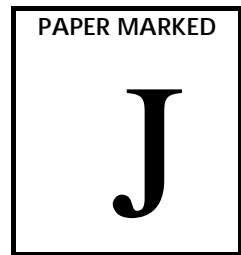


# ***LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY***



Meeting           **POLICE AUTHORITY**

Date               **TUESDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2009**

Report of         **CHIEF CONSTABLE**

Subject           **BENEVOLENT FUND TRUSTEES**

## **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Police Authority members on the changes to the Force Benevolent Fund and to seek approval for the Police Authority to become Corporate Trustees of the Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Fund.

## **Background**

2. The Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Fund is an internal fund whose membership consists of police officers, police staff and honorary members; it is recognised by Staff Associations and Unions.
3. The Fund's income is derived from subscriptions paid by its serving members, by donations made to the Fund and income from investments. The Fund is currently applying for Charitable Status.
4. The Benevolent Committee is chaired by DCC Chris Eyre and is made up of representatives from each Area and Department within the Force along with representation from NARPO (National Association of Retired Police Officers), the Police Federation, UNISON and GMB. The Committee meets quarterly with the Annual General Meeting being held in October of each year.
5. The Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Fund assists both police officers and police staff by providing grants and interest-free loans for benevolent purposes. Members requesting assistance are asked to complete an "Assessment of Need Form" to ensure that monies are provided to those Members who have the greatest need. In urgent cases the Sub-Committee can meet to make an immediate grant or loan and report such action to the Committee at the next meeting. Loans when granted are interest-free but are subject to the ability to repay in order to alleviate hardship. Membership of the Fund also entitles serving members of staff to receive comforts during times of illness. These comforts are provided at intervals of 28 days, six months and twelve months. This comfort is only meant as a small gift from the Fund and does not detract from the support given to that member of staff by their Area/Department.
6. Police officers are also able to benefit from membership of the Benevolent Fund by receiving treatment at the Police Rehabilitation Centre this also includes reimbursement of travel expenses. From an organisational perspective this reduces sickness as members receive top quality private medical treatments and therapies.

7. The Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Fund also makes payments to the:
- Police Dependents Trust which helps members or their dependents who are killed or become incapacitated in the line of duty;
  - Gurney Fund for police orphans which provides money for children of members who become incapacitated or die.

### **Taking the Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Fund Forward**

8. At a Committee meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2007 it was formally recorded in the minutes that unless an increase in membership took place the future of the Fund was in jeopardy. Membership at this time stood at 1,825. A number of measures were put in place to increase membership, these included:
- briefings on induction days for new recruits and transferees
  - Production of a DVD outlining the benefits of membership and how non-members have regretted not joining because of treatment they have needed
  - Six months membership given free of charge to new recruits.

These measures have proved successful with membership now standing at 2,212.

9. A Part-time Benevolent Fund Administrator has recently been appointed who is funded by the Force. The Administrator is in the process of updating all the scheme's records to ensure that those eligible receive benefits and welfare support from the scheme in a timely manner.
10. The membership of the Committee has also been extended to include a representative of the Corporate Finance Department. Their assistance and advice is invaluable in ensuring that the scheme's funds are wisely invested and accounts are maintained in an appropriate manner.
11. In 2008 the Benevolent Committee agreed to seek charitable status for the scheme in order to take advantage of tax exemptions and reliefs available to charities and thereby optimise the funds available to for benevolent work.
12. Currently within the Chief Constable has agreed that the Constabulary will be the 'corporate trustee' for the charity, but in consultation with the chief executive we identified that this could be a useful role for the Police Authority. This paper therefore seeks the authority's view about becoming the 'corporate trustee' for the Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Scheme Charity. As 'corporate trustee' the Police Authority would be able to appoint a member (or members) to the Benevolent Committee and take an active role in supporting the benevolent and welfare work of the scheme.
13. The responsibilities of a corporate trustee are appended to this report. A full copy of the Charity Commissions "Essential Trustee" document is being held in the Police Authority Office.

### **Recommendation**

14. It is RECOMMENDED that the Police Authority consider taking on the role as Corporate Trustees of the Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Fund. This would provide a link between the Force and the Police Authority and thus illustrate its commitment to the welfare of its staff and its dedication in achieving the best use of monies within the Fund for the benefit of its members.
15. It is RECOMMENDED that Police Authority Member(s) or Officer(s) sit on the Leicestershire Constabulary Benevolent Fund Committee.

### **Financial Implications**

None.

### **Background Papers**

Force Benevolent Fund Minutes dated 6<sup>th</sup> July 2007

Force Benevolent Fund Rules as agreed at the AGM on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2008

[www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Library/publications/pdfs/cc3text.pdf](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Library/publications/pdfs/cc3text.pdf)

### **Officer to Contact**

Deputy Chief Constable, Chris Eyre, tel. (0116) 248 2001