TAYSIDE JOINT POLICE BOARD

26 August 2002

Report by the Chief Constable No. PB 38/2002

SUBJECT: POLICE SURGEON SERVICE

Abstract: A Best Value Review was conducted on the provision of Police Surgeon Services. In light of that review and other factors the Force intends to seek a single contractor to manage the provision of the service.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Board

   a) note the recommendation arising from the Best Value Review of the Police Surgeon Services, and

   b) delegate authority to the Chief Constable, in consultation with the Convener, Treasurer and Clerk to the Board to accept on its behalf the most suitable tender to meet operational needs in the event that a decision is urgently required to suit the exigencies of the service

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 A Best Value Review of the Police Surgeon Service in Tayside Police was carried out with the main recommendation being that consideration should be given to outsourcing this service. In general Police Forces have encountered difficulties in recruiting Police Surgeons and maintaining an effective administration of the process, which has on occasions impacted on the resilience of the service provided. Consequently a number of Forces have decided to fully outsource the Police Surgeon Service.

2.2 The existing Police Surgeon Service is provided through a large number of individual contracts with local Doctors, generally specially trained General Practitioners. The day to day management of this service has been provided by the Force and has been a significant commitment.

2.3 In common with many Police Forces, Tayside Police has encountered difficulties in the recruitment and retention of Police Surgeons due largely to the unpredictability of work and its unsocial hours commitment. The more general pressure on GP resources has also impacted on the availability of new recruits.

2.4 As a consequence of these factors significant senior management time is required to ensure adequate Forcewide Police Surgeon cover. This is not an area of work where the Force has specific expertise.

2.5 Following the conclusion of the Best Value Review and in light of the other issues the Force intends to seek a single supplier to provide and manage a Forcewide Police
Surgeon Service. This will provide the framework for a more holistic and effective service provision on a Force basis. It will also simplify the management arrangements.

3. CURRENT POSITION

3.1 A scoping exercise has been completed and in accordance with rules on procurement it will be necessary to seek ‘invitations to tender’ for the service. The Specification of Service document and tables of activity have been completed and the draft advertisement has been prepared.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 It is anticipated that the value of the contract arrangements for the provision of a Police Surgeon Service will require approval by the Board in accordance with the Board's Financial Regulations.

4.2 The Financial Regulations provide that any contract may be exempted from any or all of the provisions relating to regulations governing contract arrangements when in the opinion of the Chief Constable, in consultation with the Convener and Treasurer, the contract is required as a matter of urgency to suit the exigencies of the service. It is requested that should a decision be required urgently due to the exigencies of the service authority is delegated to the Chief Constable in consultation with the Convener, Treasurer and Clerk to the Board to accept the most suitable tender to meet the operational needs of the Force.

4.3 A report will be submitted to the Board at the earliest opportunity detailing those invited to tender, the amount of each tender and a recommendation as to which tender should be accepted or in the event of an urgent decision being required which tender has been accepted.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 The Clerk and the Treasurer have been consulted in the preparation of this report together with Lothian and Borders Police on the basis that it has outsourced its Police Surgeon Service in Edinburgh.
6. CONCLUSION

6.1 It is recommended that the Board notes the proposal to seek a single contractor to manage the provision of the Police Surgeon Service which is expected to procure a more resilient and common standard of service provision across the Force.

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