

GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD

BUDGET MEETING

Committee Room 2, Town House, Aberdeen, 21st January 2011 - Minute of Meeting of GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD.

Present:-

- Councillor Greig, Convenor
- Councillor Hendry, Vice-Convenor
- Councillor Shepherd, Vice Convenor
- Councillor Bell
- Councillor Collie
- Councillor Dunbar
- Councillor Farquharson
- Councillor Hood (as substitute for Councillor Howie)
- Councillor Leadbitter (as substitute for Councillor McGillivray)
- Councillor Lonchay (as substitute for Councillor Al-Kowarri)
- Councillor Mair
- Councillor McKail
- Councillor Penny
- Councillor K Stewart
- Councillor Webster

In Attendance:-

- Mr Colin McKerracher, Chief Constable, Grampian Police
- Mr John McNab, Deputy Chief Constable, Grampian Police
- Mr Billy Gordon, Assistant Chief Constable, Grampian Police
- Mr Colin Menzies, Assistant Chief Constable, Grampian Police
- Ms Karen Williams, Director of Corporate Services, Grampian Police
- Mr Gary Craig, Depute Director of Corporate Services, Grampian Police
- Chief Inspector Nick Topping, Staff Officer, Grampian Police
- Mr Barry Jenkins, Treasurer
- Ms Karen Donnelly, Depute Clerk
- Ms Fiona Smith, Aberdeen City Council

CONVENERS INTRODUCTION

The Convener sought approval from the Board to add an item to the agenda. This would be considered in private session and would be a verbal update from the Depute Clerk with respect to the Grampian Police and Grampian Joint Police Board Best Value Audit and Inspection report which had been considered by the Accounts Commission

at its meeting on 20th January 2011. The Board agreed to this additional agenda item being added.

The Convener welcomed Assistant Chief Constable Billy Gordon to his first meeting of the Board following his promotion as a Temporary Assistant Chief Constable with Grampian Police.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Al-Kowarri, Councillor Howie, Councillor McGillivray, Jane MacEachran, Clerk, Mr Ian Robbie, Henderson & Loggie and Ms Karlyn Watt, Henderson & Loggie.

MINUTE OF GJPB BUDGET MEETING HELD ON 22ND JANUARY 2010

2. The Board had before it for information the Minute of the Board Budget Meeting held on 22nd January 2010.

The Board Resolved:

To note the minute.

PROPOSED REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS – 2011/12

3. The Board had before them a joint report by the Chief Constable and the Treasurer, presenting the proposed Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2011/12 and requesting that the Board set requisitions on the Board's Constituent Authorities, in accordance with the Grampian Combined Police Area Amalgamation Scheme.

The Treasurer introduced the report and advised that the Deputy Director of Corporate Services would provide a presentation which would set out the report in detail to the Board.

The Deputy Director of Corporate Services gave a detailed presentation to the Board summarising the detail of the report. He advised that the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) Announcement had provided for a one year budget and outlined the headline figures of this. Further budgetary pressures were also outlined and the combined overall budget reduction, in real terms, was stated to be £5.6m or 6%.

The presentation outlined the projected savings in 2010/11 and provided further information with respect to an on-going voluntary redundancy scheme for Police Staff. Options for savings in 2011/12, including a reduction in overtime, continued recruitment freeze for Police Officers and Police Staff, renegotiation of contracts, estate savings and supplies and services savings were also outlined.

The presentation also provided details of previous, current and budgeted overtime spend, an update with respect to Force Reconfiguration and details of the Impact and consequences of the proposed budget. Finally, an update with respect to the Scottish Government Efficient Government programme and with respect of the Capital budget was provided.

The Chief Constable concluded the presentation of the report by noting that Grampian Police recognise the current challenges facing the public sector with respect to funding. The budget process for 2011/12 had been particularly difficult and the Chief Constable welcomed the input Board Members have had to it. Grampian Police remain committed to strengthening local policing wherever possible and the budget presented for approval seeks to do this.

The Convener thanked Mr Craig for providing such an informative presentation and thereafter invited questions from Board Members.

Councillor Webster noted that the issue of Police Officer time spent in court is one which is out with the direct control of the Force or the Board. However, Councillor Webster requested that the Board take any possible action to seek progress on this matter. The Chief Constable advised that the Scottish Policing Board is presently seeking to progress matters relating to the modernisation of the Scottish criminal justice process and the Local Criminal Justice Board is doing likewise.

The Board agreed to instruct the Depute Clerk to write to the Scottish Policing Board and to the Grampian Local Criminal Justice Board to urge both bodies to prioritise progress with respect to matters of modernisation of the criminal justice process.

Councillor Hood sought further information with respect to the impact of restructuring to take account of reductions in Police Officer and Police Staff numbers on the effectiveness of the Force. The Chief Constable advised that restructuring is on-going within the Force to ensure that all available staff resources are deployed within Local Policing Teams in order to best benefit local communities.

Councillor McKail noted that it is regretful that Police Officer and Police Staff numbers are declining and sought assurance that the impact of these decreases on communities would be minimised. The Chief Constable concurred with the disappointment expressed and noted that the impact can now be accurately stated at present. The strategy of Grampian Police will be to be as visible and as accessible in local communities as possible in order to minimise potential impacts on communities and ensure that the Force are as effective as possible in reassuring local communities.

Councillor Bell suggested that the Board should seek to ensure that all reserves are maintained in Grampian, through the return of reserves to constituent local authorities should this be necessary, in light of the potential restructuring of policing in Scotland. The Chief Constable noted that any change to the structure of policing in Scotland

would be unlikely to take place until 2013. As such, this is not an issue that requires to be addressed at present but will require to be resolved at the appropriate time.

Councillor K Stewart noted that the Board require to give detailed consideration to the development of a long term financial planning strategy to support on-going improvements in service levels and current Police Officer and Police Staff numbers.

The Depute Clerk advised that the Budget Working Group had previously been tasked with this role and that arrangements would be made in due course for this matter to be progressed.

Councillor Hendry requested further details with respect to proposed savings from changes in the use of Police Surgeons and with respect to the use of Regulation A19 in Grampian.

The Chief Constable advised that, at present, there was no need to the Force to consider use of Regulation 19 as the vast majority of Officers who have reached 30 years service have made known their plans for retirement. Should this position change then the Force will bring a report to the Board for consideration.

With respect to Police Surgeons, Assistant Chief Constable Colin Menzies advised that this matter has been under consideration for some time and negotiations are on-going with NHS Grampian regarding the transfer of the responsibility for medical care for custodies being transferred to it. However, it was also reported that this may not realise a saving for the Force as the existing funding allocation may be transferred to the NHS also.

Councillor Farquharson noted that the thorough budget process conducted was welcome. He requested further information with respect to the impact of major new developments on Grampian Police. The Chief Constable advised that these issues are highlighted for information only at this time. The impact of these on Grampian Police will not known until further progress is made on these issues.

The Convener questioned what impact any move to a Single Scottish Police Force would have for policing in Grampian. The Chief Constable advised, that in his view, such a change would require to ensure that local demand and need could be met, however the forecast savings being mentioned at present can only be achieved if a large decrease in Officer and Staff numbers is made and, as such, this may have an negative impact on policing in Grampian.

Councillor Hood noted that the 2010/11 Capital Budget is under spent and requested further information on the impact of this in 2011/12. The Deputy Director of Corporate Services advised that discussions were on-going regarding this with the three constituent local authorities and he was hopeful that this under spend would be returned to the Force by the local authorities on 1st April 2011 as has happened in previous years.

The Convener noted that no budget had been set aside for the Summit on Gypsy Travellers that the Board previously agreed should take place. The Depute Clerk advised that discussions had taken place with GREC who would be able to organise and facilitate this summit. It was noted that the summit would take place in the 2010/11 financial year and, as such, was not directly relevant to the budget being considered. It was agreed that a budget of up to £2,000 should be set aside for the Board for this summit and that the Board should ask GREC to progress the organisation of this event to be held in March 2011.

The Convener noted that an incredible amount of effort had been made by Grampian Police staff, the Treasurer and his staff and Board Members in preparing the 2011/12 budget and expressed his thanks to all who were involved. He noted that the budget presented ensured that the Force would continue to address the Board's priorities and welcomed the continued commitment of the Force to prioritising local policing.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) To approve the Revenue Budget for 2011/12;
- (ii) To approve the updated medium term policy on Reserves and Balances
- (iii) To approve the proposed Capital Budget for 2011/12 including some provisional sums pending further prioritisation and consideration of detailed submissions and business cases
- (iv) To approve the requisitions on the Board's Constituent Local Authorities, in accordance with the Grampian Combined Police Area Amalgamation Scheme.
- (v) To instruct the Clerk to write to the Scottish Policing Board and to the Grampian Local Criminal Justice Board to urge both bodies to prioritise progress with respect to matters of modernisation of the criminal justice process.
- (vi) To instruct the GJPB Budget Sub Group to give consideration to the development of a long term financial planning strategy for Grampian Police and to report back to the Board in due course.
- (vii) To approve a budget of up to £2,000 for the Summit on Gypsy Travellers in the North East from the 2010/11 budget and to agree that this Summit should take place in March 2011 and should be facilitated by GREC.

POLICE APPEALS TRIBUNAL

4. The Board had before it a report from the Clerk which advised the Board of an appeal to a Police Appeals Tribunal received and sought approval for the appointment of the Tribunal.

The Depute Clerk introduced the report and advised that, following receipt of an appeal to the Police Appeals Tribunal, the report outlined the procedural measures necessary in order to facilitate this process. The report detailed the Members identified as willing to sit on the Tribunal and sought the Board's approval of these appointments. In

addition, the Board require to formally appoint a Registrar and Depute Registrar for the Tribunal in order that necessary arrangements can be made.

The Board Resolved:-

- (i) To appoint the Clerk to the Board as Registrar to the Police Appeals Tribunal
- (ii) To appoint the Depute Clerk to the Board as the Depute Registrar to the Police Appeals Tribunal
- (iii) To appoint Councillor Martin Greig, Sir William Rae, Mr John Finnie and Mr Stuart Gale QC to this Police Appeals Tribunal.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

Prior to considering the remaining items of business the Board resolved that in terms of section 50 A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 that the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration on the items on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the consideration of these items that there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of part 1 of schedule 7 A of the said Act.

GRAMPIAN POLICE AND GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD BEST VALUE AUDIT AND INSPECTION

- 5. The Depute Clerk provided a verbal report to Members regarding the Accounts Commission meeting during which it received a report from Audit Scotland and HMICS regarding the outcomes of the Grampian Police and Grampian Joint Police Board Best Value Audit and Inspection. The Depute Clerk advised that the findings of the Accounts Commission will be published in late February 2011 and that a full report will be brought to the Board in March 2011 outlining a proposed Action Plan for addressing the recommendations detailed in the report.

The Board Resolved:

To note the report.

COUNCILLOR M GREIG - Convenor