

Decision Of The Chief Constable.
Implementation is subject to a consultation process and review by the
Police and Crime Commissioner.

Appendix 1

The Future of the Cleveland Police

Mounted Section

Chief Constable Jacqui Cheer
31st May 2013

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cleveland Police currently maintain a Mounted Section comprising of five horses, two members of police staff, one police sergeant and six police constables based at Ormesby Hall.
- 1.2 The Section costs in the region of £521,000 per year to maintain and generates a non-guaranteed income of approximately £40,000 a year. These costs include the salaries and ancillary costs of the staff and officers and the costs associated with the horses, equipment including specialist vehicles and the building lease.
- 1.3 In order to meet the challenge of maintaining good policing services whilst significantly reducing the budget, every function within Cleveland Police is being reviewed and subject to scrutiny. The force has a strong commitment to maintaining frontline services and, in particular, retaining close links with local communities through teams dedicated to identifiable geographic areas known as neighbourhood policing. In order to maintain this area of policing, other areas will need to take disproportionate reductions and activities that are important but not essential may need to cease. Such decisions balance the operational impact of the activity ceasing with the costs (both capital and revenue) saved.
- 1.4 In line with the Policing Protocol it is for the Chief Constable to make decisions about the delivery of operational policing within their force area. The Police and Crime Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account for those decisions and their impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the force in delivering policing services.
- 1.5 This paper sets out the information taken into account, the decision and proposed associated timescales and will be presented to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

2. Information and Intelligence

- 2.1 The budget for the current year (2013-2014) is balanced, although achieving that balance requires the implementation of a number of significant change programmes. The majority of the savings this year will be achieved through the loss of police officer posts through compulsory retirements, resignations and dismissals. Over the period of the current Comprehensive Spending Review, Cleveland Police will lose approximately 320 police officer posts. The change programme is targeting that loss at senior and management posts in order to maintain constable numbers. It is also concentrating on retaining those roles and posts that have regular or daily contact with members of the public in circumstances that have a direct impact on reducing crime levels, increasing victim satisfaction and apprehending offenders. The change programme will eventually have considered all

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parts of the organisation to find savings and improve effectiveness and efficiency.

- 2.2 As part of the force restructure programme, the change team considered the future of the Mounted Section and recommended that it was disbanded with the officer posts moving back into response or neighbourhood roles. This recommendation was not supported by the majority of the chief officer team and a decision was taken to consider the Mounted Section in isolation rather than as a part of the general decision to move to a force-wide functional model.
- 2.3 Previous reports concerning the Mounted Section have been revisited and discussion has taken place amongst the wider senior management team. The workforce is aware that this subject is being considered and officers and staff have had ample opportunity to provide information and evidence to support either keeping or disbanding the Section. Following a chief officer meeting, a further piece of work was commissioned to understand the estimated additional costs of changing the tactics and deployments of officers at football matches. This work has now been completed and the decision regarding the future of the Mounted Section can be made.
- 2.4 The decision is made by considering separately and then balancing two issues; operational effectiveness and cost effectiveness.

3. Operational Effectiveness

- 3.1 The Force has been given five Strategic Directions by the Police and Crime Commissioner; neighbourhood policing, focusing on victims, preventing offending and re-offending, working in partnership and employee & community relations. We have agreed six policing priorities for 2013-2014 to support the delivery of those Directions; reducing neighbourhood crime, protecting people, tackling serious and organised crime, reducing and preventing offending, improving services to victims and the effective use of resources.
- 3.2 To be retained, the Mounted Section need to demonstrate direct and measurable outcomes linked to both the PCC Directions and the Force Priorities. Evidence of their effectiveness concentrates on three main areas - maintaining public order, contributions to the safety of the public and contributions to public confidence.
- 3.3 Information has been provided which demonstrates the effectiveness of horses at events with large crowds. Within Cleveland this largely centres on football matches, marches, protests and large community events. The effectiveness of the horses at these events is proven and recognised.

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3.4 However, many forces police similar types of events without having mounted officers available or deployed. They are therefore an effective, but not the only, means of maintaining public safety at these events. Indeed some of the reasons given such as the additional benefits of officers on horses being able to see more due to their height advantage are negated by watching their actual deployment at a football match and the obstructions caused to their visual awareness by the parked vehicles.

3.5 It is likely that mounted officers are deployed to all policed matches within Cleveland because they are available and Commanders are trained and used to having them available. If they were not readily available, the deployment of horses would be based upon the risk category of the game and the intelligence and information available prior to the match.

3.6 Matches are categorised as follows:

Category 'CS' – No known risk, club security only, no Police

Category 'A' – Low risk

Category 'B' – Medium risk

Category 'C' – High risk

Category 'C+' – High risk (specific intelligence in relation to the risk).

3.7 A breakdown of Football season 2012/13 is illustrated below:

	Cat 'A'	Cat 'B'	Cat 'C'	Cat 'C+'	Total
Middlesbrough FC	6	3	0	1	10
Hartlepool FC	1	3	0	0	4
Total	7	6	0	1	14

3.8 Category 'A' matches are low risk matches, because they are available, we currently deploy the mounted section. They are not required or necessary to safely police this category of matches.

3.9 For Category 'B' and above additional staff would be required to offset the loss of mounted officers.

3.10 Police forces that use mutual aid to deploy mounted officers at football matches tend to use them for the top risk category only. For Cleveland that would currently amount to one match per season. If the deployment was extended to the next highest category that would increase the deployment to seven games per season, which is only half of the fourteen matches they are currently deployed to (ten at Middlesbrough and four at Hartlepool).

3.11 The Mounted Section has also been deployed to maintain public safety at demonstrations and marches. They are effective in this role as the horses tend to have a calming influence on many people due

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to their size, can be rapidly deployed if required and have a height advantage for spotting issues in a crowd. It is difficult to predict the number and type of these events into the future.

3.12 It is evident that Commanders of these events value the contribution of the mounted officers. However, the number of events and football matches that potentially require (rather than would like) the availability of this public order tactic is small (potentially eight to ten deployments a year).

3.13 The Mounted Section also deploy to peaceful and good natured community events involving large crowds. In this role they are welcomed by the public and the organisers and may contribute to people feeling safer at the event. This, in turn, is likely to have a positive impact on the public confidence in policing.

3.14 There is no evidence to suggest they are more effective than a patrolling officer or police community support officer in terms of preventing or detecting crime. Anecdotes about being able to see over walls and fences abound but there is no direct correlation between this assertion and the prevention or detection of any specific crime.

3.15 There are mixed views in the community. Many people say they like to see the horses on patrol but in recent months a few people have expressed a view that they are an unnecessary expense in a time of significantly reducing budgets.

3.16 In summary, the value and usefulness of mounted officers at large gatherings of people, be they peaceful or disorderly, is recognised, however, the actual number of these events that require their deployment as a public order tactic is small. They make a contribution to the positive image of the force and when deployed make people feel safer. All of these things can, and are, achieved by other tactics and resources and therefore the issue of cost must also be considered.

4. Cost Effectiveness

4.1 The Mounted Section costs about £521,000 per annum. The costs can be broken down into the salaries and associated costs for the police officers and police staff, the lease of the premises and the operational budget for food, veterinary fees and equipment.

4.2 Two trained public order tactical advisors with experience of policing similar football matches were asked to consider the impact of the loss of the mounted officers as a tactic to police these events. One has considerable experience of working with the Cleveland Mounted Section, the other officer works in a force (West Midlands) that does not deploy mounted officers at football matches but does have access

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to many public order trained staff. They modelled a response to matches using public order trained officers and untrained officers.

- 4.3 The West Midlands officer replaced the mounted officers with police support units (PSU's), a PSU consists of one inspector, three sergeants and eighteen constables, costing £5,121 per unit. He outlined that the number of PSU's required to replace the mounted officers was dependent upon the category of the match:

Cat 'A' – one PSU, totalling £5,121 per match.

Cat 'B' – two PSU's, totalling £10,242 per match.

Cat 'C' – three PSU's, totalling £15,363 per match.

- 4.4 Working on the categories of the fourteen matches in the 2012/13 season, this would equate to the deployment of an additional 22 PSU's, costing £112,659

- 4.5 The Cleveland officer suggested a team of one sergeant and six constables to replace each mounted officer at a cost of £1,594 per team. This would equate to four sergeants and twenty-four constables costing £6375 per football match to replace the four horses. Using their advice the worst case scenario is an additional four teams at all fourteen matches, costing £89,251.

- 4.6 However, this is the equivalent to deploying in excess of a full additional serial, even to Cat 'A' matches.

- 4.7 Using the Cleveland Police staffing levels for last season, the report from the Tactical Advisors and limited information from eight other Police forces with similar football teams and crowds, we have estimated that the loss of the Cleveland Police mounted section could be offset as follows:

Cat 'A' – No additional resources required

Cat 'B' – One additional PSU required

Cat 'C' – Two additional PSU's required

- 4.8 As with the mounted officers, any cost is only an additional revenue cost if the resources can not be drawn from duty strength or re-rostered duties. At some matches a proportion of the costs of policing the match can be charged to the football club.

- 4.9 The tactical advisor's report also considers the approximate costs of mutual aid (if the mounted officers from other nearby police forces were available). This would be an additional revenue cost of approximately £1600 per match for a team of four mounted officers.

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4.10 In summary, if the Mounted Section is retained solely to facilitate their availability as a tactic at football matches the comparative costs are:

Football Matches	Mounted Section (yearly cost divided by matches where tactic required)	Approx. cost of Mutual Aid	Cleveland model (additional officers normal rate)	West Midlands model (additional officers normal rate)
6x Cat 'B'	£74,429 (7 matches)	£0	£38,250	£30,725
1x Cat 'C'	£521,000 (1 match)	£1,600	£6,375	£10,241
Total	£521,000	£1,600	£44,635	£40,966

4.11 If the Section is disbanded only part of the £521,000 could be removed from the revenue budget. There would be no additional capital expenditure into the future.

4.12 The officers posts, and therefore their costs, would remain within the overall police budget as there is no ability to downsize the force beyond that which is already planned due to conditions of service for police officers (i.e. there is no form of redundancy).

4.13 The lease for the premises has four years to run. The use of the premises is currently shared between the Mounted Section and the Dog Section. The Dog Section would retain the use of the premises. The lease costs are within the current budget and are therefore neither a saving nor additional cost. The intention would be to terminate the arrangement at the end of the lease or negotiate a reduction in cost.

4.14 Savings would be accrued from the loss of the groom and groom/trainer post and the operational budget. This amounts to approximately £88,000 in total. It is possible that redundancy costs will be incurred.

4.15 There are a number of options with regards to the horses and equipment. Several forces have disbanded their mounted sections and there is a surplus of horses available. It will be important to ensure they go to good homes and this should take priority over any income that could be made. The equipment for each horse should remain with it.

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4.16 There is a relatively new horse box which is valued at approximately £68,000 if sold. Other options include refurbishing the horsebox as a silver command vehicle for forward deployment at major incidents although the costs of this have not been explored.

4.17 In summary the current £521,000 revenue costs would split into;

Recurring Savings = £88,000	Continuing costs = £433,000
Police staff posts x 2	1 sergeant and 6 constables to other frontline duties
Operational budget	Lease on property

4.18 Initially any savings will need to off-set any redundancy costs. The horses and equipment and the horse-box may generate one-off income.

5. Threats and Risks

5.1 Mounted officers provide a highly effective tactic for deployment at public order events especially when disorder occurs. The number of these events is small.

5.2 It is possible to maintain the same level of public safety at these events with additional officers and a change of tactical options. There may be an additional cost to this especially if officers are required to work on rest days or require other payments such as overtime.

5.3 Cleveland Police train officers in public order to a standard and in sufficient numbers, to meet our national commitment for mobilisation within England and Wales. There is a risk that Cleveland would not have sufficient trained officers available for the policing model described by the West Midlands officer for a high risk game. In the last season there was only one such game. Public order trained officers or mounted officers from other forces could be sought on mutual aid. This would incur a cost.

5.4 In summary, with regards to the policing of public events with an assessment of potential disorder;

- The mounted officers offer a highly effective tactic to quell disorder and restore order.
- This can be achieved through the deployment of additional trained police officers and/or the use of other approved tactics.
- Cleveland Police may not have enough trained officers for the high risk games (only one during the 2012/13 season).
- Additional resources or mounted officers could be arranged for this match via mutual aid at additional cost.

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- 5.5 In relation to their deployment at good natured large crowd events and general patrol there is no or minimal risk of any adverse consequence of the mounted officers not being deployed.
- 5.6 With regards to public confidence there is a perception that this may be adversely affected by the loss of the mounted section. This has not been supported by any evidence. This is balanced by the potential savings of approximately £88,000 (equivalent to 2 new constables) and the move of the officers to fulfil other frontline posts. In addition there will be no further capital expenditure at a time when that budget is also being reduced for the foreseeable future.
- 5.7 The disbanding of the unit will result in the loss of two police staff posts. The risks associated with the mishandling of this will be mitigated by utilising professional advice, engagement and consultation with those involved and engagement with the relevant union representatives.
- 5.8 The horses have served us well and must be found good homes. The placement of the horses must be conducted in an open and transparent way so that the public can be reassured about their welfare.

6. Powers and Policy

- 6.1 In line with the Policing Protocol the Chief Constable is responsible and accountable for decisions that affect the operational delivery of policing services in Cleveland. In holding the Chief Constable to account for that operational delivery of effective and efficient policing, the Police and Crime Commissioner will review the rationale for the decision. Should further information be required this will be provided.
- 6.2 There is no national requirement for forces to have mounted officers or to deploy mounted officers at certain events. Their deployment is an approved tactic but there are other approved tactics that achieve the same purpose.
- 6.3 Any changes to the employment of Police staff members will be in line with national requirements, employment law and local policy. Any changes to the posting or conditions of service of the police officers will be in line with Police Regulations.

7. Options and Contingencies

Option 1 - The Mounted Section is maintained

Option 2 - The Mounted Section is disbanded with immediate effect.

Option 3 - The Mounted Section is disbanded within the current financial year and at the very latest the 31st March 2014.

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- 7.1 With options 2 and 3 a full review of the operational orders for football matches will be needed. Option 3 potentially offers more time to do this and the changes would need to be in place for the end of the 2013-2014 season and beyond.

8. Decisions

- 8.1 The Cleveland Police Mounted Section will be disbanded within the current financial year and at the very latest by 31st March 2014.
- 8.2 The timing will ensure that full year savings (of approximately £88,000) can be made for the year 2014-2015. A proportion of these savings or any income from selling the assets will be available to offset any additional costs for high risk (Cat C) games in the 2014-2015 season with the full savings removed from the budget in the following financial year.