

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

27 NOVEMBER 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

BEST VALUE – PROGRESS REPORT

Report by the Clerk

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on progress in respect of the recent Best Value inspection of the Northern Joint Police Board. Also to progress actions agreed by the Board in the Self-Assessment Action Plan, which was agreed at the last meeting, specifically in relation to Members' development and the consideration of dedicated support for the Board.

Background

1. At its meeting held on 28 August 2009, the Board was updated on the arrangements for the Best Value Joint Inspection of Northern Joint Police Board and Northern Constabulary. Members also agreed a Self-Assessment Action Plan and Best Value Submission to be provided to Audit Scotland.

Progress

2. The Best Value Inspection was conducted during September/October and involved inspectors, from Audit Scotland and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, observing the Board and Working Group meetings, interviewing officers and Members including the Convener and Vice Convener and interviewing partners including the Chief Executives of all constituent authorities.
3. The Convener, Vice Convener and Clerk have since met with the Inspectors for an informal debrief and a draft report will be made available in December. The final report, which will be a public document, is expected to be published in February 2010.
4. In the meantime it is important that the Board continues to implement the Action Plan agreed at its last meeting. This report deals specifically with actions regarding the training needs assessment for Members and consideration of the need for dedicated support for the Board.

Training Needs Assessment

5. The Board agreed (28 August) to introduce Role Descriptions for Board Members. This has been viewed as a positive move, however the next stage is for all Members to

undertake a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) which will inform the development of a Members' Development Programme.

6. The TNA will be conducted in January 2010 and all Members will be emailed a survey form for completion on-line. The surveys will then be analysed and it is then intended to bring a Development Programme to Board for approval in April.
7. A TNA is also being conducted, at the same time, for Members of the Highlands & Islands Fire Board. Those Members who serve on both Joint Boards will only have to complete the survey once.

Dedicated Officer Support

8. The Board has previously recognised (as part of the Self-Assessment Action Plan) that in order to become more pro-active and leading from a position of strength, dedicated officer support is required for the Board. It was agreed that consideration would be given to the appointment of a full-time officer to be based in the Clerks Office and that a more detailed report on the job description and associated costs would be brought back to this Board for consideration.
9. The Board is currently supported by the Clerks Office (located at Highland Council) which includes the Clerk, Assistant Clerk and administrative support. None of these officers are dedicated exclusively to the Board. It is estimated that 5% of the Clerks time and 45% of the Assistant Clerks time is dedicated to Northern Joint Police Board. As a result the support provided to the Board is largely in relation to ensuring proper governance and administrative arrangements are in place and that the Board is complying with its legal obligations e.g. equalities (CHECK STANDING ORDERS FOR NJPB). The role of the Clerk, as detailed in the Scheme of Delegation, is detailed at Appendix One.
10. The Board, through its self-assessment process, has identified the need for officer support in relation to research, policy development, performance management and communications. The role would also be responsible for ensuring that the self-assessment action plan is delivered and that an annual self-assessment is undertaken by the Board. Attached at Appendix Two is a proposed job description for this role.
11. Members are asked to give consideration to offering a secondment opportunity to undertake the role of Development Officer for NJPB. The secondment would be made available to employees from the four constituent authorities and Northern Constabulary. It is proposed that the secondment would initially be for a 12 month period and that the position would be reviewed at that time. The post would be based within the Clerks Office, although it would not necessarily need to be based in Inverness with the opportunity for flexible working arrangements.
12. The cost of this post would be met from the funding provided to the Board from Northern Constabulary. Highland Council would be the employer and the post would be paid in accordance with the Council's pay and grading scheme. A budget of no more than £40,000 would be required to fund salary and on costs, as well as any costs associated with office accommodation and equipment.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- i. **Note** the progress of the Best Value Inspection;
- ii. **Note** the intention to conduct a Training Needs Analysis;
- iii. **Agree** the appointment of a Development Officer for the NJPB for an initial period of 12 months, as detailed in paragraphs 10-12;

Signature

Designation Clerk

Date 19 November 2009

Author

APPENDIX 1

CLERK

The following matters are delegated to the Clerk:

1. Acting as the proper officer of the Board in relation to the provisions of the Police (Scotland) Act 1967 and the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, and other statutory provisions, including the Board's Scheme of Delegation and Proper Officer provision
2. Meetings and proceedings of the Board (Section 43 of the Act of 1973)
3. Circulating reports and agendas, supplying papers to the press and, where necessary, providing summaries of minutes (Section 50B(2); 50B(7)(c) and 50C(2) of the Act of 1973)
4. Complying with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (Section 50A of the Act of 1973)
5. Deciding on members' rights of access to Board documents which disclose 'exempt information' in terms of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (Section 50(F)(2) of the Act of 1973)
6. Acting as the proper officer of the Board to prepare and maintain a list of politically restricted posts (Section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989)
7. Acting as Registrar in terms of The Police Appeals Tribunals (Scotland) Rules 1996 in respect of all appeals brought by an officer of the force of whatever rank under those Rules, including the payment of any expenses of an appeal
8. Arranging and clerking Support Staff appeals
9. Accepting tenders and awarding contracts in circumstances as set out in the Board's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts
10. Acquisition of property as instructed by the Board
11. Disposing of Police property declared surplus to requirements, in liaison as appropriate with Constituent Authority Housing Services and with Housing Associations
12. On the recommendation of the Chief Constable and in consultation with the Convener and Vice-Convener, approving (a) early retirements on the grounds of ill-health; (b) the payment of injury benefit where retirement on medical grounds has arisen as the result of an injury on duty; and (c) early retirements on the grounds of efficiency.

APPENDIX 1

13. On the recommendation of the Chief Constable and in consultation with the Convener and Vice-Convener, approving applications by any member of staff for financial assistance in connection with representation in civil and criminal proceedings brought in consequence of their actions in connection with the performance of their duties, or in connection with Fatal Accident Inquiries or Tribunals affecting the Force
14. Approving attendance of Members at conferences/seminars in Great Britain where there is insufficient time for the invitation to be considered by the Board prior to the conference/seminar being held, subject to availability of funds and a report for information being submitted to the next available meeting of the Board.
15. Signing documents on behalf of the Board, including binding missives, if so required in the absence of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services or duly authorised members of his/her staff, contracts and other agreements; this matter also being delegated to the Assistant Clerk in the absence of the Clerk.

The Highland Council

Job Description

Job Title: Development Officer

Grade and Salary: TBC

Location: Council Headquarters, Inverness

Responsible to: Clerk to the Board

Job Purpose: To provide support for the Northern Joint Police Board in respect of research, policy advice and development, communications and performance management.

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

Policy & Research

1. To undertake research relating to national policy and issues, to support the Board (NJPB), Convener, Vice Convener and Members, in undertaking their roles.
2. To produce written advice and draft policy guidance to support the Board and its Members, in undertaking their roles representing the interests of the Highlands & Islands; scrutinising Northern Constabulary; engaging with the public and partner organisations and in carrying out its statutory obligations and specific functions.

Performance Management

1. To analyse performance information on the activities of Northern Constabulary to support the Board in the discharge of its statutory scrutiny functions.
2. To produce reports for the Board the interpretation of performance data, in particular the data produced under the Scottish Policing Performance Framework.

Communications

1. To develop and implement an Awareness Raising & Media Strategy for the Board.
2. To develop the NJPB website to ensure that the work of the Board is promoted and there is good access to information for the public and other stakeholders.
3. To undertake or commission surveys on the activities of the Board, as required.

Development

1. To ensure the delivery of the Board's Improvement Action Plan and to put in place arrangements for continuous improvement through the EFQM process.
2. To develop and ensure the delivery of a Member Development Programme.

Other Duties:

To undertake other duties as required.

Travel may be necessary in order to undertake the role.

Date:

19th November 2009