

**POLICE AUTHORITY  
20 JUNE 2006**

- 18 (11) **HEALTH AND SAFETY – CHANGES TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
– The Chief Executive submitted a report that outlined proposals to include Force Health and Safety issues within the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee.

**Resolved** – (a) That the Personnel Committee Terms of Reference be amended to include “To consider, as necessary, any issues in relation to Health and Safety matters”; (b) that the Personnel Committee receive an annual overview report on health and safety compliance, and (c) that the Personnel Committee receive issues on an ad hoc basis in respect of health and safety issues requiring determination from Members.

## HEALTH & SAFETY – CHANGES TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

### INTRODUCTION

1. At the meeting of the Personnel Committee on 11 April 2006, Members received proposals on how the role of the Personnel Committee could be strengthened to more effectively carry out its requirements in relation to human resource and training issues. It was identified that Force Health & Safety issues were not covered within the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee. This report addresses the issue.

### STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

2. Humberside Police Authority is the “employer” of all police staff in the Humberside Police Force under section 15 of the Police Act 1996 and, like officers, they are under the direction and control of the Chief Constable. The Police Authority is also responsible for all police buildings. In addition both the Chief Constable and the Police Authority have responsibility for the health and safety of all persons who may work in or visit police premises.
3. The Force Health and Safety Policy outlines the overall health and safety management system, including the organisational structure, responsibilities, systems and procedures that need to be in place, to enable them to comply with the relevant legislation and guidance.
4. At the core of the policy is the continuing commitment to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974, the Police (Health and Safety) Act 1997 and all other relevant statutory provisions and recognised codes of practice.
5. It is important that the Police Authority has oversight of the Force Health & Safety Policy.

### PRACTICE IN OTHER POLICE AUTHORITIES

6. Having researched the matter, the practice of reporting in other police authorities varies. The most common approach is to report to the committee for Human Resources/Personnel on an annual basis. However, a number of authorities have ad hoc reporting on health and safety issues requiring intervention from Members (for example, the ability to report back on any significant issues identified by Members as a consequence of involvement within a Force Health & Safety Board).
7. It is therefore proposed:
  - (i) **Terms of Reference** – the Personnel Committee terms of reference be amended to include “*To consider, as necessary, any issues in relation to Health & Safety matters*”;
  - (ii) **Annual Reporting** – the Personnel Committee to receive an annual overview report on health and safety compliance; and

- (iii) **Ad hoc Reporting** – the Personnel Committee to receive issues on an ad hoc basis in respect of health and safety issues requiring determination from Members.

## **REPRESENTATION ON FORCE HEALTH & SAFETY BOARD**

8. The APA Human Resources Policy Group recommends the involvement of a Police Authority Member on a Force Health & Safety Board as good practice.
9. The Humberside Police Force Health & Safety Committee meets on a quarterly basis and is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable. It is proposed elsewhere on this agenda to place a Member (of the Personnel Committee) onto the Force Health & Safety Board and report back to the Personnel Committee as appropriate.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

10. In March 2006 a project commenced, on behalf of the Home Office and ACPO, to review the management of health and safety in the police service. The review is considering how health and safety is currently provided and managed in forces. The intention was to finish the work by May 2006 (although no information had been received at the time of writing this report) and produce agreed national standards and guidance/framework by August 2006.
11. The APA HR Policy Group raised a number of issues, including:
- The lack of clarity over the legal position regarding health and safety, and the need for any guidance to clarify the position, e.g. although legally the police authority is responsible for the health and safety of police staff, the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has made clear that chief officers in practice had devolved responsibility for police staff and could be prosecuted if this was appropriate;
  - The need for any guidance to stress the need for strong and active involvement by the police authority in health and safety matters, e.g. in some authorities the lead police authority member sits on the force health and safety board (as stated earlier); and
  - The need for the police authority to hold the chief constable to account specifically for his performance on health and safety issues.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

12. It is recommended that the Police Authority discuss the report and approve the proposals set out in paragraph 7.

**JOHN BATES**  
**Director of Performance and Resources**

**Contact Officer:-** Paul Wainwright Tel: (01482) 334888

**Background Papers:-** Minutes of Personnel Committee (11 April 2006)