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MINUTES

NATIONAL POLICE AIR SERVICE (NPAS) NATIONAL STRATEGIC BOARD (MEETING NUMBER 14)

11 February 2016

PRESENT

NAME	REPRESENTING
PCC Mark Burns-Williamson OBE (MBW) Chair	Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire police – Lead Local Policing Body
T/CC Dee Collins QPM (DC)	West Yorkshire Police – Lead Local Chief Constable
Ch. Supt. Ian Whitehouse (IW)	NPAS Accountable Manager
Fraser Sampson (FS)	Chief Executive & Solicitor – Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire
Katherine Johnson (KJ)	Treasurer – West Yorkshire Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
Mark Reeves (MRe)	Temporary Director of Finance - West Yorkshire Police
Ollie Dismore (OD)	NPAS Director of Operations
Supt Tyron Joyce (TJ)	NPAS Programme Director
Susan Carte (SC)	NPAS Business Development Manager
Janine Nelson (JN)	Solicitor, Legal Services, West Yorkshire Police
PCC Barry Coppinger (BC)	Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland - North East Region
CC Simon Byrne QPM (SB)	National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) Aviation Lead
Emma Smithies (ES)	Staff Officer to CC Simon Byrne – Cheshire Police – North West Region
PCC John Dwyer (JD) (by phone)	Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire – North West Region
CC Mark Polin QPM (MP) (by phone)	North Wales Police – North West Region
PCC Ron Ball (RB)	Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire – Central Region
ACC Rob Nixon (RN) (on behalf of Neil Rhodes)	Lincolnshire Police – Central Region

PROTECT

Jane Connors (JC) (on behalf of Cmdr. David Musker) (by phone)	Metropolitan Police Service – London Region
PCC Anthony Stansfeld (AS)	Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley - South East Region
T/Chief Supt Simon Hawkins (SH) representing ACC Sarah Hamlin	Hertfordshire Police - South East Region
Tim Burton (TB) (representing PCC Christopher Salmon) (by phone)	Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner for Dyfed Powys – South West Region
CC Suzette Davenport (SD) (by Phone)	Gloucestershire Police - South West Region
Samantha Richardson (SR) (on behalf of Rebecca Lawrence)	MOPAC – Mayors Office for Police and Crime
Jenny Walker (JN)	NPAS Marketing & Communications Manager
Melanie Jaundziekars (MJ)	NPAS Support Officer

APOLOGIES

NAME	REPRESENTING
ACC Sarah Hamlin (SH)	Norfolk Police – South East Region
CC David Jones (DJ)	North Yorkshire Police – North East Region
Rachel Watson (RW)	Home Office – Head of Police Workforce and Capability Unit
Jonathan Scanlan (JS)	Home Office – Workforce and Capability Unit
CC Neil Rhodes (NR)	Lincolnshire Police – Central Region
Rebecca Lawrence (RL)	MOPAC
PCC Christopher Salmon (CS)	Police & Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys – South West Region

The Chair, PCC Mark Burns-Williamson (MBW) opened the meeting and invited introductions from those in the room and dialling in on the conference call facility. MBW thanked everyone for attending and dialling into the meeting and reminded Board members that this was an extraordinary meeting to set the budget for 2016/17.

1. APOLOGIES

Noted and recorded.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were raised.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 9 DECEMBER 2015

Minutes were agreed and passed as a correct record.

4. ACTIONS

See Action list for updates.

5. BUDGET AND CONTRIBUTIONS 2016/17

MBW welcomed all attendees to partake in the discussions regarding the budget but reminded Board members that it was Police and Crime Commissioners who had the vote on budgetary matters.

Mark Reeves (MR) presented the papers that set out the proposed operating costs for NPAS in 2016/17 and proposals around recovering costs from contributions from forces.

Budget

MR explained that the revenue budget for NPAS was £39.6m in 2016/17 which was in excess of £3m less than the 15/16 baseline and reminded everyone that the pre-NPAS baseline was in excess of £54m. Additional detail was circulated prior to and during the meeting following representation from PCC Christopher Salmon (CS) before the meeting. The additional information showed the staff employed by NPAS to be 351.5 FTE. Further detail around running costs of the fleet and NPAS as an operation, together with maintenance costs for contracts and costs regarding fuel were provided. It was noted that the low price of fuel had contributed to the lower baseline.

PCC Anthony Stansfeld (AS) queried how much NPAS were currently saving on fuel. MR stated that as fuel prices were depressed NPAS were receiving the benefits but this had to be offset against increase in fuel use. AS felt that NPAS should achieve higher fuel savings than those presented. One suggestion was to utilise any underspend to ring fence as a contingency for potential fuel increases over and above what had been assumed. It was noted that the costs for keeping the three bases open for a longer period owing to the delay with the fixed wing had also been factored into the calculation and it was confirmed that all other bases that NPAS were closing this financial year (2015/16) had now been closed.

Agreed - The Board approved the revenue budget for 2016/17.

Contributions 2016/17

MR explained that the actioned calls to service model agreed by the National Board utilised data that had been captured between April 2015 and December 2015 which had then been applied to the £39.6m budget.

The Board considered a shortlist of three options to allocate proposed budget contributions:-

PROTECT

Option 1 - That forces who would benefit from a reduced cost for service under the new formula would receive 65% of the total calculated reduction, while those forces facing an increase would pay 25% of that increased cost.

Option 2 - That forces who would benefit from a reduced cost for service under the new formula would receive 67% of the total calculated reduction while those forces facing an increase would pay 33% of that increased cost.

Option 3 - That forces who would benefit from a reduced cost for service under the new formula would receive 55% of the total calculated reduction while those forces facing an increase would pay no increased cost for this period.

PCC Barry Coppinger (BC) stated his preference towards Option 2 to move towards incentivising forces to adopt the model around threat, harm and risk. MR reiterated that 62 versions of the models had been considered and the only element that remained consistent was the number of forces that gain or lose (13). BC made reference to how hard Cleveland Constabulary had worked to adopt the model and encouraged other forces to do the same.

Susan Carte (SC) advised that the figures had been calculated using current data up to December which was driven by the behaviour of those requesting air support basing the request on expenditure of “their hours” which the requesting party believed they had paid for. SC reminded Board members that the information this time next year would look very different.

PCC John Dwyer (JD) stated that owing to the delay with the fixed wing airframe and to allow the model to settle down, he favoured Option 3 which did not disadvantage any force.

Tim Burton (TB) advised that CS had previously indicated to the Board in an email that Option 2 would be his preferred option but he was open to discussion. TB went on to say that if the collective view of the Board was that Option 3 was the preferred option CS would also support this.

There was a detailed debate during which Board members considered each option and its implications. It was apparent during the debate that the adoption of the approved threat, harm and risk principles for requesting air support varied significantly across the country. When the question of how forces were deploying NPAS assets was fully explored it became clear that many forces were still in transition and that it may be some time before each force would be in a position to identify its usage based on the agreed model. The matter was put to a vote with the majority of those voting supporting Option 3 for the purposes of the 2016/17 budget.

RB stated that, having listened to the detailed discussions and views of other Board members, he was content to support Option 3.

PROTECT

BC reaffirmed his position and stressed the need to drive down costs in the organisation. BC emphasised the importance of incentivising forces to move to the 'actioned calls for service' approach and the need to have a set of operating principles to get NPAS to the required position in its business plan but stated he would accept the Board's decision.

PCC Anthony Stansfeld (AS) stated that he agreed that Option 3 should be adopted for this financial year underlining that it would be unrealistic for forces to receive an increase at this time.

MBW stated that he understood both sides of the argument and highlighted the actual reductions which did not vary greatly from a 55% to a 67% model, pointing out that the decision was more around the principle of adopting the full model. MBW stated that having heard the debate and the proposals of other members, he believed that Option 3 was the fairest option and would accept the Board members' decision.

Members highlighted that this time next year the data available to the Board would be clearer and would be reflective of all forces having adopted the threat, risk and harm model.

JD formally proposed Option 3.

The majority of those voting supported adoption of Option 3, which the Board felt balanced the need to deliver savings to forces at this moment while supporting the service in adopting the new deployment model during the coming financial year.

Members congratulated MR and the finance team on their work. Members raised the question of an annual review taking place in April 2016. Ian Whitehouse (IW) stated that owing to the delays with the fixed wing programme NPAS needed to look at the timeline to see when the review would be. Katherine Johnson (KJ) stated that NPAS could still review actioned calls to service data before December and set next year's budget mid January 2017 which was agreed as a suitable timeframe.

Action 14.1 – A letter to be sent to all Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables from MBW, SB and DC informing them of the decision to adopt Option 3.

MBW thanked everyone for their participation around the different models.

6. SUFFOLK DISPUTE RESOLUTION

PCC Ron Ball (RB) presented this report setting out the findings of the sub-panel convened by the NPAS Strategic Board (under the Section 22A agreement) to resolve the dispute between NPAS and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk and the reasons for their decision. RB outlined the process the panel had followed that had been agreed by both parties in the dispute, explaining the issues deliberated by the panel and how it had come to its unanimous and unequivocal decision.

RB informed the Board that, after considering the submissions of the parties at an oral hearing the panel's unanimous determination was that that Suffolk Constabulary should pay the outstanding £804,000.

The Board agreed unanimously to accept the panel's decision.

MBW thanked all panel members for taking part in the dispute resolution and the NPAS team for providing the information to enable the panel to make a decision, particularly PCC Ron Ball's role in chairing the sub-panel.

Agreed – a unanimous decision of the Board to accept the decision of the panel that Suffolk Constabulary/PCC should pay the £804k.

Action 14.2 – MBW to write to PCC Tim Passmore advising of the unanimous decision reached by the panel and endorsed by the Board and requesting payment to comply with the terms of the Section 22 Agreement

7. UPDATE FROM NPCC AVIATION LEAD

CC Simon Byrne (SB) outlined the main issues that he, as aviation lead, would be addressing and stated that the reformed Independent Assurance Group (IAG) was due to meet on 4 March 2016. SB stated that guidelines for using and dealing with the illegal use of drones had been progressed and ACC Steve Barry would be supporting NPAS with the amendments to the S22a Collaboration Agreement to reflect drone/UAV use by the police service. AS raised the size of drones available on the market and the threat of carrying explosives as a potential terrorist threat which was acknowledged by Board members.

8. FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (FRS) USER REQUIREMENT

SB stated there was a need for the Board to consider the user requirements of Fire and Rescue Air Support within the context of the Government's drive for closer working between the emergency services and requested support from the Board to collaborate with the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS).

Dee Collins (DC) stated it was an opportune time given the transfer of the FRS funding to the Home Office and that she would be happy for NPAS to engage in discussions and was keen to support SB's proposals.

PROTECT

Ollie Dismore (OD) stated that there was a proposed amendment before the EU Commission allowing State Operators, such as NPAS, to use the same rules as commercial operators like the air ambulance. Although unlikely to be in place before 2018 this would be a big step forward in harmonising delivery across the blue light services.

Agreed - The Board agreed the recommendations to consider the cost of NPAS implementing and delivering the user requirements and to review the impact of any potential implementation of the user requirements on the current S.22a Collaboration Agreement (to include future governance) to be delivered by June 2016 and reported back to the meeting of the Board.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AS requested sight of the fixed wing flowchart regarding the ability to deliver full de-icing to ensure Airbourne Technologies (ABT) were adhering to the timescales. It was noted that a fixed wing update would be discussed at the Board meeting on 10 March.

PCC Barry Coppinger (BC) informed the Board that he had been contacted by PCC Matthew Grove (Humberside). BC had also received an enquiry from a North Yorkshire MP requesting a review of air support arrangements. BC confirmed he would forward the correspondence to MBW who stated he would be happy to engage with anyone who wished to receive information.

FS stated he had met with the Chief Executives for the OPCC for Humberside and South Yorkshire who agreed to discuss with their PCC and report back.

MBW stated that the next Board meeting would take place on 10 March 2016 and thanked everyone for their attendance at the meeting and support in passing the budget.

**Date and time of next meeting - 10 March 2016 - 1.00pm – 4.00pm
Carr Gate, Bradford Road, Wakefield, WF2 0QD.**