

To: Cambridgeshire Police Authority

From: Chief Executive

Date: 30th June 2008

AMENDMENT TO POLICE AUTHORITY STANDING ORDER NO. 6

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To obtain the agreement of the Police Authority to amend Standing Order Number 6 in order to clarify the procedures for members of the public speaking at meetings of the Police Authority.

2. The Amendment

- 2.2 At the Police Authority Way Forward Panel on 2 May 2008, the issue of members of the public speaking at meetings of the Police Authority was discussed. The Way Forward Panel was of the view that the Police Authority should be asked to agree to the inclusion of a “public forum” where members of the public could make a statement to the Authority, generally about something which the Authority would be considering later in the meeting. Standing Order No 6 does make provision for members of the public to attend meetings to pose a question(s) to the Authority. The amendment would extend this to allow a member of the public to make a statement presenting a factual piece of information or the particular view of an individual or group. We have considered practices applied elsewhere in the public sector in managing this issue and identified good practice is reflected in the revision proposed.
- 2.3 The current Standing Order No. 6 is at Appendix 1 and the proposed revised version at Appendix 2 with changes highlighted in bold italic type.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Police Authority is recommended to agree the proposed amendments to Standing Order Number 6.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document (s)	Contact Officer	Location
Cambridgeshire Police Authority Standing Orders.	Bob Toland Research and Policy Manager T. 01480 425999 F. 01480 425748	Cambridgeshire Police Authority, Hinchingbrooke Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 6NP.

Originating Officer: Bob Toland

Is it considered that this report contains 'exempt information' and should be considered in private? NO

If the answer is "YES", please state the nature of the exempt information and the relevant clause (s) in Part 1 of Revised Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972

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The attached report has been cleared with the undermentioned officers: (delete as appropriate)

Chief Executive

Others

Submitted on30th May 2008.....

A report will not be sent to the Authority unless this box has been satisfactorily completed and all necessary consultation carried out - the responsibility for which rests with the originator (except for consultation with the Chairman and this will be undertaken by the Chief Executive).

Standing Order 6 (Current Version)

Petitions and Questions

- (1) Petitions may be presented to any member of the Authority. Any member shall be at liberty to move a motion that the petition be referred to the next meeting of the Authority or appropriate Committee or to officers for consideration and report and such motion on being seconded shall be immediately put to the vote.
- (2) Any member of the public may ask questions of the Police Authority which are relevant to its business. However, to allow an opportunity to obtain any information sought in order to give a meaningful response written notice should be given to the Chief Executive not less than 14 days before a meeting of the Authority.
- (3) As soon as such questions are received the appropriate officer(s) involved in responding should be given a copy and be requested to prepare an answer.

Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that questions are answered fully but concisely.

- (4) Any question(s) shall be included on the agenda for the meeting as the next item of business after the approval of the minutes of the last meeting and must be addressed to the Chairman. The Chairman will then invite the appropriate officer or member of the Authority to respond. Arising from such questions, if members want a report or an issue to be debated then they must use existing procedures to ensure that at the following meeting the item is raised.
- (5) With regard to those questions which involve the disclosure of exempt information, if part of the answer can be given to the public then that should still be done. However, if that is not the case or the answer is clearly inadequate then the questioner must be told that there will be no answer available and why prior to the meeting and the question will not be put on the agenda.
- (6) The person asking the question shall be given the opportunity of attending the meeting to put the question, but if not present the answer as reported to the Authority shall be sent to such persons following the meeting. If in attendance the appropriate officer and/or member shall meet the questioner to discuss any further concerns they may have and to clarify any answer given if necessary.
- (7) The Chairman may use discretion to limit the number of questions asked by members of the public in order to avoid disruption of the business of the Police Authority. In any event the total time allowed for public questions and answers shall not exceed 15 minutes. Any questions which remain unanswered within the timescale shall receive written responses only.

Standing Order 6 Petitions and Questions (Proposed)

- (1) Petitions may be presented to any member of the Authority. ***Any member shall be at liberty to move a motion at the next appropriate meeting that the petition be referred to either:***
 - a. ***the then next meeting of the Authority.***
 - b. ***the then next appropriate Committee meeting.***
 - c. ***Officers for consideration and report.***

Any such motion on being seconded shall be immediately put to the vote.
- (2) Any member of the public may ask questions of ***or make a statement to*** the Police Authority relevant to its business. ***However, in order to give a meaningful response to questions and to manage the agenda written notice of questions and statements*** should be given to the Chief Executive not less than 14 days before a meeting of the Authority.
- (3) As soon as such questions are received the appropriate officer(s) involved in responding should be given a copy and be requested to prepare an answer. Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that questions are answered fully but concisely.
- (4) Question(s) ***from and statements by members of the public*** shall be included on the agenda for the meeting as the next item of business after the approval of the minutes of the last meeting. Questions must be addressed to the Chairman. The Chairman will then invite the appropriate officer or member of the Authority to respond. Arising from such questions, if members want a report or an issue to be debated then they must use existing procedures to ensure that at the following meeting the item is raised.
- (5) With regard to those questions which involve the disclosure of exempt information, if part of the answer can be given to the public then that should still be done. However, if that is not the case or the answer is clearly inadequate then the questioner must be told that there will be no answer available, and why, prior to the meeting and the question will not be put on the agenda.
- (6) The person asking the question ***or making a statement*** shall be given the opportunity of attending the meeting to ***speak***. ***If a person putting a question is not present*** the answer as reported to the Authority shall be sent to such persons following the meeting. If in attendance the appropriate officer and/or member shall meet the questioner to discuss any further concerns they may have and to clarify any answer given if necessary.

- (7) The Chairman may use discretion to limit the number of questions asked **or statements made** by members of the public in order to avoid disruption of the business of the Police Authority. **Members of the public asking a question or making a statement will be allocated a maximum of 3 minutes to do so.** In any event the total time allowed for public questions, answers **and statements** shall not exceed 15 minutes. Any questions which remain unanswered within the timescale shall receive written responses only. **The purpose of this “open forum” is to enable succinct questions or statements to be made within the allowed time limit in the presence of Members. This procedure does not enable a debate to take place involving the member(s) of the public nor for public participation in other business of the meeting.**