

SOUTH WEST POLICE AUTHORITIES JOINT COMMITTEE
Minutes of a meeting of the
South West Police Authorities Joint Committee (SWPAJC) held at
Wiltshire Police Headquarters, Devizes SN10 2DN
on Monday 18 July 2011 at 10.30am

MEMBERS PRESENT

Avon and Somerset Police Authority

Dr P Heffer
Ms C Gordon

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

Mr M Bull
Mr B Preston

Dorset Police Authority

Colonel Geoff Brierley OBE
Mrs Ann Stribley

Gloucestershire Police Authority

Dr M Gibbs
Mr B Crowther

Wiltshire Police Authority

Mr C Hoare
Mr B Ford

ALSO PRESENT

Mr A Champness (Chief Executive, Gloucestershire Police Authority)
Mr M Goscomb (Chief Executive, Dorset Police Authority)
Ms S Howl (Chief Executive, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority)
Mr K Kilgallen (Chief Executive, Wiltshire Police Authority)
Mr J Smith (Chief Executive, Avon and Somerset Police Authority)
Mr D Bennett (Treasurer, Gloucestershire Police Authority)
Mr R Bates (Treasurer, Dorset Police Authority)
Mr C Port (Chief Constable, Avon & Somerset Police)
Mr S Otter (Chief Constable, Devon & Cornwall Police)
Mr M Baker (Chief Constable, Dorset Police)
Mr T Melville (Chief Constable, Gloucestershire Police)
Mr B Moore (Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police)
Ms E Zeeman (Strategic Human Resources Director, Avon and Somerset Police)
Mr M Bennion-Pedley (Director of Resources, Wiltshire Police)
Mr G Hill (Regional Programme Co-ordinator)
Mr R Martin (Strategic Planning Officer, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority)
Ms D Sharpling (HMIC)
Superintendent S Wallace (HMIC)
Superintendent C Law (HMIC)

80. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, and in particular HMI Dru Sharpling and colleagues.

Apologies had been received from
Mr M Taylor (Dorset Police Authority)
Mr B Cooper (Dorset Police Authority)
Mr R Garnham (Gloucestershire Police Authority)
Mr B Greenslade (Association of Police Authorities)

81. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests.

82. Open minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2011

RESOLVED

- i) *That the Open minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2011 be approved as a correct record.*

83. Development of a Regional Collaboration Strategy

The Chairman introduced this item explaining that, following approval by individual police authorities, the SWPAJC had endorsed a Regional Collaboration Plan at its last meeting in May. At that time, the SWPAJC expressed its wish to develop a complementary, longer-term strategy. This reflected the wish of the police authorities to articulate the ambition and longer-term plan for joint working across the south west and was a logical next step in the evolution of the work of this Committee.

For the benefit of guests at the meeting, the Chairman summarised the process that had been followed. This involved a series of structured interviews with each Police Authority Chairman and Chief Executive and each Chief Constable. The findings from these interviews were subsequently fed into a Regional Police Authority Seminar which took place on 1 July. The output from this Seminar was then collated into the framework of a Strategy. Following collective agreement by Police Authority Chairmen and Chief Executives earlier this month, the framework was circulated to Chief Constables for their comment.

The Chairman explained that, following agreement by the SWPAJC, the framework would be developed further by a Joint Working Group of Police Authority and Force representatives (as agreed at the last SWPAJC on 9 May 2011), where it would be formulated into a Strategy for consideration by this Committee and subsequent presentation to individual police authorities for endorsement and approval.

Dr Heffer stressed that the areas highlighted at paragraph 33 of the draft Framework as showing potential for further consideration were merely suggestions and were not the result of any analysis or benefits assessment. Members felt there may be merit in exploring these areas but did not wish them to be seen as mandatory.

Mr Baker stated that the prioritisation methodology adopted by the SWPAJC in August 2010 still remained valid in light of current developments. Members urged that Authorities and Forces grasped best practice and looked for innovative opportunities as resource and spending decisions became more and more difficult.

Mr Moore repeated an earlier call for strong relationships to be maintained between Authorities/ Forces and the workforce. The challenging times ahead will need the support of all officers and staff at all levels to achieve the ambition set out in the draft Strategy.

RESOLVED

- i) *That the draft Regional Collaboration Strategy Framework be noted*
- ii) *That the Regional Strategic Planning Working Group commence work as soon as practicable to develop the framework into a Strategy.*

84. External Audit Collaboration

Mr Smith presented a paper setting out proposals for future external audit collaboration following the Government's announcement in August 2010 to disband the Audit Commission.

Current plans by Government indicate that, following the demise of the Audit Commission, local public bodies would be expected to appoint their own independent auditors on the advice of an independent audit committee.

It is likely that if an open tendering process for an audit service is to be carried out in 2012 or 2013 (possibly numbering over 850 public bodies), smaller individual authorities may struggle to attract competitive tenders from bidders.

Regional Police Authorities have indicated that they would be willing to enter into a collaborative approach to procure audit services in the future.

Mr Champness stated that the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill, currently progressing through Parliament, does not currently make the future audit provision clear.

Mr Bull summarised the views of the Committee by accepting that the principals of exploring collaborative approach were self evident but recognised that the timing remained uncertain.

RESOLVED

- i) *Police Authority Treasurers meet to agree a collaborative approach to establish independent audit committees and to agree an approach and timetable for a joint procurement process.*

- ii) Police Authorities to explore with local authority and other local partners as to whether they are willing to participate in such collaboration;*
- iii) The outcomes of the CLG consultation are followed and discussed with continued lobbying to NOT use the PCP as a vehicle for auditor appointments;*
- iv) Avon and Somerset to act as lead Authority and Force on this project and offer procurement services as required.*

85. Tier 1 – IPLDP Business Case

Ms Zeeman presented a business case recommending the development of online facilities to give police officer applicants a fairer alternative to the current telephone system of requesting an application form.

Due to the amount of interest in Police careers, the initial telephone stage currently used to request an application form has a limited time window which closes when the set number of application forms has been issued; therefore removing eligible and high potential candidates from applying for a post. This would be unrelated to their ability to perform the role but owing to them being unavailable e.g. their current working environment, on holiday, overseas or unable to get through due to the high demand and limited timeframe. This can reduce a Constabulary's opportunity to receive applications from the best talent available.

The proposal is to introduce a regional Situation Judgement Test (SJT) and Behaviour Style Questionnaire (BSQ) into the recruitment process to use as an early sifting tool. SJT's are currently used for recruiting Special Constables and form part of a recognised process of recruitment, widely used in both private and public sector application processes.

Ms Zeeman clarified that it was unlikely there would be any cashable savings from this aspect of recruitment but there would be as part of the pre-entry element, though that depended on national standards emerging from the Neyroud and Winsor Reviews.

The approach would be scalable for the recruitment of Specials but this would best be identified earlier on.

Mr Hoare called for the objectives of the project to focus on the quality, as well as volume, of potential applicants. This triggered a discussion regarding the educational qualifications of applicants and whether these will feature in any future national strategy emanating from the Winsor part 2 review.

Dr Heffer reassured members that this business case did not close off any options at this stage.

RESOLVED

- i) That the proposal and anticipated expenditure set out in the*

Police Constable – Pre-assessment / Initial Recruit Selection Business Case is approved.

- ii) *That a project board chaired by Ms Zeeman is established to progress across the region with immediate effect.*

86. TIER 1 – LDU Governance

Ms Zeeman introduced a report which proposed changes to the current Learning and Development governance structure under 'business as usual'. This follows the positive outcomes that have been seen from earlier collaborative work meaning that the expansion of the principles that have underpinned these programmes can now be explored in relation to all areas of regional learning and development.

Mr Baker reported that the Commissioning Oversight Board and the Programme Board both endorsed this approach.

Ms Zeeman stated that this approach fits with actions the region was exploring for a shared service model of delivery and common purchasing of external training.

So far, £211k of cashable savings has been identified with a further £114k anticipated.

Mr Hoare questioned the use of the term 'governance'. He argued that Police Authorities were charged with governance with Forces responsible for delivery.

Ms Zeeman stated there was no wish to confuse responsibilities here and an alternative wording would be found.

RESOLVED

- i) *That the revised Learning and Development governance structure be approved.*

87. TIER 1 - ICT convergence

Mr Moore reported progress on the various initiatives within this workstream:

The Regional workstream continues to progress in line with the requirements of the national Information Systems Improvement Strategy (ISIS) to ensure that the focus is aligned to business need and that technology will deliver solutions to support Forces in transforming the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

Members were reminded that the national and regional landscape remains extremely diverse and fragmented. In addition, the focus of individual Forces on responding to the financial challenges posed by the Comprehensive Spending Review has made it difficult for some to commit resources and effort to regional ICT convergence as their local ICT resources are downsized. Consequently progress within the region has been limited.

Mr Moore reminded members that the Home Secretary announced on 4 July 2011 that the Home Office will establish a police-owned ICT company (NewCo). It is likely that a mixed economy of national and regional / cluster arrangements will now emerge.

RESOLVED

- i) *That the regional ICT convergence lead, with the support of the South West Information Managers, produce an options and feasibility paper for a new regional entity along the lines proposed to this Committee, to cover the scope of services to be provided, together with management, governance and financial considerations.*

88. Proposed dates for future South West Police Authorities Joint Committee meetings

RESOLVED

- i) *That the dates for the SWPAJC meetings in 2012 are agreed as
13 February 2012 - Gloucestershire
23 April 2012 – Avon & Somerset
9 July 2012 - Wiltshire
15 October 2012 – Dorset*

89. NPIA abolition and local charging

Mr Smith initiated a conversation regarding the proposals to abolish the NPIA and the associated charges, currently picked up by the NPIA, that may in future be incurred by individual police authorities for critical police support infrastructure.

Three areas in particular were highlighted

- Implications for the future of the West Coast forensics contract (due to expire in March 2013)
- The future funding of critical infrastructure, for example PNC.
- Those elements of the critical infrastructure that may need to be paid for in future by individual police authorities, for example the national funding for Airwave (currently costing £220m).

Mr Smith indicated that there had been joint lobbying on behalf of Authorities and Forces at the national level.

Mr Bull endorsed this approach and suggested writing to both the NPIA and Home Office to highlight the concerns that this Committee had.

90. TIER 1 Amalgamated Update Report

Mr Baker provided an update on the Tier 1 projects.

Mr Preston reported that he had attended the Procurement Project Board on 13 July 2011 and was impressed with the progress being made.

Mr Otter indicated that the test would now be to implement the changes and redefine processes in order to reap the benefits. This would take commitment and drive from the participating Forces.

Approved by SWPAJC 4 November 2011

Mr Moore agreed that the project had been well run and asked for thanks to be passed on to Mrs Goscomb and colleagues for their hard work in progressing this workstream.

Mr Baker updated members that a business case proposing future options for forensic provision was on track to be presented to the next meeting of this committee in November. This is an area of considerable spend for the five Forces and it is anticipated that there may be options for reasonable levels of savings.

RESOLVED

- i. That the Tier 1 Update report be noted.*

91. Tier 2 Amalgamated Update Report

Mr Baker provided an update.

Corporate Services Transformation – further benchmarking has proven too difficult at this stage given the substantial change seen in each Force as part of budget cuts.

Source and Covert – all five Forces have now signed up to this project.

Chronicle – again, all five Forces have now signed up to this approach. This provides additional options for such options as mobile armouries during the Olympics.

Air Ops – by 30 September 2011, all police authorities will need to reach a local decision on the ACPO proposals for the future of Air Ops.

RESOLVED

- i. That the Tier 2 Update report be noted.*

92. Tier 3 Amalgamated Update Report

Mr Baker presented an update by way of exception.

A uniformed Protective Service strand has been established under the leadership of ACC Hansen (Avon and Somerset).

RESOLVED

- i. That the Tier 3 Update report be noted*

93. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED

- i) that in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Agenda Items 15 to 18 because it is likely that if a member of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.*