

## Appendix 3

### Chief Constable's Response to Questions Raised by the Police and Crime Commissioner

These responses should be read in conjunction with my report of 31st May 2013.

#### Budget.

The costs of policing fall under two main headings; capital expenditure and reoccurring revenue costs. Capital expenditure includes such things as the purchase of horses or the horse box. Some of these assets retain their value, others such as vehicles do not and their depreciation is accounted for within the budget. Revenue costs include such things as the salaries of the officers and staff.

The significant reductions in the budget required following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (2010 CSR) must be found from the revenue budget as the money available to be spent on policing in Cleveland reduces each year. Savings from within the capital budget are also necessary but are dealt with separately within the budget setting process. The decision affecting the mounted section emanates from concerns about meeting the reductions in the revenue budget and therefore I have provided revenue and not capital information.

One of the main mechanisms for reducing our revenue budget has been the compulsory retirement of police officers who have reached thirty years pensionable service under Regulation A19. Over the period of the 2010 CSR Cleveland Police will lose over 300 police officer posts. The Force has profiled the savings to be made from the retiring officers and calculated the police pay budget remaining when this figure has been deducted.

A year long process has taken place involving the whole force to develop a structure that remains within this budget and places police officers in the most effective posts with the management structures to support it. The total cost (including on-costs but not overtime) of the police officers who work solely in the mounted unit is £427,500. This does not include the time (and therefore cost) managers who line manage the unit along with other responsibilities. The changes in their roles have been taken into account in the new model and contribute to the reduction in management posts across the force.

There are two members of police staff who work in the unit a groom and a groom/trainer. The total cost of these posts (including on-costs but not overtime) is £56,000.

There is an operational budget for items such as food and travel and also officer and staff overtime. This is £44,500.

Total premises costs including cleaning, maintenance and utilities are £44,000.

## Deployments

The deployments within Cleveland fall under three headings; those where the mounted officers are deployed as a specific tactic in response to an assessed and identifiable risk to public safety, those where their presence has the potential to assist the policing of a specific event, and those where they are on general patrol or attending community events.

There was one higher risk football match last season where the mounted section were deployed as a specific tactic in response to an assessed and identifiable risk and one such public protest. Advice has been sought from knowledgeable and qualified officers and it has been estimated that there may be 1 – 7 events when horses would be deployed in similar circumstances in any future year. Other forces regularly police these events with no mounted officers. The use of mounted officers is an effective but not essential tactic at these events.

During the 2012-2013 year the mounted section were deployed to a range of events where their presence supported the policing operation. These were football matches other than the match mentioned above, the Olympic Torch relay and a music festival.

The mounted section deployed 16 times in support of specific crime or anti-social behaviour operations during 2012-2013 and attended four ceremonial events.

At other times the mounted officers were on general patrol or taking part in other engagement activities such as visits to schools. When on patrol the horses patrol for three hours during a shift and are deployed in pairs.

The hierarchy of deployments is risk based. Higher risk football matches and public events take priority followed by large crowd events where their presence may contribute to policing the event. Their daily deployment will be a management decision based requests for assistance via the Tasking and Coordination process which tackles issues affecting either the whole force area or specific locations such as a rise in thefts from garden sheds. If there are no such requests the officers will deploy where they consider they will make the greatest contribution to achieving the Policing Plan.

## Redeployment of the police officers.

As explained above the force has undertaken an extensive process to develop a new structure to deliver policing with reduced numbers of police officers and police staff. A number of proposals were presented to chief officers following force-wide consultation and development. The mounted section were not part in any of the proposed structures i.e. the suggestions for future structures developed by the workforce did not include a mounted section.

Therefore there are not 7 police officers to be redeployed. It is in fact the reverse, to retain the mounted section 1 sergeant and 6 constable posts

would need to be removed from other duties and moved into the mounted section. Given the financial constraints placed upon the force by CSR 2010 and now CSR 2013 there is no option to increase the budget for police officers.

Prior to the recent announcement of further reductions in the policing grant (CSR 2013) we were committed to retaining the constable numbers in neighbourhood policing. Officers in the mounted section are operational specialists they are not neighbourhood policing officers. Neighbourhood officers are those who are named as policing an identified geographic community. We have also committed to seeking to maintain frontline services but not necessarily numbers. With the introduction of technology, the reductions in bureaucracy and new processes it is possible to deliver the same or improved frontline services with fewer officers.

#### Redeployment of the police staff

The two members of police staff will be managed via the force redeployment and redundancy process.

#### Consultation - Internal

All members of the workforce have had the opportunity to engage in a programme of events to develop the proposed structures. This programme was managed by the Business Transformation Unit which held many meetings and one-to-one sessions to develop, test and consult on the proposals. This work produced several proposed structures, none of which included a mounted section.

Following the presentation of the proposed structures to chief officers in September 2012 I decided to ask for further information about a number of aspects, one being the mounted section. Specific information was gathered from Public Order Commanders and Public Order Tactical Advisors including one who works in a force with premier ship football clubs and no mounted section.

Due to the possible redeployment situation for the police staff members I specifically consulted with Unison with regards to the communication of my decision, the impact on the staff and the way forward following the announcement. On the day the decision was announced I met with the two members of staff prior to meeting the police officers and explained the next steps.

#### Consultation - External

Senior stakeholders from partner agencies were informed of the proposed changes to the force-wide structure. Many are facing the same financial difficulties and understood the need for changes. They have not been specifically consulted about the mounted section as it is an operational matter and no different from decisions about other units such as roads policing or investigations.

There has been no specific public consultation about the loss of the mounted section. It would not be appropriate or right to single out one particular operational unit for a public consultation process above the work conducted by their colleagues. Any public consultation would need to be based on information about all police work in order to make an informed judgement about the comparable worth of different aspects of policing. An example would be judging the relative contribution to keeping people safe from harm of the six constables in the mounted section versus the six detectives recently assigned to a new team to tackle child sexual exploitation particularly on line. Personally, I would welcome this level of public debate but have rarely found people who are able to give sufficient time to such a process.

All correspondence received since the announcement has been acknowledged and forwarded to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

#### ACPO Lead for Mounted

The ACPO lead ACC Rod Hansen recognises it is a matter for forces to decide whether to have mounted officers. There is no national requirement for a force to use this tactic or to have it available. This tactic is not covered by the Strategic Policing Requirement. He will shortly publish the first phase of university led research into the effectiveness of mounted officers. The key findings of this are 1, there is virtually no high-quality research on any aspect of mounted police work; 2, mounted police officers may have an effect on levels of disorder at football matches; 3, mounted officers on neighbourhood patrols appear to have a small but positive effect on police visibility in areas where the regularly patrol and 4, the work of mounted officers receives minimal and neutral national press coverage suggesting limited public interest in their work. There is no new information in the research document that has not already been taken account of in the decision and nothing that contradicts the information on which the decision has been based.

We have examined the proposals from West Yorkshire for a regional unit. The costs were excessive and more than we currently spend. We made some alternative suggestions to reduce costs but these were rejected.

#### Mutual Aid

There is an agreed rate for mutual aid between forces across a range of assets and this includes a management cost (i.e. income above actual costs) The mounted section has generated additional income of approximately £1,000 through mutual aid deployments.

The cost to Cleveland for four horses and associated officers on mutual aid (if available) for one event with no requirement for overtime would be £1,528 + mileage.

#### Other Mounted Sections

Nine forces have their own mounted units and South and West Yorkshire are merging into a single unit. Including Cleveland, seven forces have closed their mounted sections.

Of the forces with mounted sections, three police the matches of 2 premieriership football clubs, two police matches of both premieriership and championship clubs (one polices 2 premieriership and 2 championship and the other 6 premieriership and 3 championship) and three plus the Yorkshire unit police only championship clubs.

There is one force that polices both premieriership (2 clubs) and championship matches with no mounted section. Three forces police one premieriership club with no mounted section and including Cleveland, eight forces without mounted sections would police one championship club.

A number of forces such as Bedfordshire have faced large public protests with the potential for or actual public disorder. They either police without mounted officers or occasionally resource mounted officers via mutual aid.

#### Premises

The Specialist Operations Commander is in discussion with the National Trust. It would be inappropriate to make any further comment at this time.

#### Other Tactics

The actual numbers of officers required for the higher risk, risk and low risk football matches is constantly reviewed according to the best available advice. Current information suggests a high number of officers may be required for the higher risk game(s). On the current level of these matches the force has sufficient officers to police the match. If the number of matches increases we may need to train more public order officers. This is not specific training just for football and would provide additional trained officers for deployment at other events or on mutual aid.

#### Re-homing the Horses (and associated equipment).

A number of offers have been received to provide homes for the horses. Once the timescales for disbanding the unit are agreed the force will engage with an external animal advisor to determine the best way to decide on homes. There are a number of mounted units disbanding and therefore there is a surplus of police horses available. Our intention is to find a home which suits the individual animal and to tell the public where they have gone.

Each horse will take with it their own tack and equipment. The other assets will be disposed of in the most cost effective way e.g. the horse box may be sold or converted to a forward command vehicle.

Chief Constable Jacqui Cheer

10<sup>th</sup> July 2013