



Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland
Cleveland Police Headquarters
Ladgate Lane
Middlesbrough
TS8 9EH

Website: www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk

Police and Crime Commissioner:	Barry Coppinger	Tel: 01642 301653
Chief of Staff:	Ed Chicken	Fax: 01642 301495
Chief Constable:	Jacqui Cheer QPM	Tel: 01642 301653
		Tel: 01642 301215

Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner to the Chair and Members of the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel

18th July 2013

Scrutiny of Disbandment of the Mounted Section

1.0 Purpose of report

1.1 To update the Police & Crime panel re the above.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are invited to note the report and comment as appropriate re process followed.

3.0 Background

3.1 Members will be aware of the increasingly difficult financial circumstances public services generally face and be aware that Cleveland Police face substantial budget pressures, following ongoing reductions in government grant in a time of austerity.

3.2 The Chief Constable has undertaken a number of activities to mitigate against reductions in funding, most notably including a restructure of the Force. My office is working closely with the Force to oversee financial performance. My intention is that this performance management will include both monitoring ongoing spend against budget, but also medium-term planning to deal with spend, pressures and proposed savings up to 2015-16

3.3 The Chief Constable, as delegated recipient from myself of the Policing budget and within the constitutional operational independence of policing framework, as set out most recently in the Policing Protocol Order 2011, advised me of her decision to disband the Cleveland Mounted section.

3.4 A report has been prepared which is appended at **Appendix 1** and I have undertaken appropriate scrutiny, including public consultation.

4.0 PCC scrutiny

4.1 The process I have followed is :

- (a) receipt of an appropriate report from the Chief Constable.
- (b) informing Cleveland residents, via local media and my website, of my intention to scrutinise decision and to invite comments and suggestions.
- (c) advising Police & Crime panel also, at your last meeting.
- (d) visiting Mounted section at Ormesby Hall, view set-up and talk to officers.
- (e) studying report from Chief Constable and drawing up a series of questions – **Appendix 2**.
- (f) receiving any comments from public and including any further issues in questions to Chief Constable as appropriate.
- (g) meeting with Chief Constable to go through questions, and receive answers as appropriate – **Appendix 3**.
- (h) publicising the report of Chief Constable, together with my questions, and her answers.
- (i) continuing to monitor responses of Chief Constable and follow-up actions and any issues raised by Police & Crime panel, following this report.

4.2 During the public consultation process, a member of one of the Cleveland local authorities put a motion to their council seeking to halt the disbandment of the Mounted section and my intervention to ensure this. I have written to the Chair of the council to explain both the constitutional position and the budgetary circumstances in which the decision has been taken, **Appendix 4**.

4.3 Representations have been received in writing and orally, and there has been comment via social media and in local media. During the consultation period 2nd June – 2nd July, my office has received: 19 letters; 51 emails; and petitions totalling approximately 4,700 signatures. Whilst there has been some correspondence in support of disbanding the mounted section, the weight of such has been against. I have also received 15 items of correspondence offering to re-home the horses.

4.4 I have met with some long-term volunteers from Ormesby Hall. I have given assurances to them, and within a public statement issued on 2nd July (**Appendix 5**), that I would be willing to engage positively with anyone willing to meet the costs of the Mounted section for the next 3 years, as has the Chief Constable. I will report further at your meeting. I have also sought that the views and input be utilised of local volunteers re gaining a caring and compassionate location re re-homing of horses.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 This has been a difficult decision for many people, including for the Chief Constable to make, and the loss of the Mounted section will be felt by many residents.
- 5.2 The unprecedented financial circumstances have dictated that in order to preserve other policing priorities the Mounted section has been wound up.
- 5.3 I shall continue to monitor and question, and ensure the panel are kept updated, re any future proposals and actions to ensure the financial sustainability of the Cleveland Force.

Barry Coppinger
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland