

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Police Authority held at Leicestershire Police Headquarters, Enderby on Tuesday 9 February 2010

Present

Mr D Bill, Mr P Brown, Dr S Chowdhury, Mr U Dholakia, Mr B Greaves, Dr S Hill, Mr W Naylor, Mr J Orson, Mr D Prince, Mr T Render, Mr B Rhodes, Mrs A Roberts, Mr B Roper, Mr D Snartt and Mr M Sood.

Officers

Mr R Swinfield (Chief Executive), Mrs A Perry, (Deputy Chief Executive), Mr C Smith, (Treasurer), Mr S Fraser (Performance Analyst), Mrs S Hoare (Engagement and Communications Officer) and Mrs L Salmon (Members' Services Officer).

Representatives from the Constabulary

Mr C Eyre (Temporary Chief Constable), Mr P Dawkins (Director of Finance), Mrs R Gilbert, (Head of Finance), Mr A Wroe, (Head of Estates) and Mr T Glover, (Head of IT).

Mr B Rhodes – in the Chair

16/10. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs Martin and Mrs Newton.

17/10. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

18/10. Declarations of Code of Conduct Interests

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to make declarations of any Code of Conduct interests in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting. No such declarations were made.

19/10. Minutes of Meeting held on 26 January 2010

The minutes of the Police Authority meeting held on 26 January 2010, tabled at the meeting, were confirmed as a correct record and duly signed.

20/10. Capital Programme 2010/11

The Authority considered a joint report of the Chief Constable and Treasurer setting out the Capital Programme for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13 and seeking members' approval of the 2010/11 Programme. A copy of the report marked 'A' is filed with the minutes.

The Director of Finance stated that all business cases had been overseen and managed by the Strategic Infrastructure Board and elements of the programme had been examined by the Strategic Financial Planning Group.

In response to a question regarding the decision of the Chief Officer Group to reject additional funding required for Safer Detention upgrades, the T/Chief Constable stated that recommendations within the Safer Detention guidance were either essential, desirable or aspirational and that Leicestershire had followed the advice from HMIC and taken a risk assessed approach when prioritising funding for this area of work.

The Treasurer stated that an explanatory note regarding the prudential indicators would be placed on the Authority's website to provide clarity for the public.

Members commented that further information should be made available to the public, where appropriate, on the rationale behind the different projects within the programme, particularly in relation to IT where assurance needed to be given that current systems remained secure.

Members requested that Appendix 'B' in future reports include a summary at the front of the outputs and benefits for each business case.

It was RESOLVED to approve the:-

- (a) prudential indicators set out in the report; and
- (b) capital programme and the proposed methods of financing detailed in Annex A.

21/10. Review of Policy on Reserves

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer to review the existing policy that informed the level of reserves maintained by the Authority. A copy of the report marked 'B' is filed with the minutes.

The Treasurer stated that it was proposed that any uncommitted underspend from 2009/10 be used to boost the General Reserve up towards 3%.

The Director of Finance informed members that it was unlikely that the Home Office would reimburse any costs arising from the incident at Ashwell Prison. He added that approximate costs of this incident to the Constabulary were in the region of £110,000 which was mainly due to overtime, travel and subsistence for officers attending.

It was RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the General Reserve be maintained at between 2 and 3 percent of the net revenue budget requirement, with the aim being to maintain it as close as possible to 3%;
- (b) in the event that an underspend on the revenue budget is recorded for 2009-10, up to £372,836 of that underspend be transferred to the General Reserve;
- (c) a maximum figure be set of 5%;
- (d) the position be monitored in-year through the Strategic Financial Planning Group; and
- (e) the policy be reviewed each year when the budget and precept are set.

22/10. Revenue Budget and Precept 2010/11

The Authority considered a joint report of the Chief Constable and Treasurer presenting revenue budget and precept information for the three years 2010/11 to 2012/13, summarising the proposed revenue budget allocations and seeking members' approval to the budget requirement and precept for 2010/11. A copy of the report marked 'C' is filed with the minutes.

The Treasurer stated there were no growth items included in the proposed budget for 2010/11. He added that any spare underspend from 2009/10, not currently identified,

could be utilised to support the IT budget to reduce the significant impact this would have in future years.

The Director of Finance stated that the current recruitment freeze which would be in place until March 2011 would see a reduction of 120 police officers. The T/Chief Constable added that any proposed permanent change to the establishment would be risk assessed and reported back to the Authority.

In response to a question regarding why an increase on the precept was proposed for this year instead of a standstill, the T/Chief Constable stated that any decision to maintain a standstill budget for 2010/11 would directly affect police officer numbers in future years and it was essential that the Force continued to deliver the best service to the public as possible.

It was proposed by Mr Roper, and seconded by Mr Chowdhury, that Option 1 in Appendix 3 of the report, being a 2.68% precept increase, be approved. There being no further proposals a vote was taken in which all 15 members present voted in favour of the proposal.

Members noted that the funding gap outlined in paragraph 44 of the report was a major risk to the organisation and that after considering other options a 2.68% precept increase would be appropriate to mitigate against that risk.

It was RESOLVED to:

- (a) approve a budget of £175,116,000 for 2010/11;
- (b) approve a 2.68% council tax precept increase for 2010/11, equivalent to a Band D figure of £169.63;
- (c) authorise the Treasurer to issue the necessary precept notices;
- (d) note that the detailed arrangements for confirming and monitoring efficiency and productivity gains be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee via the Strategic Financial Planning Group, and
- (e) note that the application of any underspend achieved for 2009/10, other than the efficiency gains recorded by the Savings Team, and other than the proposal to boost the General Reserve, be considered by the Police Authority after the end of the 2009/10 financial year, which could also include a sum for Police Authority post inspection development.

CHAIRMAN

2.00 p.m. – 3.15 p.m.

9 February 2010