

# *LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY*

PAPER MARKED

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Meeting           **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Date               **26 FEBRUARY 2009**

Report of         **DIRECTOR OF HR**

Subject           **VOLUNTEERS**

## **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present to members details of the Leicestershire Constabulary Police Support Volunteer Programme.
2. This report specifically excludes the Special Constabulary and Neighbourhood Watch. Both groups have clear structures already in place to support them and accordingly, this report focuses entirely on the Police Support Volunteer.

## **Background**

3. The Leicestershire Constabulary has been supported by volunteers for many years and those volunteers generally fall into three distinct groups as indicated above:
  - Special Constabulary Members
  - Neighbourhood Watch Volunteers
  - Police Support Volunteers (i.e. those volunteers not forming part of the first two groups)
4. It is fair to say that the Leicestershire Constabulary Police Support Volunteer programme (LCPSV Programme) has developed on an ad hoc basis in response to identified needs at a local level.

Two clear examples of this approach are as follows:

- The introduction of volunteers to Castle Donington Police Office in the 1980s to provide an enquiry office function that otherwise would not be available because of cost/demand issues.
  - The use of volunteers to monitor CCTV when it was introduced during the late 1980s and early 1990s. My recollection was that funding was made available centrally for capital expenditure but that ongoing revenue costs were to be met from existing budgets. Accordingly, the CCTV hardware was purchased for places like Melton Mowbray whilst volunteers were introduced to monitor CCTV screens in order to limit the ongoing revenue cost.
5. Since this time, volunteers have continued to join the programme in a number of roles including:
    - Community Volunteers working on crime prevention
    - Clerical/Admin support to Special Constabulary
    - LSTO at locations other than Castle Donington
    - CCTV Monitoring
    - Locksmiths to support vulnerable victims

6. To date, there are 150+ volunteers on the programme with another 33 currently in the recruitment process all giving or intending to give a portion of their free time to the community through the Leicestershire Constabulary.
7. It is important to note that the volunteers are not spread evenly across the Force area but are concentrated in pockets that, almost certainly reflects the previous ad hoc nature of their introduction over the years. A list setting out their distribution is attached at Appendix A.

### **Current Position**

8. The current position is that nationally, all Forces are being encouraged to develop strong and effective volunteer schemes.
9. This reflects the Government's position that opportunities should be taken to utilise the huge volume of interest in volunteering across the public and private sector.
10. Of the numerous recently published reports that have Government support the recent White paper – Communities in Control, in particular makes several references to the importance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector (voluntary sector) and of course restorative justice as outlined in the Flanagan report is a very recent example of a new opportunity to engage volunteers.
11. In terms of policing schemes, Lancashire, Thames Valley and The Metropolitan are widely acknowledged as leading the way forward and have invested heavily in their volunteer programmes. For example, Thames valley have a target of 1000 volunteers by 2010 and are supporting that number through the use of paid co-ordinators at the rate of one co-ordinator to 75 volunteers. Lancashire have in the region of 650 volunteers supported by a budget of £350K I am told.
12. What is clear is that a) there is clear direction, encouragement and indeed expectation that Forces build a strong volunteer programme and b) where Forces have done so, it has not been done without the investment of time, effort and money.
13. Specifically in Leicestershire, the resources currently available to support the development of the programme are as follows:  
  
1 x PCSO and Volunteers Policy Development Manager  
  
1 x Special Constabulary and Volunteer Co-ordinator (entirely committed to the Special Constabulary)  
  
2 x recruiting clerks – allocated to lead on volunteer recruitment as part of their role
14. Chief Superintendent, CSB holds the overall strategic responsibility for the programme with day-to-day responsibility resting with the PCSO and Volunteers Policy Development Manager.
15. A recent review of the support given to the PCSO & Volunteers Policy Development Manager, conducted by Inspector Streets, Corporate Development, has recommended that a dedicated Volunteers Coordinator post is established.
16. In response to this recommendation, I have met with Martin Gage, Chief Executive of NWL Community Volunteer Scheme to explore the opportunity of engaging a full time member of staff from the voluntary sector on a one year contract to support the ongoing development of the LCPSV programme.
17. The response has been very positive and it is anticipated that one third of the required funding would be met by the Constabulary from existing Force budgets whilst Martin Gage has agreed to secure the remaining two thirds from budgets linked to Stronger Communities.

18. The post will support the ongoing development and expansion of the existing programme and it is hoped will begin work in April 2009.
19. Whilst the current programme has been ad hoc in its development, it should not be viewed as being ineffective. This past year the team of volunteers working out of Blaby LPU received a national team award for their contribution.

### **Recruitment & Training**

20. The recruiting process for volunteers has been enhanced in order to deal with the increased demand. Importantly, recruiting is demand led wherever possible because of the nature of volunteering. In essence, suitable work is identified and then a volunteer is recruited to meet that need, otherwise volunteers who have no meaningful work, simply become fed up and move on.
21. In addition, expressions of interest from prospective volunteers are now recorded by the recruiting department and matched to future identified needs where possible.
22. All PSVs are expected to attend the constabulary's induction training programme at the earliest opportunity. Currently, this represents the only formalised training available with all other training being delivered in the workplace on a one to one basis as required.
23. That said, work is in hand to develop bespoke training for the volunteer LSTOs in order that they can properly reflect the Force's commitment to service delivery standards in the enquiry office arena.

### **The Future**

24. Nationally there is an NPIA/ACPO led (Chaired by DCC Lee, Dorset Police) working group supported by regionally based co-ordinators developing the national programme and providing support to forces.
25. By 2010 it is expected that there will be 10,000 volunteers nationally delivering some 1,000,000 hours of voluntary work in support of the Police Service. Studies in Thames Valley Police have shown that for every £1 invested in a volunteer programme a return of £4 is realised.
26. As the LCPSV programme expands, there will be a need to agree appropriate levels of funding to support it and that is currently subject of a report to Finance Department identifying these emerging pressures.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the content of this report.

### **Person to Contact**

Mr. Phil Iley, PCSO & Volunteers Policy Development Manager, Tel: (0116) 248 2435