

## Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

### MINUTES

A meeting of the **Human Resources Committee** was held on 11 May 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-Chair.....Mrs L Price

Members: Mr M Clayton, Mr J Hart, Mr M Hicks, and Ms J Norton

#### Officers in attendance:

##### Police Authority

Mrs E Zoestbergen (Policy Officer)

Mrs J Hall-Williams (HR Advisor to the Police Authority)

##### Police Force

Mr C Haselden (Director of HR)

Ms C Owen (HR Strategic Development Manager)

#### HR/460 Apologies for Absence

Apologies of absence were received from Mr M Hodge and Mr B Preston.

#### HR/461 Declarations of Interest

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

#### HR/462 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- A Regulation A20 (Medical/III Health Retirements and Injury Awards) training date has now been agreed for 24 June
- Mrs J Hall-Williams, the new HR advisor to the Police Authority, was welcomed to her first meeting.
- Members of the Diversity and Equality working group have now been assigned to specific diversity strands and in that capacity attend the morning Independent Advisory Group strand meetings. Ms J Norton represents the Police Authority on the Strategic IAG meeting in the afternoon.

#### HR/463 Minutes and Actions of the last meetings

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2010 be confirmed as a correct subject to the minute HR/457 being amended to change the second resolution to:  
(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

#### Matters arising:

- HR/454 – members sought clarification around the forthcoming "Working for the Public" (WfP) inspection. The Director of HR explained that HMIC take an "outside in" approach and that there is very little to no notice as to the initial stages of Inspection. HMIC will invite a response and input from the Police Authority.
- HR/457 – the Chairman notified the Committee meeting that Mr D Percival is the new lead member for Learning & Development.

- HR/458 – discussion highlighted the need to be clear around workload parameters of the HR Committee and the Diversity & Equality working group to prevent unnecessary duplication of issues. The Chairman stated that it would be beneficial for the Chair & vice Chair of the HR Committee to meet with the chair of the Diversity & Equality Working Group.
- There were no actions outstanding from the last meeting

#### **HR/464 People Strategy – Implementation Update**

The mechanism for reporting on the effective implementation of the People Strategy was presented to and agreed by the HR Committee on 24 November 2009. The key measures to be used were agreed by this Committee on 26 January 2010. This report detailed the progress to date for the key outcomes and outputs, using the agreed measures. The HR business plan for 2010/11 incorporates the activity necessary during the year to implement the strategy and this includes the areas for improvement as identified by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). Clearly, there is work which will continue beyond March 2011 and these areas of work will be incorporated in next year's business plan.

Members sought clarification around Health & Safety training programme timescales and the meaning of the term 'supervisor'. The Director of HR said the planning and timescales for more elements of the programme had not yet been finalised, but said this information would be available for future reports. He also explained that the term supervisor relates to any individual who has a responsibility for other staff. In response to a question around dip-sampling of PDRs, the director of HR stated that this refers to a qualitative process relating to how well the PDRs are completed. This should be done routinely through senior management team reviews but will also be complemented by a process that is run alongside the HR business partners, though not started yet in a structured manner. Completion of PDRs means the documentary process finalisation to include a retrospective review of performance as well as the setting of objectives for the next year. Quantitative monitoring of the actual numbers that have been completed on time is undertaken continually. Furthermore the business change unit is working to develop the leadership strategy which will include an element of performance management.

The People Strategy is an important tool in making the organisation work in an effective and efficient way and there is a clear link to the Value for Money programme for example through overtime reduction. Members queried whether there should be a target set for this and it was felt that this consideration should be added to the discussions around the KPI pack. Further discussions highlighted that the PDR process is another area where the Police Authority might consider setting targets.

It was agreed that the Chairman would meet with the HR advisor to the Authority to prepare a list of those areas of business that are vital in terms of governance and in need of specific scrutiny.

A detailed discussion on the balanced scorecards followed. There is a Corporate Scorecard that gives a balanced overall view of Force performance, supported by scorecards for specific business areas which have been shared with the Performance Management Committee. The 'People' aspect of the scorecard covers the effectiveness of the people management/HR function at a corporate level. The Balanced Scorecard for the HR Directorate is used to provide information on how the directorate is performing and also can measure its contribution to force performance. Members were asked to consider what specific indicators they would like to see which could be taken into consideration when discussing the next KPI pack.

- RESOLVED**
- (i) to note the report
  - (ii) for members to consider further possible indicators and targets relating to effective and efficient people management to inform the KPI pack discussions

#### **HR/465 Governance Structure for the Job Evaluation process**

The purpose of this report was to provide the Police Authority HR Committee members with an overview of the proposed governance structure for the job evaluation process, which is now a current project within the corporate programme. The Chairs' Committee on 16 April resolved that the Chief Executive work with the Deputy Chief Constable and the Job and Grading (JAG) Task and Finish Group to draw up complimentary governance arrangements in relation to the JAG programme for submission to a future meeting of the Chairs' Committee for approval by the full Police Authority.

Detailed discussion followed but it was recognised that as this is still work in progress and as a consequence the report should be treated with latitude in respect to what is being proposed. Members were of the view that it is vital the Authority does not get involved in delivery but that all members should be aware of the governance concerns as highlighted by the last JE programme. The Authority's role is to ensure that the work is undertaken and in an appropriate manner. This is clearly an important subject and members suggested that the wider membership might be involved, perhaps by way of a seminar.

There was some discussion as to the fact that the terms JE and JAG are used interchangeably. The Director of HR said that this had been discussed with the trade unions and that in light of transparency they prefer for it to be referred to as JE.

- RESOLVED**
- (i) to note the report
  - (ii) note it is work in progress, for further consideration by the Chairs' Committee but that a report will be brought back to a future HR Committee meeting by way of update at a future date

#### **HR/466 Review of Police Staff Establishment**

Further to the report presented at the last meeting of this Committee on 26 January, further information was requested on how the police staff establishment is managed and how ongoing reviews in force such as Value for Money (VfM) and the Blueprint work would impact on the establishment. This report provided a summary of how the police staff establishment is managed and potentially how Force wide reviews will impact on this

Controls are in place and risk and prioritisation of need is managed via the People Gold Group (PGG). Outcomes of these reviews will eventually impact on workforce numbers but at this time it is premature to know which posts will be impacted.

Members asked why the FTE was lower than the Staff Establishment. The Director of HR explained that this is because of vacancies but also that there is some double-counting going on in FIMS where new posts are created whilst on the system the old posts are still in place for a period. The existing HR system has certain limitations and much updating still takes place manually. He also explained the vacancy factor and that there is never a full complement of staff. This makes it difficult for BCUs to keep to a fixed period around vacancies as it depends on the nature and frequency of the movement – the overall impact is averaged to around 5%. There is a scrutiny process on-going where all business areas have been asked where they would make reductions in case of a cut in budget and what the impact of this would be on their unit and their ability to deliver.

Members highlighted that it is not about numbers but about flexibility. The question that should be asked is 'how effective are we in using our human resources?' This has an important link to confidence. The Director of HR stated that this is a theme that will be explored at the WfP HMIC Inspection.

Members also queried the number of agency staff employed and noted that agency staff can be an expensive option as well as filling vacancy gaps through overtime. The Director of HR stated that the PGG plays a vital role in the scrutiny of this and that the overtime of those business areas that carry a lot of vacancies are carefully monitored.

## RESOLVED

- (i) to note the report
- (ii) A small sub group comprising the Chair and Vice-Chair of the HR Committee and the HR Advisor to the Authority to meet with the Director of HR to discuss what areas the Police Authority wish to have more information about to reassure the Authority that human resources in the Force are being used efficiently and effectively
- (iii) To be linked in with the work on the KPI pack and report back to the HR Committee at a future meeting

### HR/467 Learning and Development Scrutiny

This report was produced after the seminar on Learning & Development on 9 March by the lead member on Learning & Development. He stressed that it is important to focus on the Authority's remit and to be aware not to stray into the HR arena of delivery. It's important to request the right level of information, and without going into minute details by way of assuring the Authority that the appropriate numbers of people are (re)trained that should be (re)trained and that the processes in place to enable this to happen are robust, effective and efficient.

Members also added that there should be a clear focus on risk management as this will direct our scrutiny within this business area, as well as considerations around Value for Money, statutory requirements and training evaluation.

The Chairman recorded his thanks to the lead member for producing the detailed report.

## RESOLVED

- (i) To note the report
- (ii) For the lead member to meet with the HR advisor to the Authority as well as the Director of HR to agree on the specific framework details, including the comments made by members during the meeting, in order to map the way forward

### HR/468 Performance Indicators for Human Resources

This report provided an analysis and initial commentary on the latest HR performance indicators.

Main issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Difference between FTE and Staff Establishment which linked to an earlier conversation around using agency staff. The Director of HR explained that the numbers involved are not as high as might be perceived once the vacancy factor is taken into consideration and that one of the reasons for using agency staff means that jobs can be filled quickly when there is an initial need to support frontline policing. He agreed that it is an expensive commodity but there is a 3-month time limit to using agency staff, after which it would be expected to be filled by permanent staff, else it needs formal approval. The other reason why there is a higher number of agency staff is that it provides greater flexibility at these times of business change. Whilst the Force is waiting for the outcome of Blueprint which might well make changes to business areas, keeping agency staff in certain posts means that it provides greater flexibility to make the changes required. Consultants are employed for projects and are costed within those projects. They provide a level of specific expertise that is only required for a certain period. The current pay and employment climate within the public sector also makes it hard to fill certain posts especially if they are at specific locations.
- Sickness trends – whilst the Force has put a huge amount of effort into this business area, the improvement in the sickness trends is not as significant as members might have wished. Members expressed concerns around this, and also queried the "Fit notes" and its outcomes. The HR Strategic Development Manager reassured the Authority that a huge amount of effort has already gone into attendance management and that the Force is aware of the cost of sickness absence especially in the current economic climate. Government Office for the South West (GOSW) had recently visited the

Force and referred to the work undertaken around absence management as a positive case study. Members also queried if information around sickness was available around specific phenomena or departments / units.

- Overtime – members requested a separate report on this as the current KPI report information on overtime is not as robust as they would wish, for example it carries no benchmarking information. There has been a recent Home Office survey looking at overtime in detail and members requested a report containing similar information to reassure themselves that overtime is controlled and well-managed. The vice chair offered to send the Home Office report across to the HR Director.
- Joiners report – members commented on the fact that 396 people were appointed which included only 1 member of the BME community. Members expressed their concerns around this and requested further information on the Force's activities around recruitment, retention and progression, including Positive Action.

**RESOLVED** (i) to note the report  
(ii) to bring a report to the next meeting on overtime based on the points covered in the Home Office survey  
(iii) to request a report to go to the Diversity & Equality working group on recruitment, retention and progression of BME staff, to include positive action, and for the work group to report back to the HR Committee.

#### **HR/469 Cultural Audit Report**

In 2008/9 the Force conducted a staff survey in respect of culture. Following analysis of the results, at both force and BCU/departmental level local action plans have been developed to address those areas where scores were low or middling. A recent peer review across the local policing areas (LPAs) has been carried out, a key objective being to highlight where there is good practice, leading to increased public confidence, enabling that to be adopted Force wide.

Members sought to clarification around the Force's ability to present the information from the Cultural Audit in such a way that it could be linked to diversity. The HR Strategic Development Manager said that she would find out if this information was available.

**RESOLVED** (i) to note the report.  
(ii) For the HR Strategic Development Manager to provide information on diversity after the HR Committee meeting

#### **HR/470 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:

- The systems procurement process has been halted due to none of the bids being acceptable. An accelerated tendering process is now being explored.

**RESOLVED** To note the update.

The meeting closed at 13:25 hrs