

HUMBERSIDE POLICE AUTHORITY

(Special Meeting)

26 July 2005

<u>PRESENT:-</u>	Councillor Stroud in the Chair
Elected Members:-	Councillors Black, De Freitas, Phillips, Rudd, Tress and Uzzell.
Magistrate Members: -	Mr C Palmerley, JP and Mr Stuart, JP.
Independent Members:-	Mr S Abdul Rahman, Mrs S Tibbett, Ms A Branton and Mr J Shipley.
Officers: -	Ms S Ismail, Chief Executive, Mr T Hollis, Chief Constable, Mr D Hunter, Acting Assistant Chief Constable, Mr P Goatley, Assistant Chief Officer (Support), Inspector E McGee, Mr J Mabbett, Consultation and Partnership Manager, Mr P Wainwright, Performance and Resources Manager, Mr R Gray, Performance and Resources Officer, Mr S Driver, Treasurer to the Police Authority and Ms S Blair, Better Times Ltd.

The Authority met at Pacific Exchange, Kingston upon Hull.

23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/OFFERS OF GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY –

The Chief Executive reminded Members of the need to record any personal or prejudicial interest in items on the agenda and to disclose any relevant receipt or offering of gifts or hospitality.

Councillor Phillips declared a prejudicial interest in minute 33 and withdrew from the meeting during discussion of that item.

Ms Blair declared a prejudicial interest in minutes 31 and 32 and withdrew from the meeting during discussion of those items.

24 APOLOGIES – Apologies for absence were received from Mr Ali, Councillor Brady and Councillor Stewart.

DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE APPOINTMENT - The Chair reported that Mr David Griffin, currently Assistant Chief Constable (Operational Support) at Cheshire, had been appointed as the new Deputy Chief Constable of

Humberside Police. Mr Griffin had 20 years police service and had previously served for 15 years in Humberside. It was hoped that Mr Griffin would join the Force in late September.

- 25 **(15) ANNUAL ACCOUNTS** – The Chief Constable and the Treasurer to the Police Authority submitted a joint report that included and sought approval for the Annual Accounts 2004/05.

The Treasurer reported that the Accounts were submitted one month earlier than previously in order to meet statutory deadlines. He drew specific attention to the revenue accounts, the balance sheet and movements. He highlighted that this was the second year that full pension liability had been shown in the accounts (which had increased by £200m) which reflected the increasing liability on all public sector bodies.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Support) reported that the Accounts were pre audit statements and there could therefore be some marginal changes. He referred also to the fact that some in-year underspending was to be expected not least because of the way in which the Police Authority properly took annual budget decisions within the context of the five year financial forecast.

Members referred to the revenue reserves relating to pensions and queried how this compared with other Forces. The Assistant Chief Officer (Support) advised that the Force had been commended by HMIC for taking a prudent approach and was one of approximately 50% of Forces who adopted the approach of meeting the pensions liability for officers at the point they became eligible to retire. This was sensible in any Authority with limited financial resources as it avoided the risk of significant unplanned expenditure having to be met in a financial year which could disrupt the delivery of operational policing.

Resolved – (a) That the Annual Accounts 2004/05 be agreed, subject to audit, and (b) that a further report be submitted following the audit.

- 26 **(16) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE** – Further to minute 11 the Chief Executive submitted a report that outlined the changes made to the performance management structure within the Force. Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was a Performance Management Handbook that was intended to act as a guide for all members of Humberside Police in understanding the overall purpose of the Force in the context of performance management, the performance objectives of Divisions and Branches, the role of policing teams and the contribution of individuals to the process.

The Chief Constable reported that this process ensured that the appropriate meetings at Branch, Division and Force level were in place to provide Performance Scrutiny Committee Members with the information they needed.

Resolved – That the principles of the Performance Management Handbook be followed.

- 27 **(17) NATIONAL BLACK POLICE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE** – The Chief Constable submitted a report that updated Members on the National Black Police Conference that was to be held in Cleveland between 27 and 30 September, which had been part sponsored by Humberside Police and the Police Authority. He advised that sponsoring an event such as this highlighted that Humberside Police were working with the BPA on diversity issues and had the knock on effect of increasing community confidence. He indicated that the support provided by the Police Authority was much appreciated.

Reference was made to the allocation of 2 places for Authority Members and it was indicated that as many Members who wished to go should be permitted to do so. The Chief Executive requested approval for 2 members of the Secretariat staff to also attend.

Resolved – (a) That the report be noted; (b) that a letter be sent to all Members of the Authority asking if they wish to attend the Conference, and (c) that 2 members of the Secretariat staff be authorised to attend.

- 28 **CALL HANDLING – REQUEST FOR UPDATE** – The Chair referred to the number of complaints received by Members regarding call handling. He indicated that whilst there was much good work going on within the Force and much to be positive about, there did appear to be a problem with call handling. The complaints related to members of the public having difficulty getting through on the 0845 number and then being kept waiting. He queried whether the successful advertisement and promotion of the single non emergency number had led to the service being overwhelmed. He referred to the amount of overtime being spent within that Department and the high levels of sickness. He also expressed concern that calls to the 0845 number cost just over 3p per minute. Members reiterated these concerns referring also to issues around recruitment, training, sickness and overtime within the Command Centre and it was suggested that the Call Handling Board needed to refocus. It was requested that the Force provide details of the duration of all calls including the number of “lost calls”. Concern was expressed that an Inspector had indicated at a PANE L meeting that there was a faulty line into the Command Centre and that this fault could not be located. Members expressed concern that Call Handlers were indicating to callers that they were not aware of locations. They indicated that many services handled calls remotely and it was not a matter of where the call was answered but how the caller felt about the response

The Chief Constable reported that, co-incidental to the concerns being raised

by Members, he had had various meetings with Chief Officers, Unison and Police Staff and had visited the Command Centre regarding this issue. He acknowledged the problems regarding call handling and indicated that there were some big issues for the Police nationally regarding meeting public need. He advised that there were no instant solutions but that there were some decisions that could be made at a senior level to introduce change. He advised that there were some longer term issues around staffing levels, training, pay and sickness levels and gave his assurance that he would get personally involved in resolving these problems and would keep Members involved and informed.

Resolved – That the Chief Constable be requested to undertake an urgent review of call handling and customer responses and submit to the next meeting of the Police Authority a comprehensive report setting out the findings of the review and recommendations for improvement.

29 **(18) SPECIAL CONSTABULARY ALLOWANCE SCHEME** – The Chief Constable submitted a report that updated Members on the Special Constabulary Allowance Scheme.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Support) reported that in order to claim the allowance Special Constables were required to work 16 hours per month. There was an underspend on the budget and the reasons for Specials not claiming the allowance were highlighted at paragraphs 10 and 11 of the report. He advised that it was important to maximise the number of productive hours worked by Specials, rather than to focus only on the number of Special Constables in the Force, and to ensure that they were being used in the most appropriate ways. He referred to the need to accelerate the officer safety training package. He referred to the setting of the budget for Specials and to the current underspend, all, except £200,000, of which was expected. He confirmed that there was no intention to use the ringfenced Special Constabulary Budget for any new purpose and that before any alternative use of the £200,000 underspend was progressed in any event this would be brought to Members for consideration and approval.

Members expressed concern that figures relating to the number of Special Constables included within the Performance Management Guide were different to the numbers contained within the report. The Chief Constable confirmed the need for accurate management information. He advised of the need to address how Specials were used explaining that, although volunteers, they were there to work for the Force and to provide a service for communities and it was necessary to align their preferences with what the Force and public wanted.

Members referred to the uneven distribution of Special Constables and it was reiterated that they were volunteers and so they chose where they wished to

work with the majority choosing to work in their local area. It was queried what measures were being taken to increase the numbers in A Division and it was reported that tendering was currently underway for a media campaign for A, B and D Divisions that would involve posters in bus shelters, advertisements in the press, on the radio and in supermarkets.

Members indicated that although the number of Specials in C Division met the target, no-one wishing to volunteer should be refused. Reference was made to the need to identify where and how Specials spent their time. A Member referred to money allocated by the Home Office and indicated that this should be shown in future reports. Members commented on allowances, referring specifically to the non take up of the allowance, retrospective claims and whether Specials were advised of what they needed to do to claim and it was reported that attempts to make the claiming process as simple as possible were being made and the possibility of introducing this electronically was being looked into.

Members referred to the effect of the Council Tax discount being offered to Specials in Hull and it was reported that since it was advertised last week 93 applications had been received.

Members and the Chief Constable commented on the opportunities for partnership working and the establishment of Local Area Agreements and the need to ensure that where opportunities existed these were accessed and exploited to the full.

Resolved – That detailed reports on the Special Constabulary and Allowance Scheme, including (i) the number of Special Constables on the establishment by Division, showing cumulative increases and decreases; (ii) a breakdown showing the numbers in training; (iii) those claiming allowances, not claiming allowances and the reasons for not claiming; (iv) average hours worked; (v) duties undertaken; (vi) the contribution to the performance and efficiency of the Force; (vii) training issues, and (viii) the budget position and any rise or fall in budget spend, be submitted twice yearly to the Police Authority.

30 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC** – **Resolved** - That in accordance with the provisions of Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, minutes 31 - 35, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

31 **(19) MEDIA LIAISON, PUBLIC RELATIONS ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR THE POLICE AUTHORITY** – The Chief Executive submitted a report that outlined the findings of a Best Value Review of Communications and Marketing that had been undertaken between November 2004 and February

2005 and detailed a number of options.

Resolved – (a) That the adoption of a tendering process for a “fixed fee” approach for a two-year period be agreed, and (b) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Police Authority on progress with the development of the tendering process.

Ms Blair declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting during consideration of the above matter, minute 31.

- 32 **(20) HUMAN RESOURCES ADVICE AND CONSULTANCY AND MEDIA LIAISON/PUBLIC RELATIONS ADVICE AND SUPPORT CONSULTANCY FOR THE POLICE AUTHORITY** – The Chief Executive submitted a report that updated Members on the Human Resources (HR) advice and Consultancy Service for the Media Liaison/Public Relations Advice and Support Consultancy for Humberside Police Authority.

Resolved – That the extension of the existing HR and Media Liaison contracts, until such time as the quotation process is completed, be agreed, and (b) that a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Police Authority on progress with the quotation process for the HR and Media Liaison contracts.

Ms Blair declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting during consideration of the above matter, minute 32.

- 33 **(21) GEOGRAPHICAL POLICING PROGRAMME – SCUNTHORPE NORTH LOCAL POLICING TEAM BASE** – The Chief Constable submitted a report requesting approval for the disposal of a small strip of land adjoining the new Scunthorpe LPT base.

Resolved – (a) That the sale of the strip of land adjoining the Scunthorpe North base, as shown at Annex 2 to the report, for a nominal sum of £1 to the owners of 57 Ferry Road, be approved, and (b) that each side meet their own legal costs.

Councillor Phillips declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting during consideration of the above matter, minute 33.

URGENT ITEMS – The following items, minute 34 and 35, were considered after the Chair had decided they were urgent for the following reasons (i) so as not to leave a building empty for which a prospective purchaser had already indicated a willingness to pay market value, and (ii) a need, operationally, to complete an MIR as soon as possible and because the contract would provide continuity of work to the Partner’s vetted staff already experienced in working on Force building projects, respectively.

- 34 **(22) GEOGRAPHICAL POLICING PROGRAMME – DISPOSAL OF BARTON POLICE STATION** – The Chief Constable submitted a report that informed Members of the case for declaring Barton Police Station surplus to requirements and the proposal to sell this property without placing it on the open market.

Resolved – (a) That Barton Police Station be declared surplus to requirements, and (b) that the sale of this property to the Barton Veterinary Group for the sum of £125,000 be approved.

- 35 **(23) MAJOR INCIDENT SUITE – A DIVISION** – The Chief Constable submitted a report that set out a case for a new Major Incident Room (MIR) facility for A Division to be created by means of the conversion and refurbishment of the former Sports and Social Club and other currently under-utilised accommodation at Cleethorpes Police Station.

Members referred to minute 2228 (04/05) when it had been requested that no new building works commence until a report has been submitted to the Police Authority in September.

It was moved by Councillor Tress and seconded by Councillor De Freitas, that the recommendations contained within the report be approved.

Motion Lost.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by the Vice Chair, that the report be noted and consideration deferred until September.

Motion Carried.