

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

MINUTES

A meeting of the **Human Resources Committee** was held on Tuesday 26th January 2010 in the Conference Room, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter, starting at 10:30hrs.

Present:

Chair : Mr D Money
Vice-Chairman: Mrs L Price
Members: Mr M Clayton, Mr M Hodge, Mr J Hart, Ms J Norton and Mr B Preston.

Officers in attendance:

Police Authority

Mrs E Zoestbergen (Policy Officer), Mr C Schofield (HR Advisor to the Authority), Mrs G Clifton (Administrator).

Police Force

Mr G Cooper (Head of People Services), Mr C Haselden (Director of HR), Ms C Owen (HR Strategic Development Manager), Ms A Hasyn (Special Constabulary Co-ordinator) – Item 11 only

HR/448 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Hicks and Mr D Percival.

HR/449 Declarations of Interest

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

HR/450 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Ms Susan Howl had started her appointment as the new Chief Executive.
- Mr Percival could not attend as he was representing the Police Authority at a Children's Trust meeting.
- An email had been sent to members including information about the Job Evaluation problems. The Penn report had made various recommendations that had been considered by the Chairs' Committee. The Chairs' Committee would get an update report to check that the recommendations had been addressed as far as possible prior to the Job and Grading Review. The Policy Officer could provide details to any members of this Committee if required.
- Dates set for future meetings of this Committee needed to be evened out and members would be consulted over the proposed changes.

HR/451 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

HR/440 last bullet point – some members had already visited the new Human Resources Department's People Services Centre at Middlemoor; arrangements were being made for other interested members. The Chairman had visited and was impressed by the Centre.

HR/441 first sentence – needed 'tidying' to make better sense. The changed sentence would now read:

HR/441 Resolution (vi) – all members had been contacted about training for the Police Pension Regulations. A training session was being organised for those interested.

HR/445 Resolution – the Local Employment Targets for under-represented groups had not been put on the agenda for this meeting. The issue was being considered by the Performance Management Committee and the Diversity and Equality Group. A group of members agreed to discuss the issue further after the meeting.

HR/452 People Strategy – Implementation Measures

The HR Strategic Development Manager introduced the report that listed the proposed measures for demonstrating effective implementation of the People Strategy. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Following the completion of the People Strategy earlier this year consideration was given to the areas to report on in future and their frequency. It is important that members can monitor how the Strategy is being implemented across the organisation. The measures were detailed in the Appendix attached to the report.
- In some areas the first measure is to check that the policy or framework exists and put in place those that are absent. Then measures can be developed to test whether it is working effectively.
- The priorities may change in the future as the needs of the organisation change; it is a dynamic process. The outputs are measured but it is also the outcomes that need to be kept under review.
- The type of queries being received by the new People Services Centre (PSC) could identify whether managers are starting to manage. In time, difficult cases should become run-of-the-mill; the creation of the PSC is a critical part of the Strategy.
- Aiming to minimise absences due to ill health does not mean that employees should feel obliged to work if unfit. However, there might be situations where someone with an ailment that precludes them doing their normal job could do something else. Each case would be judged on its merits.

RESOLVED: (i) to agree the proposed measures to be utilised to evidence effective implementation of the People Strategy;
(ii) to support the approach outlined regarding the continual development of measures to reflect the implementation phase.

HR/453 Update on key issues facing HR management in the Constabulary

The HR Advisor to the Authority and the Director of HR introduced the report that outlined the actions taken in delivering the initiatives required to improve human resource management in the Constabulary. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- One of the roles of this committee was to scrutinise whether or not appropriate actions had been taken following the critical reports from HMIC on the standard of HR management in the Force. Much had been done since 2007 and all the remaining actions had been built into the People Strategy.
- The underlying issue crucial to attaining a top ten force by 2012 was that line managers should manage their part of the business, underpinned by an effective and cost efficient HR function. HMIC had been critical of the absence of line managers' understanding of how they should be managing and HR's inability to fill the gap. At a reassessment in 2008 the score had improved from 'Poor' to 'Fair' (meeting basic requirements).
- The use of a scorecard system for HR similar to that used in Performance Management might make it easier to judge the areas that needed attention and the areas of biggest risk.
- The focus was currently on encouraging managers to manage. A lot of work had already been done. All managers had attended the Franklin Covey Leadership training and new managers would attend a future course. All new Sergeants are trained for their first position; some existing Sergeants had not had the formal training but had built up the necessary skills in post. Courses had been redesigned in a modular format so staff and their managers can select the areas they need most. The same training regime is available for non police staff.

RESOLVED (i) to note the actions taken since 2007 in delivering the initiatives required to improve human resource management in the Constabulary.

(ii) to endorse the actions outstanding on these initiatives and new initiatives identified in the report as the core work programme for the Committee in 2010.

HR/454 HMIC Inspection of HR – Implementing the Recommendations

The HR Advisor to the Authority introduced the report that provided an update on the actions arising from the HMIC Human Resources inspection. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The HMIC performance inspections including HR no longer took place every year. The specific re-inspection in 2008 resulted in an assessment of 'Fair' and had identified some elements for improvement. The regular review by HMIC will check that all of these recommendations are being addressed. Reports from HMIC inspections are discussed with the Chief Executive of the Police Authority and then go to the Corporate Governance Committee that decides which is the most appropriate committee to deal with the issues raised.
- A workshop in February followed by a launch in March will give more information about the forthcoming 'Working for the Public' inspection. The Force has a recommendation closure group that verifies actions are delivered and sustained. It meets quarterly and has a representative from the Police Authority on it.
- Many of the actions outlined in the Appendix were due to be completed by March 2010. Not all the recommendations were 'essential', some were only 'desirable'. It is possible that some of the 'desirables' will be lower priority and not be done immediately. Another report would be submitted after the end of March for the Committee to check progress.

RESOLVED (i) to note how the Force is addressing the HMIC recommendations following its inspection of Human Resources in November 2008, and in particular how it ensures that action is owned, planned and monitored.
(ii) to receive a further report after the end of March 2010 to check progress against the recommendations.

HR/455 Review of Staff Establishment

The HR Strategic Development Manager introduced the report that outlined how the police staff establishment is controlled. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The 'establishment' is the figure recorded on the Force Integrated Management System (FIMS) and reflects the basic budgetary provision. However, at any point in time there is an element of turnover. There is a percentage of vacancies and new staff tend to be appointed on the bottom of the grade when the previous post-holder might have been earning more. The paper explains how the budget is devolved to BCUs/departments and how it is managed.
- The workforce modernisation programme saw the creation of 180 new police staff posts (further to returning 200 police officers back to the front line) and a reduction of 250 police staff posts. Over this period a higher number than usual of agency staff had been used, some in post for more than six months in areas where changes are due or the IT systems are not yet in place. The numbers had been reduced and the aim is to significantly reduce these numbers further in the future. The alternative would be to make use of Fixed Term Contracts but staff in such posts have similar rights to full time staff and therefore do not provide additional flexibility.
- If the Force is to increase the confidence of the public it is essential that staff have confidence in the organisation. Tightening budgets will inevitably mean reduction in workforce numbers, this will have to be managed to maintain confidence.
- The budget is set based on historic turnover data but turnover is falling so in order to manage the budget vacancy gaps must be enforced between the leaver and the joiner.
- The People Gold Group (PGG) sets the number of establishment posts and authorises the use of agency staff and consultants. The latter are employed on a contractual basis so can only stay for the length of the contract.
- In the table at Appendix 1 some areas showed more FTEs than establishment posts. This was probably due to the restructuring process; full details would be brought to the next meeting.

- RESOLVED** (i) to note the contents of the report
(ii) that a further update would be provided to a future meeting.

The Chair announced that, with the agreement of members, Item 11 would be taken next on the agenda.

HR/456 Deployment of the Special Constabulary

The Special Constabulary Co-ordinator provided a report on the deployment, management, hours worked and the type of duties performed by Special Constables. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Motor Patrol Special Constables work alongside traffic officers as crew members. They assist in Speedwatch, ANPR etc. but do not drive the high performance vehicles as they are not authorised through the Advanced Driving training.
- A national strategy working with the NPIA to provide standard recruitment and training of Special Constables was due to be produced in March 2010 but it was likely there would be some slippage in this timetable. A briefing paper on the strategy would be brought to the meeting when complete.
- The Devon and Cornwall Police cadet scheme had been very successful and received national recognition.
- Deployment of Special Constables depends on the link officer; this system had improved significantly although in some areas it was not as effective as it should be. It was also the responsibility of the Special Constables themselves to communicate to the duty sergeant in advance when they are due to work so that they can be properly deployed.

- RESOLVED** to note the report

HR/457 Performance Indicators for Human Resources

The HR Strategic Development Manager presented the report which provided an analysis and commentary on the latest performance indicators and key People Management Data. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Attendance management had improved compared with the last quarter. The Force was now 24th for both officers and staff, an improvement of five places.
- PDR completion had seen little improvement. This was a key tool for managers so the completion rate needed to be raised. The individual also had a responsibility to ensure the PDR was completed. Next year every manager will have a responsibility to complete all their PDRs; failure to do so will be reflected in their own PDR.
- It was anticipated that by the end of the financial year officer numbers would be 3506; this would not be an additional strain on the budget since it was already built in. Overtime had been dramatically reduced.
- There was little coverage of Learning and Development in the report. The performance indicators for this were being developed and the Chair would discuss this with the lead member for this area.
- More information was needed on the retention of female officers and opportunities to return to work after four or five years of child-care. In addition, the drop in the number of female PCSOs was of concern. More details would be provided, firstly to the Diversity and Equality Group.
- This was the fourth quarter in a row that sickness absence had fallen; the Force was improving faster than other forces. It would be useful in future reports to include benchmarking details comparing Devon and Cornwall with other forces.
- Agency staff were used both for filling vacancies and for additional tasks. This was funded within the budget of the host department.

- RESOLVED** (i) to note the report
(ii) for the HR Strategic Development Manager, the HR Advisor to the PA and the PA Policy Officer to reconsider the layout, format and content of the KPI report to be submitted to future HR Committee meetings

HR/458 Alcohol and Drugs: misuse and testing policy

This was an update report following an initial report twelve months ago. There had been a reduction in the random tests carried out due to resources constraints. This was being re-examined for the new financial year.

- RESOLVED** (i) to note the report
(ii) to note that the Professional Standards Department now owns the policy.

HR/459 Director of Human Resources Update Report

The Director of Human Resources introduced the report giving an update on important items that have arisen since the Committee papers were prepared. Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- At the last meeting when discussing the Police Pension Regulations the use of the term "ceased" had been queried. Legal advice had been sought that confirmed that the term was used in the statute. It was suggested this should be interpreted in the context of the original award.
- Concern was raised about the management arrangements for Learning and Development. Although the Head post is shared there is a very clear demarcation of responsibilities. This is the best interim arrangement, as the long term future of the post is uncertain. There might be regional collaboration to provide the service in future.
- The impact of the budgetary issues on future staffing levels is an issue dealt with by the Resources Committee.

- RESOLVED** to note the report

There being no other business the meeting closed at 13.10 hrs