

The **POLICE AUTHORITY** met at **SHIRE HALL, WARWICK**, on the **23rd February 2009**

Present:-

Ian Francis (Independent Member) (**Chair**)
Phil Robson (Independent Member) (**Vice Chair (1)**)
Phil Blundell (Independent Member) (**Vice Chair (2)**)

Independent Members:-

Mike Edwards, Steve Nicklin, Angela O'Boyle and Clive Parsons

County Councillors:-

Chris Davis, Eithne Goode, Bob Hicks, Richard Hobbs, Katherine King, Phillip Morris-Jones, Izzi Seccombe and John Vereker

Police: -

Chief Constable Keith Bristow, Assistant Chief Constable Lewis Benjamin, Chief Superintendent Richard Sear, Richard Elkin, Paul Mason-Brown, Marie Perry, Mike Ball, Carl Baldacchino, Debbie Sansom, Junaid Gharda and Mark Richards.

Police Authority: -

Sue Howl, Neil Gulliver, Dave Clarke, Tony Brown, Debbie Mullis, John McPhail and Steve Baldwin.

In Attendance:-

Vaughn Jones (UNISON)

1. Chair's Announcements

None.

2. General

(1) Apologies

were received from Anne Forwood, Dorrette McAuslan, Deputy Chief Constable Andy Parker, Assistant Chief Constable Bill Holland and Simon Payne (Police Federation).

(2) Declaration of Members' Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None.

(3) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 21st January 2009 and Matters Arising
(i) Minutes

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the Police Authority's meeting held on the 21st January 2009 be approved.

**(ii) Matters Arising
Minute 7 – General Report of the Chief Constable**

In response to a question by Katherine King, Phil Robson confirmed that a presentation on the use of protective equipment by the Force would form part of the agenda for the April meeting of the Authority.

3. Report of the Audit Committee

was considered.

Resolved:-

That approval be given to the proposed Terms of Reference and Service Level Agreement for Internal Audit.

4. Inspection and External Audit Programme 2009

The report by the Chief Executive was noted.

5. Financial Management Report 2008/09

was considered.

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a contribution of £0.109m being made from the Repair and Maintenance Reserve to support the revised spend in the backlog maintenance programme.

6. Treasury Management Strategy 2009/10

The report by the Treasurer to the Authority was considered.

Dave Clarke introduced the report and drew a number of key issues to Members' attention. The following points were noted during this introduction and the subsequent debate:-

- Interest rates were very fluid at the moment.
- Difficulties in lending money to banks at present.
- Update reports to be submitted to the Authority, where appropriate, on the Treasury Management Strategy 2009/10.
- Acknowledged that the Authority had been extremely careful about who they lent money to and, as a result, did not face the same problems as other authorities.

It was then Resolved:-

1) *That the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy for 2009/10 be approved;*

2) That the net borrowing does not exceed the level specified in Appendix A of the report, taking into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in the budget report;

3) That authority be delegated to the Treasurer to undertake all the activities listed in paragraph 10 of the report;

7. Medium Term Financial Planning Strategy including 2009/10 Revenue Budget and 2009/10 – 2013/14 Capital Programme and Reserve Strategy

The joint report by the Chief Constable, the Treasurer to the Authority and the Chief Executive was considered.

Steve Nicklin presented the report and stressed that the budget process had been extremely thorough with Authority Members being fully engaged with the process. A Budget Strategy Group comprising Members and Officers from the Authority and Officers from the Force had been established to drive forward progress on the Medium Term Financial Planning Strategy (MTFPS) to its present point but would remain in existence to monitor progress through the year.

Richard Elkin added that the MTFPS provided the framework for the Force to be able to carry out its role and was very closely linked to the Policing Plan. The main aim being to achieve an effective and balanced budget with savings targets which were realistic and workable. The Plan had been developed around a number of assumptions and did leave a £2m funding gap at the end of the three years but this would be addressed as the Plan continued to be developed.

Dave Clarke stated that the strategy provided the Authority and the Force with the opportunity to produce a three to four year glide path to produce a balanced budget at the end of that period. He pointed out that using borrowing to help fund the Justice Centre project would provide the Authority with a level of reserves around £7.5 - £8.0m which would be more realistic for the future. Ongoing savings would be critical to the success of the Strategy and, if they could not be achieved, would eventually impact upon frontline policing. In addition, it was extremely difficult at this stage to judge the impact of the level of inflation and interest rates in the future.

John Vereker then spoke on behalf of the Elected Members of the Authority stating that they had discussed the budget proposals in detail at a meeting immediately prior to the Authority's meeting and, although they had concerns about the proposals to increase Council Tax by 3.97%, they fully appreciated the aims set out in the Strategy and were particularly grateful for the way that they had been fully engaged in the development of the Strategy. They had spent some time discussing the views of local communities both in their own areas and those from other councillors across the county. This valuable source of feedback confirmed that while the public wanted only inflation level increases they also wanted high service standards. In particular, he commented on the need for the Authority to remain robust about achieving savings which must be aligned to improvements in the level of service.

He then moved the following motion:-

1) That approval be given to:

i) a Net Revenue Budget of £93.588m for 2009/10 as detailed in Appendix 9 of the joint report;

- ii) the use of £5.510m Reserves to support the 2009/10 budget of which £0.754m will be used for one-off purposes.
- iii) a budget requirement for 2009/10 of £88.078m, in line with the maximum set by the Government as part of the 2008/09 capping determination and a Budget Requirement of £90.909m for 2010/11 in line with the Government determination.
- iv) a Council Tax for a Band D property of £171.22p, an increase of £6.54p (3.97%), equivalent to a weekly increase of just 12.5p calculated as follows:

	£
Budget Requirement	88,078,000
Less Police Grant	32,648,789
Less Formula Grant	<u>21,496,325</u>
Sub Total	33,932,886
Add Collection Fund Deficit	<u>55,873</u>
Amount to be raised by Council Tax	<u>33,988,759</u>
Divided by Aggregate Council Tax Base	198,514.13
Basic Amount of Council Tax at Band D	£171.22

- v) the consequential Council Tax for each property band will be as follows:

Band A (6/9 th)	£114.1439
Band B (7/9 th)	£133.1679
Band C (8/9 th)	£152.1918
Band D	£171.2158
Band E (11/9 th)	£209.2638
Band F (13/9 th)	£247.3117
Band G (15/9 th)	£285.3597
Band H (18/9 th)	£342.4316

- vi) the Chief Executive to the Authority being authorised to issue Precepts Notices on the Warwickshire billing authorities as follows:

	£
North Warwickshire Borough Council	3,624,945.33
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council	6,648,481.40
Rugby Borough Council	5,973,250.73
Stratford-on-Avon District Council	8,788,550.70
Warwick District Council	8,953,530.84
TOTAL	33,988,759.00

- vii) the Sustainability Strategy as set out in Section 7 of the joint report.
- viii) the Reserves Strategy as set out in Section 8 of the joint report.
- ix) the revised Capital Programme and funding arrangements as set out in Section 10 of the joint report together with the Prudential Indicators detailed in Appendix 10 to that report.
- x) Officers being instructed to comply with the prescriptive legal duties placed upon the Authority and the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

be asked to advise of any instances in which they consider that the implementation of policies should be amended to ensure compliance with requirements.

xi) all Officers being instructed to exercise tight budgetary control. No overspending of the aggregate 2009/10 budget will be authorised and caution will be exercised in entering into expenditure which creates additional commitments in future years. The Authority will be kept fully informed of the financial position throughout the year.

2) *That in approving the budget, the Authority notes the Treasurer's comments in Section 11 of the joint report in respect of the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves.*

Izzi Seccombe formally seconded the motion.

In response to concerns expressed by Izzi Seccombe, Dave Clarke stated that the Collections Fund assumed a growth of 0.2% annually but accepted that in the present economic climate this was difficult to predict accurately.

In response to a question by John Vereker, Richard Elkin confirmed that the Authority's Risk Register had been taken into consideration in developing the Strategy.

On being put to a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

8. Policing Plan 2009-12

The report by the Chief Constable was considered.

Richard Sear introduced the Policing Plan and explained it as more a review of the previous Plan rather than a complete re-write. The main issue being the Force and the Authority delivering on the priorities within the Plan.

During the subsequent debate, the following issues/comments were noted:-

- Need to ensure that the Policing Plan receives wide publication.
- Council Tax leaflet is effective way of getting the Policing Summary to every household.
- A summary of the Policing Plan should be produced for presentation to all Community Fora. Excellent way of getting information into the communities. Could also be used to help communities understand how call handling issues are addressed by the Force.
- Reference to Safeguarding Children should be included in the Plan.
- Community Engagement and Consultation Panel be asked to look at producing summary of Plan for distribution at Community Fora meetings.

It was then Resolved:-

- 1) *That approval be given to the content of the draft Policing Plan 2009-12***
- 2) *That the on-going work required to finalise the Plan prior to publication be noted.***

3) *That authority be delegated to Chris Davis and Mike Edwards, in conjunction with the Chair of the Authority, to approve the final Plan for publication.*

9. Proposed Policing Priorities 2009/10

The report by the Chief Constable was considered.

Keith Bristow presented the report and explained in detail the thinking behind the three main policing priorities for 2009/10. In doing so, he emphasised that the measures were not “set in stone” and he would come back to the Authority later in the year to amend the measures if it was felt to be appropriate.

During the debate, a number of questions were raised by Members and the key issues are set out as follows:-

- Communicating the policing priorities to all communities was essential.
- Need to ensure that all partner agencies are also working to the same priorities.
- Recognise that the fear of crime is still an issue, particularly amongst the older community – need to continue to engage with them to help them to be more aware of the things they need to do to protect themselves. Need to ensure that SNTs are properly trained to listen and help and that partnership agencies are prepared to meet their obligations.
- Recognise that the Force will never solve the “visibility” issue but do need to get the message across that this is not the only means by which the Force protect communities from harm.
- Phil Robson stressed that the Authority were fully engaged in the development of the policing priorities through Member attendance at the Force Executive Board and the Force Management Board.
- Recognise that improving public confidence will be a major challenge but should not detract from the main aim of protecting communities from harm.
- On the third bullet point of the third priority, it was agreed to insert “at least” before “85%”.

It was then Resolved:-

That approval be given to the proposed priorities and measures as amended for 2009/10.

10. Report of the Chief Constable

was considered.

Keith Bristow reported that Supt Christine Wadsworth had been leading on a review of shift patterns. She had concluded that the new system had been properly introduced but there were not enough officers available for it to develop. As a result a new system had been set up, with the agreement of the Police Federation and UNISON, and would be introduced during March 2009.

11. General Report of the Chief Executive

was considered.

After Sue Howl had introduced the report, Phillip Morris-Jones stressed the need for greater emphasis to be given to consulting with representatives from commerce, farming and industry and that this could be achieved primarily through the Chambers of Commerce. Keith Bristow replied that the Force regularly engage in this area but felt that businesses should also be encouraged to engage with their local Community Fora.

12. Urgent Business

None

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the full Authority will be on Wednesday 22nd April 2009 at 2.15pm.

14. Exclusion of Members of the Public

Resolved:-

That the members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the following agenda items on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

15. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on the 21st January 2009 and Matters Arising

Resolved:-

That the exempt minutes of the Police Authority's meeting held on the 21st January 2009 be approved.

There were no matters arising.

16. Force Performance

The Authority considered a report by the Chief Constable on the Force performance since their last meeting. They noted that the Force was performing well in most areas.

17. Operational Update

The Authority considered a report by the Chief Constable and recent a further update on a number of incidents which had recently occurred.

18. Supplementary Report by the Chief Executive

The report by the Chief Executive was noted.

All County Council Members of the Authority left the room prior to consideration of Agenda Item 19.

19. Operation Westbere

The report by the Chief Constable was considered.

Lewis Benjamin introduced the report and gave the Members a detailed update on the progress of the investigations and the issues which still needed to be addressed.

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Chair of the Authority

The meeting closed at 12.25pm.