

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
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Roger Baker QPM MBA MA
Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

28 September 2012

Mrs Ros Taylor MBE
Chair – Humberside Police Authority

RB/LKB

Mr Kevin Sharp
Chief Executive – Humberside Police Authority

Dear Ros and Kevin,

HMIC Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Budget Preparedness Visits

Thank you for the time the Police Authority spent with the HMIC team on 11 September 2012. The meeting presented an opportunity for you to provide an overview of your budget development process for 2013/14, the funds identified for transition and the development of potential models of governance, decision making and accountability.

I am writing to provide you with a summary of our discussions and to highlight areas that emerged for further consideration.

Budget setting process

Humberside has a robust budget setting process in place and you purposely adopt a prudent approach in your financial planning. While you recognise that there is still a considerable level of uncertainty, your budget plans are based on up-to-date and prudent assumptions and potential pressures have been identified and where possible costed. The approach you have taken is in effect 'business as usual' in your financial planning while allowing the potential for flexibility for the new PCC.

Preparation of scenarios to support the PCC in setting the budget

You have done a substantial amount of work to prepare a budget for the PCC to take forward. Based on your early dialogue with the candidates, it is your assessment that the main focus will be on the community safety and partnership aspects of their role. As such you have not prepared alternative scenarios.

The authority maintains a significant level of reserves which enable you to mitigate the impact of uncertainty. This will also provide the incoming PCC with flexibility and time to fully consider plans for 2013/14 and beyond.

Workforce and service impact

You described that your current workforce reduction plans are progressing as planned and you are not expecting any changes to your workforce projections through to 2015, which take into account the savings required by the force. It is not anticipated that there will be any negative impact on service delivery.

You are involved in embedded collaborative working with other forces as a means of increasing efficiency and reducing costs.

Forward planning: governance and the Office of the PCC (OPCC)

The infrastructure for the OPCC is in place with a timeline set to April 2013 which enables the PCC to operate from their first day in office, while allowing flexibility for future change. A skills audit has been undertaken and you are confident that you have sufficient capability in place to support the PCC.

In considering the requirements of the OPCC you have included provision for a deputy PCC. The budget for the OPCC is based on the current police authority budget.

Your approach to governance has been to start with a clean sheet and develop a corporate governance framework for the incoming PCC to consider. This includes proposals for how the PCC will hold the Chief Constable to account and includes the development of a joint arrangement protocol for public engagement

You have offered the authority's 'needs assessment' to the police and crime panel who met for the first time in early September. Another meeting is planned in February in respect of the precept. Membership for the joint audit committee has yet to be advertised and it is proposed that a list of applicants will be presented to the PCC to allow them to select.

In summary, your budget development process is based on prudent assumptions and you have identified contingencies for changes in funding. You are developing proposals for PCC governance arrangements and while some areas are more advanced than others you have a clear plan that ensures these will be finalised in advance of the election and available for you to brief prospective candidates.

You fully understand that it will be a matter for the PCC which, if any, options they choose to adopt.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the police authority for its continuing commitment to plan and prepare for transition a PCC.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Baker', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Roger Baker
HM Inspector of Constabulary

Copied

Mr Tim Hollis CBE QPM
Chief Constable Humberside Police

Ms Kirsty Tuton
HMIC Liaison Officer