

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Monday 14th December 2009

Time: 4.00 pm until 5.35 pm

Location: Conference Room 3, Police Headquarters, Huntingdon

Present:

Members: Ms Shona Johnstone – Chairman
Mr John Batchelor – Deputy Chairman
Mr John Clark

Executive Team: Mr John Hummersone, Treasurer
Dr Dorothy Gregson, Chief Executive
Miss Jackie Chapman, Committee and Support Services Officer

Constabulary: Chief Constable Julie Spence
Mrs Niki Howard, Director of Finance and Resources
Mr Colin Luscombe, Head of Estates and Facilities Management

1. To note any apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Benjamyn Damazer, Mr Mahmood Fazal, Mrs Olive Main and Ms Ruth Rogers.

2. To note any Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

3. Questions and Statements from Members of the Public

None were received.

4. Any Other Items of Business that the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972

None were received.

5. **To confirm the minutes of the Capital Panel meeting held on 15th September 2009 and the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 20th October 2009**

The minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

However, the Chairman agreed to defer the signing of the Capital Panel minutes to the next meeting, subject to endorsement by Members who were present at the relevant Capital Panel meeting.

6. **Capital Programme 2009/10 - Monitoring Report**

The Committee received the Capital Programme 2009/10 Monitoring Report.

The report gave a financial overview of the Capital Programme for the seven months ending 31st October 2009 and also included:-

- Details of Budgeted Capital Payments for 2009/10 and payments approved as part of the Capital Programme.
- a scheme by scheme summary of spend against budget and progress highlighting variances from agreed budgets.
- A project highlights report which showed the current predicted delivery times (and slippage) for each scheme.

The Constabulary reported that as at the end of October 2009 some 70% of the 2009/10 Capital Programme had been spent and committed. This represented a significant improvement on previous years.

Principal spends in the period included a number of significant buildings projects brought forward. These were Cambourne Police Station (£1.3m), Copse Court refurbishment (£1.5m), HQ remodelling (£1.2m) and planned major repairs (£1.2m). In addition, actual and committed expenditure had reached £1.6m on the Microsoft Migration project and £1.0m on vehicle replacement at the period end.

The Committee noted that the purchase of Monks Wood had been completed and the Microsoft Migration project was ahead of schedule.

The Constabulary further reported that the capital resources to date included grants of £0.8m from Central Government and receipts of £0.2m from the sale of vehicles. The Committee noted that these had been added to receipts brought forward of £2.3m.

The Committee noted the report and approved two capital budget virements of £50k to the Web Based Platform Project and £70k to meet emerging capital pressures.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To note the report.*

- (ii) *To approve two capital budget virements of £50k to the Web Based Platform Project and £70k to meet emerging capital pressures.*

7. Revenue Monitoring 2009/10

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a report on spend against the approved 2009/10 Revenue Budget for the 7 months ended 31st October 2009.

The report included an indicative forecast of outturn and variances. The principal variances against budget included underspending against Police and Police Staff pay budgets, offset by overspending on Police Staff overtime and agency staff and a range of goods and services (e.g. consultancy fees, legal and audit costs, subscriptions and contributions, spend on Interpreters and collaboration costs).

The Committee was informed that the budget was broadly in balance with a marginal underspend of £135k or 0.2% of Net Revenue Budget. At the same point in 2008/09 there was a £1.4m underspend and the Committee acknowledged that 2009/10 would prove more challenging for budget management.

The Committee approved a recommendation to write off a 'bad debt' of £5,454.70, from a music promotions company (M.A. Concerts) that had gone into liquidation.

The Committee highlighted two key issues – the use of fuel in Police vehicles and Police Officer overtime. The Director of Finance and Resources confirmed that the Constabulary was currently exploring various options to identify potential fuel savings (including partnership work).

The Chief Constable then briefly described the Constabulary's measures to reduce Police Officer overtime. In order to support this, it was agreed that the report to the next Committee meeting would contain extra information regarding this issue and the Constabulary's efforts to manage this.

At the Committee's request, the Director of Finance and Resources also agreed to bring the ACPO guidance – charging for Police services report – back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To note the report.*
- (ii) *To approve the recommendation to 'write off' a debt of £5,454.70.*
- (iii) *For the Committee to receive a report at its next meeting on the ACPO Guidance – Charging for Police Services.*

8. Budget Setting Process

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a report which updated the Committee with the latest progress on the budget process for 2010/11 and beyond.

The Committee was reminded that at its meeting on the 20th October 2009, the Committee had discussed the Medium Term Financial Plan which had highlighted a budget gap for £1.1m for 2010/11. The report outlined different scenarios relating to a 3% council tax increase.

The Director of Finance and Resources described the budget setting process for 2010/11. The Constabulary had issued cash limits to budget holders based on the financing forecast. The Chief Constable had used the Star Chamber process to work with budget holders and identify further savings of 10%. This would assist in preparing a realistic balanced budget, ensure value for money, generate additional income and identify ways to work differently.

The Committee noted that the budget process took into account the rolling forward of 2009/10 establishments, the costs of increments and pay awards.

The Committee was informed that the Chief Constable wished to maintain front-line policing numbers.

The Constabulary reported that it had identified other significant service pressures totalling £2.4m. These included staffing for areas such as financial investigators, national ballistics work and honour based violence.

The Committee also received the Capital Programme for 2010/2013. The Director of Finance and Resources confirmed that a prioritised Capital Programme would be brought back for the Committee's consideration at its meeting on the 20th January 2010.

The Committee raised some questions regarding the reporting of each Capital scheme. The Director of Resources agreed to include a brief paragraph on all future reports, on each of the Capital schemes, outlining its purpose. In addition, the Director of Finance and Resources also agreed to separate out any long term revenue consequences from the report (with notable reference made to delivery of the Parkside Replacement Project).

The Committee generally discussed the financial difficulties faced by the public sector, the council tax precept and issues surrounding 'capping rules'.

The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial for the Chairmen of the Police Authority and Finance and Resources Committee to be involved in the Constabulary's Star Chamber process for 2010.

The Committee noted the report and the progress on the budget setting process for 2010/11, and in addition confirmed the assumptions in the draft budget.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To note the report and the progress on the budget setting process.*
- (ii) *For the Chairmen of the Police Authority and Finance and Resources Committee to be involved in the Constabulary's Star Chamber process for 2010.*

9. Policing Plan Priorities for 2010/13

The Committee received a report which outlined the planning process and future priorities for the Cambridgeshire Policing Plan 2010/13.

The Chief Executive described the planning process involved to enable the Police Authority and Constabulary to work jointly to produce the Local Policing Plan. This work would include a comprehensive threat and risk assessment together with public engagement on the “people’s priority”.

The Committee was informed that the Plan would be issued by the statutory deadline of 31st March 2010 and published by the 30th June 2010.

The Committee approved the four Local Policing Priorities for 2010/11.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To note the report and approve the four Local Policing Priorities for 2010/11.*

10. Exclusion of the public

The Committee resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Clauses 3 and 4 of Part 1 of revised Schedule 12A to the Act”.

11. Lease Renewal

The Committee approved the surrender and renewal of a lease.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To note the report and approve the recommendation.*

12. Proposed A14 Link Road

The Constabulary gave an update on the current position in relation to the proposed A14 link road.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To note the report and approve the recommendation.*

13. Southern BCU Accommodation

The Committee was updated on the project for the new Southern BCU accommodation and Cambridge city centre presence.

RESOLVED:

(i) To note the report and the agreed course of action.

14. Date of the next meeting

It was noted that the next Finance and Resources Committee would be held on **Wednesday 20th January 2010 at 4.00 pm**, at Police Headquarters, Huntingdon.

CHAIRMAN