

MINUTES: of the Extraordinary Meeting of Surrey Police Authority held 13th October 2011 at Mount Browne, Surrey Police HQ, Guildford.

Members

Mrs Louise Rhodes	Mrs Jane Anderson
Mrs Lynn Hawkins	Mr Peter Williams
Mrs Heather Kerswell	Mrs Amanda Mills
Mr Michael Blank	Mrs Claire Storey
Mr Bill Barker OBE	Mrs Yvonna Lay
Mr David Harmer	Mr Ernest Mallett
Mrs Margaret Hicks (a)	Mrs Hazel Watson
Mr Geoff Marlow	Mrs Fiona White (a)
Mr Nick Skellett CBE	

a = absent

All item numbers refer to the agenda bound with these minutes

PART ONE
IN PUBLIC

The Chairman opened Surrey Police Authority's meeting and welcomed all Members and members of the public.

110/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Apologies were received from Mrs Fiona White and Mrs Margaret Hicks.

111/11 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 8TH SEPTEMBER 2011 (Item 2)

The minutes of the SPA Public Meeting held on 8th September were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

112/11 MATTERS ARISING (Item 3)

There was no Matters Arising.

113/11 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (Item 4)

Mr Roy Buchanan, a member of the public was invited to put forward his question:-

“Based on my experience of other forces, when non-frontline services are passed to private companies the service in policing has dropped. Has Surrey Police researched this in full”

The Chairman stated that this question could not be answered in full under this part of the agenda as it would come up as part of the wider debate under item 8.

The Chief Constable responded by suggesting that there was perhaps an element of misunderstanding in the question. He stated that policing services would not be outsourced under the contract but that the private company would become a partner of Surrey Police. He said that there was certainly an important role for police staff in policing and highlighted that Surrey Police currently employed police staff in roles such as Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), Contact Centre Agents and roles in supporting detectives with investigations.

Mr Buchanan said that there appeared to be a lack of clarity for the public on this subject.

114/11 PETITIONS (Item 5)

No petitions had been received.

115/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 6)

No declarations were made.

116/11 NATIONAL AIR SUPPORT MODEL (Item 7)

ACC Olivia Pinkney introduced the paper on the proposed National Police Air Support (NPAS) model. She explained that Surrey was currently in a fairly recently established three force consortium with Sussex and Hampshire which worked well. However, the proposed new national service would not be limited by traditional police boundaries and would ensure the best use of the aircraft. She informed the Authority that the project had gained support both operationally and financially at ACPO Chief Constables' Council and that the purpose of this briefing was to seek support from the Police Authority just for the direction of travel for the project, since there was still a lot of information to be provided.

The Chairman stressed to Members that the decision being sought today was to support the direction of travel for the project, not approval of the project itself and Surrey's place in it.

Members raised the following concerns: viability of the proposed Dunsfold location including planning and security issues, changes in coverage as a result of change of base locations, response times, maintenance costs, and that London could and perhaps would drag most of the resource from Surrey.

ACC Pinkney reiterated that the national team were still working on the plan and that more information would be given at a later date.

The Chief Constable stated that it was common sense to have no borders in the sky. He said that the proposed model and arrangements was a sensible proposition for Surrey.

Resolved that,

The Police Authority agreed to support the direction of travel and the further exploration of the National Police Air Service model but would require more information before further support was given at future stages of the project.

117/11 OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE FOR BUSINESS PARTNERING IN SURREY POLICE (Item 8)

The Chief Constable introduced the item and noted that this proposal had been discussed in great detail with Members at previous public meetings and several workshops. He said that this proposal had his full support bearing in mind that the option of doing nothing was not available.

The Deputy Chief Constable highlighted that the purpose of the report was to seek formal support from the Police Authority to commence a process of procurement to explore the feasibility of going into partnership with a private sector company to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of middle office services, while making significant financial savings, thus allowing us to increase frontline services. He emphasised that that there would be no impact on the Olympics planning and that it would present an opportunity and not a threat to the Enterprise project.

Members acknowledged that the Force needed to make savings but some expressed concerns over this proposed approach. These concerns included:

- the approach was not defined clearly enough
- there was a lack of detail on how the savings would be made
- the £1million would be better spent on the frontline or an internally run exercise
- West Midlands was not a good or suitable partner for Surrey
- the only way to make savings was to get rid of staff
- what were the main middle office functions to be separated out
- it would hamper future savings programmes
- it would take up too much management time

- uncertainly about the tender process
- being able to walk away at any time

Some Members thought that there were worthwhile benefits in going through the procurement process to see if the proposal was viable, and that by doing so would mean that we would have spent £1million to gain £5million worth of knowledge. If it didn't work out then we would have learnt lessons about what would not work in the future. It was pointed out that in a competitive bid situation, potential private sector partners would release only the minimum information necessary to achieve contract award.

The Deputy Chief Constable informed the Authority that the £1million estimated cost was a total figure and would not be handed over as a lump sum at the start of the process. Rather there would be 'gateways' throughout the process and it was intended we could withdraw from it at any stage. Some Members were sceptical that this would be possible, particularly if political pressure came into play.

The Chief Constable said that the Force was looking for a different relationship with the private sector. He emphasised that if we did not go forward with the exploration then it would make it harder for the Force to improve the frontline and to meet the £5million budget gap.

The Chairman stated that he had worked with the Force to provide Members with as much information as possible on which to make a decision. He emphasised that for him the key word was 'explore'. He still remained doubtful about the levels of savings that would be made but recognised that doing nothing was not an option. He said that it was difficult to go forward without 'testing the water' and was satisfied that there were gateways in which we could pull out at points throughout the process. He said that there was a long way to go but that the Authority should embark on the process, ensuring that the 'conditions precedent' had been met and that the OJUE notice was couched in terms acceptable to the Authority.

The Chairman proposed a vote on the recommendations. It was agreed that they would be taken 'en bloc' with the fourth recommendation amended to allow a gateway to occur at the December 8th meeting. The result of the vote was that nine Members were in favour and six Members were against.

Resolved that,

By majority vote, the Authority agreed that:

- i) Subject to satisfaction that the 'conditions precedent' as set out in paragraph 4 have been met, authority be given to progress to a procurement process to explore in detail the benefits of a partnership with a private sector service supplier

- ii) Whilst the procurement process is underway, other options will be kept open, with regular reports to the Authority at key gateways to ensure the key benefits identified remain deliverable.
- iii) A staged investment over two financial years (total of 12 to 13 calendar months) of a maximum of £1m to be made from existing change budgets.
- iv) A further meeting be held on 8th December to consider progress against the conditions precedent and wording of the OJUE notice prior to its publication.

118/11 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Item 9)

PART TWO
IN PRIVATE

119/11 POLICE PROPERTY ACT REQUEST (Item 10)

The Authority received a request to approve the retention of an item of property seized by Surrey Police.

Resolved that,

The Authority approved the recommendations as set out in the paper.

120/11 OPR ESTATES DISPOSALS – ASH POLICE STATION (Item 11)

The Authority received an update on the disposal of Ash Police Station.

Resolved that,

The Authority approved the approach as set out in the paper.

The meeting ended at 12.35pm