

TAYSIDE JOINT POLICE BOARD

14 May 2001

Report by the Chief Constable No. PB 20/2001

SUBJECT: OPERATIONAL REVIEW REPORTS

Abstract: This report provides the Board with information following three internal reviews of Force and Divisional Headquarters Posts and Functions, Road Policing and Control Room and Call Handling Strategies. These reviews were commissioned by the Chief Constable to ensure optimum operational efficiency and provide an enhanced level of service to the public.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Board ;

- (a) note the measures initiated to re-deploy police officers presently employed in Force and Divisional Headquarters posts through a restructuring of role requirements and internal processes
- (b) note the planned restructuring of road policing within Tayside Police which will provide Divisional Commanders with additional resources following a co-ordinated Force Strategy on Road Policing
- (c) note the planned migration of staff from the satellite Control Room in Eastern Division to rationalise the Force Control Room and Call Handling Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In December 2000 the Chief Constable commissioned management reviews in the areas of Force and Divisional Headquarters Posts and Functions, Road Policing, Control Room and Call Handling Strategies. These reviews sought to ensure that Tayside Police was in a position to maximise the number of police officers in operational posts, enhance its service provision to the community and operate within a 'Best Value' regime.
- 2.2 Senior officers within the Force conducted the reviews and the process involved full and ongoing consultation with the police Staff Associations, UNISON, the Transport and General Workers Union and those members of staff likely to be affected by any change.
- 2.3 Each review included detailed analysis and evidence on performance, providing opportunities to enhance service provision in a planned and structured fashion, taking account of the opportunities provided by new technology, legislation cost/benefit analysis techniques.

- 2.4 With reference to paragraph 4 Minute of Meeting of the Finance Sub Committee of 28 March, 2001 wherein the Board considered Report No. PB 12/2000 – ‘Revenue Monitoring Statement and Provisional Outturn’ which indicated that net expenditure for the financial year 2000/2001 will be £467,000 less than originally budgeted for. In approving Report No PB 12/2001 the Sub Committee noted the intention of the Chief Constable in consultation with the Treasurer to bring forward a report detailing proposals to utilise the projected working balance of £467,000 to enhance operational efficiency including proposals to employ support staff to release police officers for front line duties.

3. REVIEW OF FORCE AND DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS POSTS AND FUNCTIONS

- 3.1 A Review of Force and Divisional Headquarters Posts and Functions has been carried out and has identified seven posts that will accentuate proactive policing. These include three Inspector posts, two Sergeant posts and one Constable post within Force Headquarters roles. An additional Inspector working within Central Division Headquarters will be re-deployed in an operational role.

- 3.2 In addition to the above seven posts identified for re-deployment Report No PB 21/2001 – ‘Bid for 2000/2001 Unused Police Grant’ which is also to be considered at this Board meeting identifies the following 14 posts which would release police officers for front line duties;

2 x Fraud Investigator
2 x Driving Instructors
3 x Court Team Officers
3 x Firearms Enquiry Officers
3 x Citation Servers
1 x Administration Assistant (Family Protection Unit)

- 3.3 Civilianisation of the above 14 posts is estimated to cost £147,000 in 2001/2002 based on an average cost of £18,000 per annum (including employer’s costs) would be appointed on a fixed term basis with half employed for approximately 8 months and the remainder for 6 months and it is anticipated they would allow an additional 14 police officers to be released for front line duties for an equivalent period in 2001/2002. Such an arrangement would allow the Force to gauge their effectiveness and consideration will be given to formally civilianising these posts which would enable some of the 14 police officers to be retained for operational duties beyond 2001/2002.

- 3.4 A further nine posts, three in Headquarters roles and six in Divisional Headquarters roles have been identified as suitable for civilianisation through a process of planned migration following internal restructuring. This would free a Sergeant and eight Constables to return to core operational duties. The report however recognises the value of retaining some posts as suitable for police officers who require a modified role due to injury sustained during operational duty or as part of a structured return to core policing following long-term or serious illness.

- 3.5 The Board may wish to note that the Chief Constable and the Force Executive have approved the immediate return to core policing duties for police officers identified as being in the posts outlined in paragraph 3.1. The civilianisation outlined at Paragraph 3.2 is the subject of a separate agenda item placed before the Board. (Report No PB 21/2001 refers). Further consideration will be given to the co-ordination of placements for officers on modified duties which will take account of the Force's 'Duty of Care' to its employees.
- 3.6 In terms of the Local Authority areas this review will provide for an additional Inspector and Sergeant in Perth and Kinross. In Western Division the additional supervisors will improve resilience at Blairgowrie and Pitlochry sections. In Eastern Divisional an additional Sergeant will provide resilience and support for supervisory cover during periods of annual leave, sickness absence and support functions.
- 3.7 In addition to the review of posts the Chief Constable has taken steps to ensure that the functionality of the Force is enhanced as a result of the reviews undertaken. The authors of the reviews were encouraged to consult on cross cutting issues and this has resulted in a rationalisation of the current Force structure. The restructuring takes account of opportunities that all three reports provide to free police officers from administrative roles.
- 3.8 The rationalisation of structure that flows from the reviews will see many of the crime prevention and reduction roles presently undertaken within Headquarters Community Safety move under the command of Crime Management. This will allow greater co-ordination based on crime pattern analysis and emerging trends in addition to consistency of policy.
- 3.9 A Corporate Development Department will be established to provide a comprehensive policy and strategy unit taking account of developing legislation, national policy and emerging issues.
- 3.10 This will continue to develop an all-inclusive communication strategy that informs staff and produces regular information on service delivery through public satisfaction surveys. The restructured department will manage the demands of 'Best Value' and performance measurement to provide high quality and detailed information to managers and statutory bodies.

4. CONTROL ROOMS AND CALL HANDLING

- 4.1 The Review of Control Rooms and Call Handling highlighted a number of call handling issues, both local and national, that were impacting upon telephone service delivery. In particular, the dramatic rise in the use of mobile phones and the misuse of the 999 system is placing a huge strain upon existing control rooms. [Appendix A](#) shows the increase in incidents handled over the past years.
- 4.2 The review highlighted that until the formation of the Force Support Group in 1999 little had fundamentally changed in regard to control room establishments since the formation of the force in 1975. The Board has already been made aware that the long term option of retaining three control rooms is not affordable under Airwave which will be brought into service by 2005.

- 4.3 An appraisal of various options outlined a strong case for reducing the number of control rooms from three to two. This will provide an improved level of service to the public through greater resilience and better use of resources. Furthermore, to address local call handling issues effectively and improve communications across the force area, a continued move towards centralised call handling and command and control is considered essential.
- 4.4 It was also noted that as long ago as 1990, the Audit Commission found that control rooms with less than four operators on duty for most of the day were less efficient than larger ones. The current level of staff within the Forfar control room is 1 Constable and 2 support staff operators per shift with a single Sergeant providing overall supervision.
- 4.5 The Chief Constable accepts the report's conclusion that keeping Forfar control room open for a further four years does not represent best value and to do so would incur refurbishment costs in this financial year of £20,200. To provide adequate staff cover, 4 additional full-time support staff would be required at Forfar at a cost of £83,828 per annum.
- 4.6 To address these issues and to provide the most cost effective means of improving service to the community of Angus, the Chief Constable has approved the relocation of the Forfar control room staff, 4 Constables and 8 support staff, to a dedicated desk within the Force Control Room at Headquarters. Therefore, staff with local knowledge will deal with all 999 and other telephone calls from Angus as well as controlling all ongoing incidents across Eastern Division.
- 4.7 This will bring a number of benefits to the people of Angus and address several outstanding issues. In particular, much greater support and resilience is provided due to the fact that all incoming telephone calls are displayed at each workstation in the Force Control Room allowing any operator to pick up a call if the Eastern Division desk is busy. In addition, further cover is provided by the pool of call takers who are employed to cover peak times to assist with answering non-urgent calls from the public.
- 4.8 Supervision and support is provided to all staff within the Force Control Room on a 24 hour basis by a shift Sergeant as well as the Force Duty Officer and the enhanced facilities will provide staff with improved working conditions.
- 4.9 As an additional commitment towards centralised call handling and to provide a more efficient telephone service to the public of Tayside, the force will put in place a central switchboard facility, based at Headquarters and staffed until 2300 hours each day.

5. ROAD POLICING REVIEW

- 5.1 A Review of Road Policing within Tayside was carried out. This review promotes the need to attain a balance between policing of the strategic road network and local road policing issues that Board members will recognise as an issue of priority for the public. The Chief Constable accepts the report's conclusions that in order to provide an enhanced level of service within the three Divisions restructuring must take place. In order to achieve this the following key measures will be introduced as a matter of priority.

- 5.2 Operational Officers will be devolved to Divisions providing a dedicated policing unit in each area. This will be under the command of the Divisional Commander who will respond to local issues thereby leading to an integrated approach in line with the Force's Community Orientated Policing strategy.
- 5.3 The Chief Constable has approved an increase in the baseline number of operational officers that will be allocated to the new Divisional Road Policing Units which will each have an operational base. In Angus the Divisional Road Policing Units will comprise of an Inspector, 3 Sergeants and 18 Constables. In Perth and Kinross the Accident Unit is to be retained and the establishment enhanced to provide an Inspector, 3 Sergeants and 28 Constables. This acknowledges the proportionate level of patrol activity for the trunk road network. The City of Dundee will have a dedicated resource with an Inspector, 3 Sergeants and 18 Constables.
- 5.4 Two Constables in the Angus and Perth & Kinross areas are presently engaged in driver training on a full time basis and the civilianisation of the post as approved paragraph 3.2 will allow those officers to return to a core policing role.
- 5.5 The Review identifies further opportunities for civilianisation of the Headquarters Camera Detection Unit and cost saving in this area through the introduction of cost recovery (Hypothecation). The report examines the use of support staff to escort abnormal loads and the extension of powers to police support staff will allow this function to migrate to support staff.
- 5.6 The increase in baseline staffing levels dedicated to road policing may be further enhanced at the discretion of Divisional Commanders. This additional support to Divisions reflects the priority that Tayside Police places on reducing road casualties and vehicle related crime.
- 5.7 Each Division will have an officer at Inspector rank who will consult with the Local Authority Traffic Co-ordination Committee and elected members to resolve local problems and develop local initiatives. The three Road Safety Officers currently employed under the Headquarters Command will be devolved to Divisions providing improved local co-ordination within the Local Authority areas. The Headquarters Unit will undertake to establish a higher level of public consultation through the development of a Road Users Safety Forum which will inform policy.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Paragraph 3.1 of this report identifies three Inspector posts, two Sergeant posts and one Constable post suitable for re-deployment in operational roles. There are no additional costs involved in transferring these posts to operational roles referred to in the reviews.

- 6.2 The proposals to civilianise the 14 posts referred to in paragraph 3.2 are estimated to cost £147,000 in 2001/2002. This cost is to be met from a bid to the Scottish Executive for unused 2000/2001 police grant as detailed in Report No PB 21/2001. The effectiveness of this move will be gauged in 2001/2002 and consideration will be given to formally civilianise these posts to enable some of the 14 police officers to be retained for operational duties beyond 2001/2002. Should formal civilianisation of these posts be considered appropriate further proposals would be brought to the Board detailing the financial implications of such a move.
- 6.3 Paragraph 3.4 indicates a further nine posts have been identified which are suitable for civilianisation. Further consideration is to be given to placing officers on modified duties in these posts where appropriate. It is intended that those posts which are not suitable for officers on modified duties should be civilianised and any savings arising from civilianisation should be used to augment operational policing.
- 6.4 The proposals outlined in paragraph 5.6 require further examination before the financial implications can be established. Such a review will be carried out and a report detailing the costs and benefits will be submitted to the Board once completed.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Clerk and the Treasurer have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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30 December, 2010

1996/1997 172,569
1997/1998 168,439
1998/1999 168,036
1999/2000 189,354
2000/2001 199,355

Tayside Police Incidents Per Year 1996 - 2001

