

HUMBERSIDE POLICE AUTHORITY

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

14 APRIL 2009

PRESENT:- Mr K Robinson in the Chair

Police Authority Members:- Councillor Rudd and Mr J Shipley

Lay Independent Members:- Mr J Goolden

Officers:- Mr K Sharp, Chief Executive.

The Committee met at Pacific Exchange, Kingston upon Hull.

- 13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/OFFERS OF GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY** – The Chair 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.

Mr Goolden declared a personal interest in minute 19, insofar as he was on the reference group for the research group mentioned at paragraph 17 of the report.

- 14 **APOLOGIES** – Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mrs Groves.

- 15 **MINUTES – Resolved** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2008 having been printed and circulated amongst the Members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the Chair.

- 16 **UPDATE ON THE MINUTES** – The Chief Executive referred to minute 6 and reminded Members that an informal meeting would be held with the Chair of the Authority after the Committee to discuss a wider role for the Standards Committee.

In response to a Member's query, the Chief Executive advised that although a meeting had been arranged with the Fire Authority, they had failed to attend and it had not yet been possible to arrange a subsequent meeting.

The Chief Executive advised in relation to minute 8 (the application of the Code of Conduct to off duty police) that although off duty conduct could be taken into account within disciplinary proceedings, such conduct would have to be significant to justify it being used.

Resolved – That the updates be noted.

- 17 **(6) ACTION SCHEDULE** - Members received a rolling schedule of actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.

The Chief Executive advised that the matters referred to at items 9 and 10 had been discharged.

Resolved – That the Action Schedule and update be noted.

- 18 **(7) MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES** – The Chief Executive submitted a report that sought advice from the Committee on any proposed revisions to the Police Authority's Members' Allowances Scheme following the Report of the Independent Panel on Police Authority Members' Allowances.

Following clarification from the Chief Executive that following any recommendations from the Standards Committee, it would be within the remit of the full Police Authority to make a final decision with regards to changes to the Allowances Scheme, a Member suggested that a separate Committee be introduced with the specific role of reviewing Members' allowances.

Members commented that they would have liked to have seen the whole range of figures that had been used to obtain the median figures for allowances that had been contained within the report.

Members highlighted and discussed four possible options, i) to increase allowances in line with the APA report; ii) allowances to remain at the current level; iii) the introduction of an end of year bonus payment up to a maximum of 5% of annual allowance and iv) payment of allowances to be based on performance.

In answer to a Member's query, the Chief Executive advised that a proposal was to be presented to the full Authority that would designate lead roles to each Member. The current system did not allow for any formal reporting mechanisms and it was hoped that the proposals would enable more formal and specific feedback to be introduced.

The Chief Executive stressed that any remuneration system introduced should be open, transparent and easy to administer.

Following a discussion, Members highlighted two options, i) allowances to remain at the current level, and ii) the introduction of an allowances scheme that worked on the basis of a credit system that would see Members receiving credits for each additional responsibility that they had and being remunerated accordingly.

Members advised that although they would like to seek informal feedback from all Members, additional information was required before any consultation with Members was conducted to ensure that all questions and

concerns could be addressed. Members therefore requested that research be conducted into the allowances paid within Local Authorities and Fire Authorities in the local area to allow comparisons to be made in a local context.

Resolved – (a) That the report be noted, and (b) that the Secretariat conduct research into the allowances paid within Local Authorities and Fire Authorities to allow comparisons to be made in a local context with a view to seeking informal feedback from all Members on the options discussed for reviewing the Members' Allowances Scheme.

- 19 **(8) WIDER GOVERNANCE** – The Chief Executive submitted a report that considered how the Standards Committee could demonstrate the existence of good ethical standards within the Authority and what could be done to ensure continuous improvement.

Members spoke of the importance of becoming a 'Guide Dog' Standards Committee commenting that the Audit Commission favoured this approach and that the capability of achieving this status existed within the Authority's Standards Committee.

Although Members agreed that the Committee had to be more proactive and take on more functions, it was also agreed that a defining characteristic of Standards Committees was that they were one step removed from the Police Authority and Members therefore discussed the roles that could be undertaken by the Committee whilst ensuring that it kept its independence.

A Member suggested that the Committee undertake an advisory role in relation to the ethical functions of the Authority, such as viewing and providing feedback on proposals and protocols.

In relation to paragraph 14 of the report and the question "Does the organisation promote and demonstrate the principles and values of good governance?" Members agreed that they needed further insight as to how the Authority worked. They agreed that the 2008 PDR process had been positive and felt that follow up work to further investigate how the Authority and its Committees worked would be beneficial. The Chief Executive advised that arrangements were to be made over the next two months to undergo the 2009 PDRs.

Members were to meet with the Police Authority Chair following the meeting and it was agreed that this matter be further discussed at that forum.

Resolved – (a) That the report be noted, and (b) that arrangements be made in respect of the 2009 PDRs.

- 20 **(9) MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOLS** – The Chief Executive submitted a report that introduced i) an early draft protocol that governed the working relationship between the Chair of the Police Authority and the Chief

Executive of the Police Authority and ii) a Member/Officer protocol that governed the working relationship between Members and Officers of the Police Authority. The protocols were attached as annexes to the report.

A Member queried what would happen in the event of a dispute in respect of the Chair/Chief Executive Protocol. He went on to highlight that the day to day issues for the Chief Executive differed from the overall performance objectives and stressed that the Chair should not be the sole arbiter as to whether the Chief Executive had achieved those objectives.

A Member advised of the awaited release of national Officer and Member Codes and requested that following their publication, specific references be made to these within the Authority's Protocols.

A Member suggested that the Protocols be included within the induction process for both new Members and Secretariat staff and it was agreed that the induction processes and training programmes for Members and staff be included within the Committee's work plan.

Resolved – (a) That the report be noted, (b) that the views expressed above be taken into account when finalising the Member/Officer Protocols, (c) that following the publication of national Officer and Member Codes, specific references be made within the Authority's Protocols, (d) that the induction processes and training programmes for Members and staff be included within the Committee's work plan and (e) that the Member/Officer Protocols be reviewed annually to ensure any required changes are made.

21 **(10) 8th STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND ANNUAL ASSEMBLY** –

The Chief Executive submitted a report that sought a Member representative to attend the 8th Annual Assembly of Standards Committees on the 12 and 13 October 2009.

Resolved – (i) That the report be noted and (ii) that Councillor Rudd attend the Standards Board for England Annual Assembly 2009 with the Chief Executive on 12 and 13 October 2009 and Mr Goolden be listed as his substitute.