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12 August 2008

Dear

Request for Information relating to Humberside Police Officer

Further to your letter dated 6 August please find below our response to the questions that you raised.

1. **What are the costs of providing a half day training course for 344 police and 166 civilian staff?**

271 police officers of all ranks and 166 police staff attended this training which lasted a maximum of one hour.

There was no additional cost to the organisation because it was delivered internally by one of the training officers employed by the Force. Training is delivered for every officer on a weekly basis on a variety of topics depending on what is happening at that time, it could be legislation, new policies, performance updates, diversity etc.

The awareness training was put into this 'calendar' of training with only a couple of extra dates added for police staff who attended as well. The briefings were arranged to minimize the impact on operational policing and generally speaking staff abstraction rates were minimal because it fitted in with already planned training dates.

2. **Can you identify and quantify any future costs?**

There is no more transgender awareness training to take place as the training referred to above is conducted on a 5 week cycle and this has now been completed. Further training, on topics that change every 5 weeks, will continue to be delivered to police officers.

3. **Are you aware of any similar training exercises undertaken within any corresponding sectors of private industry?**

The Authority does not hold information on what training exercises are conducted in private industry.

As public authorities Humberside Police and Humberside Police Authority have statutory duties. The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 extended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to cover those intending to undergo, currently undergoing or who have already undergone gender reassignment, in the areas of employment and vocational training. These Regulations entitle the individual to a working environment free from harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment.

The Equality Act 2006 (which amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975) and the Gender Equality Duty, which became effective from 6 April 2007, place a statutory duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women. This includes the elimination of discrimination and harassment of transsexual and transgender staff.

In addition, Humberside Police Authority (and all other police authorities) with effect from 14 March 2008 has a new positive duty, introduced by the Police and Justice Act 2006 to promote equality and diversity within the police force maintained for its area and within the authority. This requires the Authority to promote equality across all strands of diversity including those people who identify themselves as transgender.

4. **Do you consider that the costs of undertaking such an exercise is “money well spent”, a view propounded by Steve Garmston?**

I would reiterate that as a public authority the Force has a statutory duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.

Gender reassignment is still a relatively rare event and remains a hugely complex issue. It is a very challenging matter for the individual and their family but also for colleagues in the workplace. As a Police Authority we support the Force for taking positive and reasonable steps to deal with the situation with which they were faced. The Force needed to balance a number of competing demands. They had to ensure they provided the officer with the necessary support to undergo the change and continue with a career in policing. Experience in other forces has indicated that where an employer fails in this regard then they may be challenged in the courts and fined if they have failed to make reasonable adjustments.

Similarly the Force has a duty of care to staff at ‘A’ division who will be working with the officer in the future. Most people do not have any experience of issues relating to gender reassignment and as such the Force felt it appropriate and proportionate to arrange for all members of staff to be provided with information and advice on the issue and this was done by way of a one hour briefing. I would proffer that any potential costs associated with not pursuing such a course of action would outweigh the negligible costs associated with the one hour briefing session delivered to police officers and staff in ‘A’ division.

5. **Do you believe that the police precept payers of the Humberside Police area consider such expenditure to be appropriate in such times of financial stringency?**

As indicated in my response to your first question the training was delivered as one small part of a greater training package. It was delivered in-house and there was therefore no additional cost to the precept payers of the Humberside Police area.

As stated in my previous letter, if you think we have not supplied information in accordance with our Freedom of Information Publication Scheme or under general rights of access then you should write, in the first instance to:

Kevin Sharp
Chief Executive (Designate)
Humberside Police Authority
40 High Street
Hull
HU1 1PS

Telephone: 01482 334818
Fax: 01482 334822
E-mail: chiefexecutive@humberside-pa.karoo.co.uk

We aim to deal with your complaint within 15 working days. If you are dissatisfied with the response you can ask for the matter to be internally reviewed. We aim to complete an internal review and respond to you within 15 working days.

If after the internal review, you remain dissatisfied then you can complain to the Information Commissioner:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 547700
Fax: 01625 524510

Yours sincerely



Alene Branton MBE
Chair of Humberside Police Authority