

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

27 November 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF SHARED SERVICES AND COLLABORATIVE WORKING

Report by the Chief Constable

SUMMARY

To update the members of the Northern Joint Police Board of the intention to commence a Best Value review of Shared Services and Collaborative Working.

Background

As part of the Budget discussions for 2010/11 which the Convener and Chief Constable have recently held with each of the constituent authorities, the longer-term issue of sustainability of services and retention of needed jobs within the Highlands and Islands was progressed.

It was suggested by the Chief Constable, and endorsed in principle by the four constituent authorities, that we commit to a fundamental review commencing in early 2010 which would seek to develop proposals for more effective sharing of back office services and support for consideration by each of the relevant authorities and Boards, for potential implementation during the next financial year 2011/12 and beyond, recognising that the budgetary challenges which we are all facing both in local government and the wider public sector are likely to continue well into the medium-term. The progression of this review is seen as necessary and unavoidable and, whilst the outcome may well be fewer support staff posts in back-office services, by undertaking this work as part of a joint process of consideration and decision making the aspiration would be to retain all affordable posts within the Highlands and Islands.

In order to support the Force in taking this work forward, the Chief Constable views it as imperative that the Police Board is involved from the outset and the Board is therefore invited to consider their involvement and representation. If approved it is suggested that representation on the Best Value Programme Board would best be achieved by a nomination of a Board member from each of the constituent authorities.

It is also intended that the Programme Board will maintain oversight of the work being undertaken to achieve the cash efficiency savings during 2010/11 which are required to balance the budget. As reported elsewhere, this requires consideration of both voluntary severance and, as a last resort, compulsory severance to ensure that front-line delivery of operational policing and therefore the service to our

communities is protected as far as practically achievable within the identified funding challenges which the Force and the Police Board now face. Whilst endorsement of severance proposals and options will be sought at the appropriate time from the Northern Joint Police Board as a full Board, it is important that this work is only taken forward with the early involvement and contribution of nominated Board representation.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is asked to consider Member representation on the Best Value Review Programme Board and, if approved, to agree on a nomination from each constituent authority.

I Latimer
Chief Constable
Date: 17 November 2009