown considerable flexibility and adaptability in accepting the changes and the training involved and considerable work had been undertaken by the Force to provide redeployment opportunities.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

HR/401 Force Response to the HMIC Thematic Report 'Leading from the Frontline'

The HR Strategy Manager presented the Report:

- The recommendations from the Report were being progressed, not all of them being HR issues. However, the Chair suggested that it was better that this Committee should continue to monitor all of them to avoid fragmentation. In the meantime he would write to the chair of the Corporate Governance Committee to ask him to consider this thematic report and suggest the most effective way to scrutinise progress reports from now on. The Vice Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee agreed to discuss the matter with the Chair of that Committee and the Acting Chief Executive of the Police Authority.
- An interim report on progress would be brought to the next meeting of the Human Resources Committee.

- RESOLVED**
- (i) there would be liaison with the Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee on how progress against the recommendations would be monitored.
 - (ii) an interim report on progress would be presented to the next meeting of the HR Committee.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.15 hrs