

**Northern Joint Police Board
No. 3 2008/2009**

Minutes of Meeting of the Northern Joint Police Board held in the Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday, 14 November 2008 at 10.30 a.m.

Present

Representing the Highland Council

Mr J Rosie	Mr H Wood
Mr G Smith	Mrs P Munro
Mr W MacKay	Mr J Finnie
Mrs D MacKay	Mr G Marsden
Mr I Ross	Mr L Fraser (Substitute)
Mr A Millar	Mr B Murphy
Mr I Renwick	

Representing Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Mr N M Macleod	Mr I MacKenzie
Mr P Carlin	Mr K Murray (Substitute)

Representing Orkney Islands Council

Mr A Drever	Mr S Harcus (Substitute)
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Representing Shetland Islands Council

Mr A Duncan	Mr A Cooper
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Officials in attendance:

Mr I Latimer, Chief Constable
Mr G Sutherland, Deputy Chief Constable
Chief Superintendent L Stewart
Mrs E Ward, Force Director of Finance and Asset Management
Mrs V MacDonald, Force Finance Manager
Mr A Graham, Force Deputy Director of Human Resources
Mr R MacDonald, Force Estate Manager
Mr P Lamont, Force Head of Administration
Mr D Robertson, Treasurer's Office
Ms M Morris, Clerk
Mrs R Moir, Assistant Clerk
Ms L Lee, Clerk's Office

Mr N M Macleod in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr H Fraser, Mr P Corbett, Mr N A Donald and Mr D Cameron of The Highland Council, Mr C Nicolson of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Mr R K Leslie of Orkney Islands Council.

2. Presentation by Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency

Deputy Chief Constable Gordon Meldrum, Director General of the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA), made a presentation to the Board on the performance of the SCDEA and its future direction.

Mr Meldrum outlined briefly the background to the establishment of the Agency, its make-up and powers, the structures and governance of the Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA), which now governed the SCDEA, and the range of offences categorised as “Serious and Organised Crime”, including drugs and human trafficking, fraud, money laundering, firearms and crimes of violence. He emphasised that, contrary to what the public perception might be, organised crime was a reality in Scotland, with influence in a wide range of disciplines.

Mr Meldrum advised that the SCDEA was a multi-disciplinary organisation requiring a wide range of skills and drew attention to examples of its successes in carrying out its remit, such as significant seizures of illegal assets. He also made reference to educational work carried out with schoolchildren and young people. The Agency’s functions and structures, including its relationship with the SPSA, would be subject to a comprehensive review to ensure its fitness for purpose.

During discussion, the Chief Constable assured the Board that Northern Constabulary had a very positive relationship with the SCDEA and acknowledged that the threat to the Highlands and Islands from serious and organised crime was growing. He also highlighted educational work with schools in the Force area, with a view to reducing future demand for illegal substances.

In response to questions, Mr Meldrum commented that:

- in his view, the reduction some years previously in the local distribution and presence of HM Revenue & Customs officers had not impacted negatively on the ability to address issues such as drugs trafficking, as alternative structures and intelligence gathering capacity were in place
- SCDEA was able to liaise positively at an international level with bodies such as Europol
- some media coverage and glamorisation of organised crime was unhelpful
- he did not believe the fight against drugs should be dismissed as lost
- the role of the public in providing intelligence was vital.

After discussion, the Convener thanked Mr Meldrum for his interesting presentation.

3. Minutes – Previous Meeting

There had been circulated and were **APPROVED** Minutes of Board Meeting of 29 August 2008.

4. Minutes – Audit Working Group

There had been circulated and were **APPROVED** Minutes of Meetings of the Audit Working Group held on 29 August and 3 November 2008.

5. Minutes – Finance and Policy Working Group

There had been circulated and were **APPROVED** Minutes of Meeting of the Finance and Policy Working Group held on 3 October 2008, subject to an amendment to remove Mr A Cooper's name from the list of those having attended.

Arising from the Minutes, the Board **NOTED** that, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland (HMCICS) had been unable to accept the Board's invitation to attend this meeting, the Convener had written to invite him to attend a meeting of either the Board or the Finance and Policy Working Group once the outcome of the Review of Policing in Scotland was available in draft form, the Board's views on the Review having been made known to HMCICS by letter following the Working Group meeting on 3 October.

6. Revenue Budget Monitoring Statement 2008/09

There had been circulated Report No. POL65/08 comprising a statement and commentary by the Chief Constable on Revenue Expenditure and Income for the period 1 August to 30 September 2008.

In speaking to the report, the Chief Constable advised that:

- i. the transfer of monies to the Scottish Police Services Authority in respect of ICT staff had not yet taken place, but was expected to have been completed by the time of the next Board meeting;
- ii. discussions concerning the proposed closure of the Grampian Forensics Laboratory and the transfer of its functions to a new facility at Dundee were ongoing, his own preference being that the Grampian facility remain open; and
- iii. taking account of additional funding of £690,000 expected from the Scottish Government in respect of enhanced pension commutation payments, the predicted year end out-turn was an underspend of £254,000.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

7. Capital Expenditure Monitoring Statement 2008/09

There had been circulated Report No. POL68/08 comprising a statement and commentary by the Chief Constable on Capital Expenditure for the period 1 August to 30 September 2008.

In response to a question, the Chief Constable confirmed that the search for a suitable site for a replacement station at Fort William was ongoing.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

8. Procurement Report

There had been circulated and was **NOTED** Report No. POL66/08 by the Chief Constable on recent procurement activity.

9. Estate Management Report

There had been circulated and was **NOTED** Report No. POL67/08 dated 10 November 2008 by the Chief Constable providing an overview of the Capital Projects Programme.

10. Operational Police Estate

There had been circulated Report No. POL51/08 dated 28 October 2008 by the Chief Constable providing details of active Police Stations within Northern Constabulary and procedures that would be followed prior to any future closure.

In speaking to the report, the Chief Constable confirmed that no decision had yet been taken in relation to the future of the Police Station at Cannich.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

11. Force Service Point Strategy

There had been circulated and was **NOTED** Report No. POL52/08 dated 28 October 2008 by the Chief Constable updating Members on progress on the development of a Service Point Strategy for the Force Area, on which local consultation was ongoing.

12. Resources Allocation Model

There had been circulated Report No. POL53/08 dated 28 October 2008 by the Chief Constable briefing Members on the current Resource Allocation Model for distribution of the Force Revenue Budget. In speaking to the report, the Chief Constable highlighted the role of local knowledge and professional judgement in assessing the various indicators factored into the Model, such as population density, employment levels, tourism figures and criminal activity trends.

During discussion, it was suggested that information for the previous year should also be presented in future reports, for comparison.

After discussion, the Board **AGREED** that an opportunity be given to interested Members to receive individual briefings from the Service Unit Manager, Force Corporate Services, to explain the weighting given to the various factors taken into

consideration when assessing future likely demand for Police services, and otherwise **NOTED** the information given.

13. Single Outcome Agreements

There had been circulated Report No. POL55/08 by the Chief Constable informing the Board of the undertakings Northern Constabulary had taken in relation to all four constituent Local Authorities in respect of their specific Single Outcome Agreements. The report highlighted those National Outcomes and related Local Outcomes where the Force shared responsibility for delivery; the Force's role within the Community Planning structures of each Constituent Authority; and the work of the Force's own Community Planning Group.

The Board welcomed the inclusion of the report on the agenda and **NOTED** that:

- i. a presentation on Single Outcome Agreements would be given to a future meeting of the Board; and
- ii. this subject would be a standing item on future agendas, to enable the Board to monitor progress.

14. Force EFQM Self Assessment

There had been circulated Report No. POL56/08 dated 28 October 2008 by the Chief Constable on the use within Northern Constabulary of the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) Self Assessment process being introduced to all Scottish Forces by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS), to be supplemented with Thematic Inspections on specific key topical subjects affecting all Forces. This development was part of a move by HMICS towards an emphasis on continuous improvement, rather than the former five-yearly cycle of inspections.

In speaking to the report, the Chief Constable highlighted the Force's use for a number of years of a more comprehensive process than that now required and also the staff input required to satisfy the new regime.

The Board **APPROVED** the submission to HMICS of the Force's EFQM Corporate Action Plan, as appended to the report, and **NOTED** that the Chief Constable would hold a Strategy Seminar in December 2008, when further information would be provided, including the possibility of using the Force's previous self assessment material alongside the new National EFQM.

15. Corporate Operational Shift Pattern Revision

At its meeting held on 29 August 2008, the Board had noted that a report would be brought to a future meeting outlining how the proposed common shift system would operate.

There had been circulated Report No. POL54/08 dated 28 October 2008 by the Chief Constable briefing Members on the current position and progress regarding the proposed implementation of shift revision for operational shift workers. The report

outlined the welfare and operational benefits of the new scheme, to be introduced in January 2009 on an incremental basis, and in further consultation as necessary with the staff associations, and advised that all officers had been surveyed on the proposals, with the majority of votes cast supporting the new system.

The Board **NOTED** the position and that a presentation on the new shift system would be given to a future meeting of the Board.

16. Equalities

i Race Equalities Schemes

There had been circulated Report No. POL57/08 by the Chief Constable, comprising the Force's revised Race Equality Scheme.

The Board **NOTED** the revised Force Scheme and that the Force's three Equalities Schemes (Race, Gender and Disability) were likely to be drawn together into a single Equalities Scheme in future.

Members were advised that the Board was also required to review and update its Race Equality Scheme by 30 November 2008.

The Board **AGREED** to delegate powers to the Clerk, in consultation with those Members appointed to sit on the Force's Diversity Group, to finalise and publish the Board's revised Race Equality Scheme by the due date of 30 November 2008.

ii Disability Equality Scheme

Members were advised that the Board was also required to publish its annual report in relation to the Disability Equality Duty by 4 December 2008.

The Board **AGREED** to delegate powers to the Clerk, in consultation with those Members appointed to sit on the Force's Diversity Group, to finalise and publish its annual report in relation to the Disability Equality Duty by the due date of 4 December 2008.

17. Force Health and Safety Committee

At its meeting held on 29 August 2008, the Board had noted that a report would be brought to a future meeting outlining the work of the Force Health and Safety Committee.

There had been circulated and was **NOTED** Report No. POL58/08 dated 30 October 2008 by the Chief Constable on the formation and work of this Committee.

18. Scheme of Delegation

Members were advised that the Board had an obligation to review its Scheme of Delegation on an annual basis.

There had been circulated and was **APPROVED** Report No. POL59/08 comprising an updated Scheme of Delegation, with revised wording reflecting (i) recent Board decisions (e.g. appointment of its Monitoring Officer) and (ii) a change in job title at The Highland Council; and also providing additional clarity on the Clerk's remit and the role of the Audit Working Group.

19. Independent Custody Visiting Association - Scottish Conference 2008

There had been circulated and was **NOTED** Report No. POL60/08 dated 17 October 2008 by the Assistant Clerk advising Members of the success of the Independent Custody Visiting Association's Scottish Annual Conference, which the Board had hosted in Inverness on 20 September 2008.

20. Chief Constable's Periodic Report

There had been circulated Report No. POL61/08 by the Chief Constable comprising his periodic report and covering Crime and Road Accident Statistics and the Crime Situation.

In speaking to the report, the Chief Constable drew attention to the Scottish Government's annual bulletin on recorded crime, which showed that, overall, the Highlands and Islands had the lowest levels of crime in Scotland and Northern Constabulary the highest detection rate of any Scottish police force. The Deputy Chief Constable highlighted some recent statistical trends and also recent notable convictions.

During discussion, a Member expressed concern about constituent complaints received in relation to a failure of response to two recent 999 telephone emergency calls. It was suggested that these were not isolated examples, that the Force's telecommunications system was not adequate to meet demand and that addressing this issue required greater prioritisation. In response, the Chief Constable indicated that he was not aware of any reports of significant and recurring concerns, but undertook to look into the matter. He also, in response to a question, outlined the next stages in the development of the Force's ICT facilities, in particular the introduction of a new Human Resources system and of mobile data equipment. He reminded Members that day-to-day maintenance and support was now the responsibility of the Scottish Police Services Authority.

After discussion, the Board **NOTED**:

- i. the information given, including that the presentation of the circulated statistical figures would be further improved for future meetings, with the addition of trend lines on graphs;
- ii. that e-copies of the Scottish Government's annual bulletin on recorded crime would be sent to Members for information; and
- iii. that the Chief Constable would undertake an internal review of the quality of the Force telephone response, and bring a report to the next Board meeting.

21. Letters of Appreciation

There had been tabled and were **NOTED** 40 letters of appreciation received by the Chief Constable for the period from 1 July to 30 September 2008. There had also been circulated and was **NOTED** Report No. POL62/08 by the Chief Constable dated 14 October 2008 illustrating letters of appreciation.

22. Complaints against the Police

There had been circulated and was **NOTED** Report No. POL63/08 by the Chief Constable dated 15 July 2008 regarding complaints against Police Officers from 1 July to 30 September 2008.

The Board **AGREED** that the Complaints Book specifying complaints against Northern Constabulary, which had been available for inspection by Members prior to the meeting, be declared exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

23. Media Coverage

There had been tabled and was **NOTED** a book of press cuttings, which had been available for inspection by Members prior to the meeting.

24. Schedule of Meetings

There had been circulated Report No. POL64/08 dated 5 November 2008 by the Clerk recommending a schedule of meetings for 2008 as undernoted:

Friday 23 January (a.m.)	Inverness
Wednesday 13 May (return 14 May)	Kirkwall
Friday 28 August (a.m.)	Inverness
Friday 27 November (a.m.)	Inverness

The Board **AGREED** the schedule of meetings for 2009 and that the Clerk make the necessary arrangements.

The Board also **NOTED** that, should there be a need for a meeting of the Finance and Policy Working Group to consider the 2009/2010 budget, this would be held on Friday, 9 January 2009.

25. Execution of Deeds

The Board **NOTED** the deeds recently executed on behalf of the Board, as set out in the Agenda for the meeting.

The meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.