

CRIMESTOPPERS-REQUEST FOR FUNDING

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report asks Members to consider a request for financial support from the Police Authority to help fund the running of Crimestoppers within the Humberside Police area under the governance of a recently created Local Volunteer Board.

INTRODUCTION

2. Crimestoppers is a national charity administered locally through a Volunteer Board. The charity was first established in 1988 in the wake of the Broadwater Farm riots when it was strongly believed that local people knew who was responsible for the murder of PC Blakelock but were too frightened to come forward. The charity promotes and operates 0800 555 111 and www.crimestoppers-uk.org which provide to the caller a completely anonymous means of passing on information about criminal activity without fear of being identified.
3. The mantra of Crimestoppers is *'tell us what you know not who you are'*. In addition to promoting the number, Crimestoppers' objectives are to encourage people to give information, pass information to the right enforcement agency, help reduce crime by running projects and campaigns in communities most affected by crime, reassure the public by increasing the number of convictions and to fund, run and administer the charity to the highest standards of governance.
4. Although Crimestoppers is independent of the service, the organisation could not operate without the full support of police forces, police authorities and partners such as local authorities. The success of Crimestoppers in identifying criminals has, and can continue to have, a positive impact on the performance of police forces and there is clear synergy between the objectives of the charity and the strategic aims and priorities within the policing plan.
5. In addition to the direct benefits in respect of crime detection and reduction, Crimestoppers has significant potential to act as a catalyst for empowering the community to take positive action under the auspices of Government's 'Big Society'.

INFORMATION

6. Until recently the charity operated at regional level through Boards of volunteers and this area was part of the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Board. Over time the size and diversity of the area made it increasingly difficult to attract sufficient

Board volunteers with local commitment and interest. Latterly for example there were only four. There was also a heavy focus at regional level on activity outside the Humberside Police Force area. Crimestoppers none-the-less continued to be active in this area but strategic direction was problematic. Over the past three years Boards nationally have been changing to cover areas coterminous with the relevant police boundary - in this case Humberside.

7. This catalyst for change led to the appointment of Frank Duffield as Chairman of the Humberside Board on 1 April 2011, who since then has set about establishing a refreshed Board of local volunteers. At the AGM of the Police Authority on 26 June 2011 Clive Palmerley JP and the Strategic Development Manager (Communities and Partnerships) were appointed as the Authority's representative on the Crimestoppers Board. The Strategic Development Manager (Communities and Partnerships) has been appointed the Treasurer for Humberside. Other volunteers have a variety of expertise including business, media, marketing, public administration, working with young people, criminology, neighbourhood watch and the Police Authority. The Board is supported by advice from the Crimestoppers Regional Manager for the North East, Yorkshire & Humberside, whose services are funded from donations received from public bodies to the national charity.
8. It is clear, given its history, that there is now a pressing need for Crimestoppers in Humberside to be firmly established on its new geographical footprint. Raising public awareness is key and the Board needs to take every opportunity to seek out platforms to promote the message. The most successful Crimestoppers areas are those where there are targeted campaigns relevant to local issues which capture the public's confidence.
9. Each Board must raise its own finances and targeted campaigns cost in the order of £20,000 each. There may be a need for several campaigns each year together with the funding of rewards for information provided. Currently the Board has £32,000 in funds comprising donations from the national charity, the Tribune Trust, East Riding of Yorkshire Local Strategic Partnership and Humberside Police (from their Proceeds of Crime Fund).
10. In June the Humberside Board set itself the target of raising £100,000 for campaigning in its first year and sees considerable opportunity to maximise the impact by working closely with other agencies and public bodies both in the identification and delivery of campaigns. The Board has approached other public and private sector organisations, including the force and this Authority seeking donations in order to meet its target. The Chief Constable has considered an approach from Crimestoppers and has agreed to contribute £15,000 from income recovered from the Proceeds of Crime Act within force budgets.

OPTIONS, RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

11. Crimestoppers is an independent organisation and there is no obligation on police forces or authorities to provide funding. However, having an active local Crimestoppers volunteer Board brings benefits to police forces in terms of supporting the delivery of the policing plan. Despite increased public confidence in policing there are still members of our communities, and most members of

the criminal underworld, who will not provide information for fear of being identified. No police force, no matter how well intentioned, can provide an absolute assurance of anonymity: as an independent organisation Crimestoppers provides a cast iron guarantee.

12. As well as campaigns for local and national crime initiatives (metal theft is a good current example) Crimestoppers provides an immediate and very creditable platform for tackling major crime. A recent local example is publicity Crimestoppers has provided for the theft of the Voyage statue of a fisherman stolen from Victoria Pier in Hull and valued at £40,000. In the event of a high profile undetected homicide most Senior Investigating Officers would wish to make use of their services and there are many examples nationally in which Crimestoppers has secured the information necessary to detect horrific crimes.

POLICING PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

13. The Policing Plan has a number of areas which link into the work of Crimestoppers and are relevant issues. For example strategic aim three is to reduce local crime and contains three priorities around focussing on local hot spots for violence, preventing rises in acquisitive crime and reducing house burglary.

IMPACTS ON OR LINKS TO COLLABORATION

14. The creation of a Humberside Crimestoppers local volunteer Board has been a move away from a regional approach, for very good reasons. However it has presented opportunities for local partnership working between Crimestoppers the police, Police Authority and public and private sector organisations. This partnership working has already secured the support of some very able and significant volunteers who sit on the Board together with practical financial support.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. Humberside Police and East Riding of Yorkshire Local Strategic Partnership have both provided £15,000 each of funding. The Authority sets aside specific reserves for future policy purposes and has four revenue reserves one of which is designated a Partnership Reserve. Members may wish to consider using monies from the reserve to match the contribution from the force to support Crimestoppers. The balance on this reserve at 31st March 2011 stood at £335,000 subject to decisions made elsewhere in these papers

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

23. There are no legal implications associated with this report and there is no legal obstacle which would prevent the Authority providing funding to Crimestoppers.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

24. There are no equality, diversity or human rights issues associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

25. It is recommended that Members:
- (i) Consider and discuss the contents of this report;
 - (ii) Determine whether they wish to grant monies to Crimestoppers to assist in funding their activities.

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Background documents: None