

GWENT POLICE AUTHORITY

BEST VALUE COMMITTEE

10th March 2005

Present: R Derricott (Co-Chair) – In the Chair
Councillors P R Clarke, M B Dally and G S Evans; V N Waters;
R Leadbeter and D G Price-Thomas
Together With: Mr W Horne – Assistant Chief Constable
Mr D Ansell – Director of Finance & Administration
Mr J Metcalfe – Corporate Service Department
Mr J Puxtey – Corporate Communications

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Tonge.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

3. The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th February 2005 were received.

Arising from the Minutes

Best Value Reviews – Crime Investigation – We noted that completion of the review had now slipped to the end of April 2005.

Implementation Monitoring Plans

- **Police Authority – Committee Structure/Member Appraisal** – The Chief Executive and Clerk would give a position statement to the Annual Meeting in May 2005.
- **Communication Strategy** – The draft Force strategy was with ACPO for approval.
- **Criminal Justice Department** – Grading issue had now been resolved and an update would be presented to our next meeting.
- **Training Department** – Completion was now unlikely before June 2005 and we have agreed a deadline of the end of June.
- **Best Value Reviews – Business Benefits** – It was confirmed that future reports would contain reference to cost saving/efficiency gains.

BEST VALUE REVIEWS

4. We received and noted an update on the progress of Best Value Reviews.

The findings of the Corporate Services, Force Control Room, Call Management, Senior Command, Crime Reporting and Recording and Standards Unit had been implemented and five other reviews were at implementation stage. The position with regard to the remaining reviews was as follows:

Air Support

The Co-Chair reported that he had received a copy of a letter from the Clerk to the South Wales Police Authority to the Deputy Chief Constable requesting an update on the latest position of the Best Value Review and possible timescales for proceeding. We noted that the next Air Consortium meeting was to be held on 24th March 2005 and that a position statement would be provided after that meeting.

Crime and Disorder

A further report would be provided at the end of May 2005.

Crime Investigation

Baseline Assessment expected to be completed by the middle of March 2005, with completion of the review by 30th April 2005.

IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING PLANS

5. We received and noted implementation monitoring plans in respect of:

Financial Management

- Skills of staff need to be identified and training programmes developed accordingly
Departmental Plan to be developed by Easter 2005 which will highlight how this is to be progressed
- Development of activity based costing and medium term financial planning be used towards the implementation of performance related budgets
Subject to discussions with HMIC, this recommendation may be considered completed
- Training programmes be integrated with the training department plans for 2004/2005
Subject to discussions with HMIC, this recommendation may be considered complete
- Service implementation plans should show financial implications of recommendations, both costs and savings generated
Templates should be in place by April 2005

- Results from activity analysis sample surveys be used for decision making Subject to discussions with HMIC this recommendation may be considered complete

Press and Public Relations

- Appointment of Senior Press and Public Relations Officer Post now designated “Corporate Communications Manager” and be re-advertised
- Post of Administration Assistant to be made redundant Contract runs until 31st March 2005. Position being reviewed
- Resources used for Administration Assistant post to be re-directed into a fifth full time substantive post Review to take place by 31st March 2005 and if to be made permanent a business case has to be submitted
- Reintroduction of Web Development Officer into Corporate Communication Complete
- An easier to use Newline service to be introduced Complete
- Senior Press and Public Relations reviews the media monitoring arrangements and establishes a new system to achieve this function To be progressed if new staff member appointed
- Press and Public Relation Officers be given training on, and permanent access to ORIS Complete
- Training on the use of other key databases be provided Complete
- Media strategy to be revised and promulgated throughout the Force Complete
- Corporate communications plan Complete
- Annual divisional media nights and twice yearly editors meetings be arranged Complete

Family Support Unit

- Service level agreement to be developed between the Force and agency partners Subject to signature by Torfaen Area Child Protection Committee on 11th April 2005 – complete
- Force conducts research into why reports of domestic abuse and repeat victimisation are low in Gwent in comparison with similar forces Complete, but we have asked for a report, in due course, on the outcome of the research

HMIC FINAL REPORTS

6. We received and noted HMIC final reports in respect of the Best Value reviews of the Criminal Justice Department, Standards Unit and Family Support Unit.

Arising from the reports,

- We have asked the Chief Executive and Clerk to take up with HMIC our concerns at the comments made in all three reports regarding the role of the critical friend in best value views
- That all recommendations arising from the HMIC reports had been included in the Implementation Monitoring Plans for those reviews.

BEST VALUE REVIEWS – THE WAY FORWARD

7. We received a report by the Chief Constable regarding the way in which the Authority conducts best value reviews and recommending ways in which that approach might be re-engineered to enable new challenges presented by changes in the policing environment could be met.

We noted the recommendations within the report and have:

- Established a Task and Finish Group comprising Mr R Derricott, Mr D G Price-Thomas and Mr R Leadbeter to give detailed consideration to those recommendations
- Asked the Chief Constable to nominate a senior police officer to serve on the Task and Finish Group
- Asked the Group to consider a link between any new best value arrangements and the risk management strategy being monitored by the Audit Committee
- Agreed that the views of HMIC be sought on any new proposals once finalised