



MINUTES

YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE JOINT POLICE AUTHORITIES COMMITTEE (YHJPAC)

14 SEPTEMBER 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT

Alene Branton
Mark Burns-Williamson
Jan Fiore
Alan Hartley
Jane Kenyon

Ann Liston
Charles Perryman
Clive Richardson
Graham Stroud
Bob Tress

Alternates
Rosie Brown
Clive Palmerley
Steven Rollinson

OFFICERS PRESENT

Catherine Archer
John Bates
Jeff Bridgeman
Janet Clitheroe
Stuart Donald

Andrew Ford
Karen Grey
Judith Heeley
Jim Holt
Shahin Ismail

Susan Reid
Pete Simmonds
Bill Wilkinson

Mark Burns-Williamson took the Chair for the first part of the meeting. He began by welcoming everyone to the first meeting of the Yorkshire and Humberside Joint Police Authorities Committee (YHJPAC).

1. APOLOGIES

Received from Bill Baugh, Jim Fender, Tony Hargreaves and Jeremy Holderness.

The Chair introduced Andrew Ford from the Home Office, who had been appointed as regional link.

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

None.

3. PROCEDURAL STANDING ORDERS

Members received a report of the Executive Director which introduced some Procedural Standing Orders for the Joint Committee, attached as an appendix, which had been prepared by the four Clerks. In drafting the Standing Orders, officers were concerned to reflect the unanimous wish of Members that the body should be inclusive and should not be dominated by any individual Authority.

The Executive Director drew attention to four clauses within the Standing Orders. The first proposed that rotation of the Chair was done on an annual basis, due to the need for continuity. The second proposed that meeting venues rotated on a fixed cycle around each Authority area. The third was the suggestion that the officers servicing the Joint Committee and the Chair ought not to be from the same Authority. The final proposal was that the quorum allowed for occasions where all Members from one Authority were not able to attend meetings. The Executive Director also highlighted the proposed arrangements for voting; saying that if no Members from one Authority were present, then binding decisions could not be taken. Finally, the Executive Director advised that some Members had requested that meetings commence later than 10am, and suggested starting them at 10.15am.

The proposals for the quorum and rotation of meeting venues were immediately supported. One Authority stated a preference for rotating the Chair on a quarterly basis, but agreed to rotate the Chair annually after further discussion. The majority of authorities preferred to start meetings at 10.30am. Members felt there ought to be the flexibility in the first year of the Joint Committee for the officers servicing it and the Chair to be from the same Authority. It was felt that the wording of paragraph 5.1 of the Standing Orders allowed this flexibility.

RESOLVED

(a) That the Procedural Standing Orders set out in Appendix A be approved.

(b) That meetings of the Joint Committee would begin at 10.30am.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR 2006/07

The Executive Director requested nominations for Chair of the Joint Committee. Mark Burns-Williamson was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED

That Mark Burns-Williamson be appointed Chair of the Yorkshire and Humberside Joint Police Authorities Committee for 2006/2007.

5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR 2006/07

The Executive Director requested nominations for Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee. Jane Kenyon was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED

That Jane Kenyon be appointed Vice-Chair of the Yorkshire and Humberside Joint Police Authorities Committee for 2006/2007.

6. WORKING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Members received a report of the Executive Director which sought to obtain approval for the latest version of the Heads of Agreement and discussed ways in which the Joint Committee could best fulfil its functions.

The first section of the report described how the proposal for the Joint Committee had come about, following work by the Chief Constables to shape proposals for joint working in some areas of protective services, in advance of and separate from forced merger activity. Following the meeting at the Thorpe Park Hotel for all members from the four police authorities, the Clerks to the four authorities were asked to draw up proposals to form a joint body to oversee collaborative working on behalf of the constituent authorities. These proposals were put to individual authorities in the form of a draft 'Heads of Agreement' document. The Joint Committee came into effect after each authority considered and approved a draft and nominated members to serve on the Joint Committee.

Minor variations to the Heads of Agreement had taken place during approval by the individual authorities, and the current version of the Heads of Agreement, attached as an appendix, was presented for formal approval.

The Heads of Agreement were approved unanimously with very little discussion.

The middle section of the report expanded upon paragraph 11 in the Heads of Agreement. The first bullet point referred to a shared vision for the development of joint working arrangements, and consultation in respect of the development and delivery of any service activity that may be undertaken on a joint basis. The Executive Director explained that this would allow the Joint Committee to act as the main point of contact between the Chief Constables and police authorities in this region for broader collaboration discussions, obviating the need for other consultation forums or separate reporting routes.

Members were reminded that an early version of the document contained a reference to Counter Terrorism, as this was a protective service likely to be delivered on a joint basis. The reference was removed as it became clear that the funding and organisation of this service would be entirely different, and that coverage would extend throughout the ACPO North East Region.

Notwithstanding this, reporting of progress to police authorities through the Joint Committee would both accord with its broad terms of reference, and offer an efficient means of enabling members to exercise some oversight of this area.

The report also envisaged that police authorities, through the Joint Committee, would have involvement in the selection of service areas that appeared to offer the potential for joint working and would have oversight of any project set up to explore that potential.

Paragraph 8 of the covering report provided a flavour of items to be discussed at future meetings of the Joint Committee; consultation on the scope of projects, consultation about the vision, draft Section 23 agreements for comment or approval and notes of meetings of the four Chief Constables.

Other suggestions for future agendas of the Joint Committee were reviewing the effectiveness of joint working, monitoring arrangements and opportunities to make changes if it felt necessary, identification of best practice and sharing of successes and failures outside the region.

Discussion then turned to whether there needed to be meetings with the four Chief Constables between meetings of the Joint Committee. This was thought to be a good idea and that it would be necessary to be flexible about who attended and the time of the meeting.

The Executive Director referred Members to the final paragraph of the covering report which suggested that the October meeting was preceded or replaced by a session to allow Members to explore the scope and purpose of their joint ambition in relation to joint working. She suggested that the four Chief Constables could be invited to this meeting. This was agreed, but the proposed date of 12 October was not convenient for many people. It was agreed to find an alternative date, with 27 October being a possibility.

RESOLVED

(a) That the Heads of Agreement attached at Appendix A be approved.

(b) That the programme of meetings at paragraph 9, with the exception of 12 October, be agreed.

7. DRAFT SECTION 23 AGREEMENT

Members received a briefing paper following a meeting of the four Chief Constables of the Yorkshire and Humberside Police Forces and the Joint Regional Programme Team.

The four Chief Constables re-affirmed their commitment to joint working, and established a timetable of regular meetings every 3 weeks. They further decided that there was a continuing need for the Joint Regional Programme Manager role (JRPM) working directly to the four Regional Chiefs Constables.

Funding and governance arrangements for this role needed to be further explored.

The Chief Constables raised questions on the expected interactions between themselves and the Joint Committee. They recognised that the Joint Committee needed to establish itself and indicated that they would value discussions on how appropriate links between the Regional Chief Constables Group (RCCG) and the Joint Committee could be developed.

The Chief Constables felt it critical to receive appropriate legal advice to progress a Section 23 Agreement under the Police Act 1996 and to ensure that all parties were fully satisfied with the implications of any such agreement. The RCCG intended to meet with legal advisers to ensure clarity of purpose and that any such agreement is sufficiently flexible for all joint working proposals.

The Chief Constables were concerned that the resource requirements were not fully evidenced. Further work was commissioned to produce Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) for scoping Serious & Organised Crime and Strategic Roads Policing projects.

Initial discussion concerned the representation of the four Chief Constables at meetings of the Joint Committee. Andy Ford advised that, as the Joint Committee was effectively a sub-committee of each police authority, it was right and proper that the Chief Constables or their representative should attend. It was agreed to write to the four Chief Constables and confirm that they or their representatives were invited to attend all meetings of the Joint Committee.

It was suggested that performance management of protective services was addressed in addition to resources. The APA Performance Management Policy Group was drawing up a scrutiny plan, but this might not be ready for the Joint Committee to use. It was agreed that the Joint Committee would also work on this and feed its findings and conclusions into the APA Working Group.

During a discussion of the time needed for the Joint Committee to discuss and agree the project briefs it was recognised that a short formal meeting might need to take place after the visioning meeting on 27 October. The Joint Committee asked Janet Clitheroe to amend the wording on the briefing paper to make it clear that the Joint Committee needed to approve the project brief before work could commence.

It was also suggested that an early item of business for the Joint Committee would be the business case for the funding of the Joint Regional Programme Manager role.

RESOLVED

(a) That the content of the briefing paper be noted.

(b) That the Chair would clarify the formal links with the Regional Chief Constables Group.

8. PROJECT BRIEF FOR SCOPING OF STRATEGIC ROADS POLICING

The project brief had been withdrawn at the start of the meeting.

9. PROJECT BRIEF FOR SCOPING OF SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME

The project brief had been withdrawn at the start of the meeting.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bill Wilkinson advised Members that the Audit Commission had approached the Treasurers about the need for external auditors for the Joint Committee. The treasurers felt that, since the Joint Committee would not have its own budget, then external audit was not necessary. Members agreed with this recommendation.

CHAIR