

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

PAPER MARKED

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Meeting **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Date **TUESDAY 23 MARCH 2010 – 10.00 A.M.**

Report of **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Subject **POLICE AUTHORITY INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides an update on the Improvement Plan presented to the Police Authority meeting on 26 January 2010 arising out of the Police Authority Inspection.

Commentary

2. The Police Authority Inspection Report was published on 15 January 2010, a copy remains posted on the Authority website. The Inspection Report indicated that the Authority was performing adequately overall.
3. The Authority approved an Improvement Plan in response to the Inspection Report at its meeting on 26 January 2010. Members also agreed that updates on the Improvement Plan should be brought to each subsequent Finance and General Purposes Committee and full Police Authority meetings commencing from March.
4. The results of the Inspection Report and the Improvement Plan have been discussed with partners in the meantime. Members have taken the issue to their respective CDRPs as meetings occur. The report was also formerly taken to the Force's Strategic Equality and Confidence Board and the Authority's Liaison Panel and will, by the time the Committee meets, have been taken to PAGRI. There are no particular issues to report to this Committee in relation to discussing the material in those forums to date.
5. The following paragraphs of this report deal with those aspects of the Improvement Plan which had any deadlines earlier than end of March 2010. Subsequent to approving the Improvement Plan, Members have taken time out on 26 – 27 February 2010 to discuss issues for change with a facilitator, which included aspects arising from the Inspection experience. Clearly this may pave the way for new or changed approaches which may not have been framed appropriately in the original Improvement Plan.
6. Paragraph 16 of the Inspection Report criticises the Authority for not providing effective strategic oversight of the Policing Plan and Policing Priorities. The Improvement Plan indicated that by 31 March targets and local objectives would be set so that the Authority fingerprint was visible on the end product. This is on course to be achieved by 31 March 2010. A report appears elsewhere on this agenda relating to the targets and local objectives that this Committee will agree on behalf of the full Authority. Background work to the preparation of these figures and the testing of information that underpin the targets has been undertaken through the Performance Panel meeting of 2

March 2010 and earlier informal discussions led by the Performance Panel Chairman with Members of the Constabulary. The Performance Panel meeting was observed by the NPIA who are helping the Authority with performance management. The approach taken by the Panel at the meeting was commented upon favourably.

7. Paragraph 18 of the Inspection Report indicated the Authority needed to give more attention to the recruitment, promotion and retention of black and minority ethnic officers within the Constabulary. The Improvement Plan indicated the Authority (Mr Brown, Mr Dholakia and Mrs Newton leading) would engage with its internal and external stakeholders regarding the issue and ensure its Human Resources Committee would examine the relevant policies and practices to determine how best to ensure equality opportunity for all communities. Recruitment in the forthcoming year is expected to be negligible. This means that the processes underpinning recruitment can be examined in slow time. The promotion and retention policies and practices can be explored to determine how best to ensure equality of opportunity for all officers and staff. The first milestone was the Human Resources Committee of 25 February 2010, when information was provided that the 3 lead members have agreed to meet with external stakeholders to discuss the barriers around recruitment and to explore community involvement in future recruitment drives. Internally, work will be undertaken with the BPA to consider retention issues and promotion opportunities for BME officers.
8. In response to the Inspection Report paragraph 23, which questions the Authority's systematic robust challenge to hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of objectives, priorities and quality outcomes, the Improvement Plan discussed the work that was taking place in co-operation with the National Policing Improvement Agency and in particular the holding of a half day seminar on monitoring protective services performance on 25 February 2010. Members will know that this took place and was attended by 12 Leicestershire Police Authority Members. The training did not fulfil all the anticipated learning features so further opportunities will be explored in future. The Improvement Plan also referred to Members of the Performance Panel attending the Force's Performance Delivery Group. Mr Render has already attended that Group and other Members are also welcome to do so.
9. Paragraph 24 of the Inspection Report indicated that Members raised performance issues with LPU Commanders but not consistently so. The Improvement Plan included actions to alter the prompter sheets for attendance at constabulary boards and LPU Commander meetings to ensure evidence of impact on issues raised. The Members' Services Officer has altered the prompter sheet accordingly.
10. Paragraph 26 of the Inspection Report called in to question the exercise of effective scrutiny of the impact of, for instance, the increase in funding. Whilst the Auditors have already been instructed to carry out a review of that particular issue the Improvement Plan talked of ensuring by March 2010 that a process would be introduced to consider and prioritise how to address the "hot pursuit" of issues and initiatives that arise from time to time. This has not been achieved to date due to staff absence. The update to the Authority meeting on 27 April 2010 will cover this. In much the same way paragraphs 47 and 50 of the Inspection Report alluded to monitoring changes and challenging perceived benefits of investment to ensure value for money. The Improvement Plan proposed the introduction of a benefits realisation appraisal for the breadth of new practices, innovations and investments which are introduced from time to time. That too will feature in the update to the Police Authority meeting on 27 April 2010.
11. Paragraph 48 of the Inspection Report focussed on value for money and suggested the Authority could take a more robust approach to performance of financial efficiency target setting which will ensure it delivers best value for money for its policing resources. The Improvement Plan indicated four steps in the short term namely

- i. research best practice in this area amongst other Police Authorities by seeking help from the external auditor – PwC have been asked to provide examples and ideas as part of the CAA (Use of Resources Work) - a meeting is arranged for 30 March.
 - ii. undertake a view of internal audit programme to focus on it even more towards value for money – internal auditors have submitted a re-worked audit plan to the Audit Committee on 18 March.
 - iii. engage in a robust manner with the Constabulary in re-engineering the Force in the context of funding cuts – this is continuing work on the agenda of the Strategic Financial Planning Group, which is now chaired by the Police Authority Chairman
 - iv. consider what further resources might be available to assist the Authority in this area – undertaken through the Thematic Audit reviews again overseen by Audit Committee.
12. Paragraph 49 of the Inspection Report mentioned collaborative working and grasping new opportunities to work with partners to ensure joint resources are used to best effect. In the short term the Improvement Plan suggested that a paper to the East Midlands Police Authorities Joint Committee regarding showing more clearly the benefits realised from regional collaboration would be undertaken. This was presented as Paper G to the EMPAJC on 22 February 2010.
13. Paragraph 52 of the report indicated that the Audit Commission and HMIC would publish an interim national report drawing on the findings from the first ten inspections by the end of February 2010. However subsequently this timescale has slipped and at the date of drafting this report the agencies' report is still awaited. Once it is to hand I shall present this to the Authority Members in order to consider any lessons to learn.

Recommendations

14. The Committee is recommended to note the update and agree that a further report be brought to the Police Authority on 27 April 2010.

Implications

Financial: Members will need to carefully monitor what impact adopting the changes to the Improvement Plan will have on the capacity of Members and Officers of the Authority. Legal: none. Diversity: none. Risk management: the inspection results are mentioned in our Risk Register – a poor inspection report can absorb resources and affect reputation.

Background Papers

None.

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