
NORTH EAST REGIONAL DRUGS INTELLIGENCE PROJECT

Joint Report of the Chief Constable and Clerk

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform members of a successful bid for funding available from the Home Office to support the Regional Drugs Intelligence Project.

2 BACKGROUND

Drug misuse is one of the most important challenges facing society as the harm it causes affects everyone. It is destroying families and young lives, fuels crime and undermines neighbourhoods. Many national studies have concluded that illegal drug use is financed by, and associated with, acquisitive and violent crime. Tackling the supply of drugs in a regionally co-ordinated, proactive manner, thereby reducing availability, should provide a major impetus for further crime reduction.

To progress this theory the three regional Police Forces (Durham, Cleveland and Northumbria) and the Drug Prevention Advisory Service held a multi-agency Regional Drug Availability Conference at Hardwick Hall, County Durham on 2 October 2002 at which members were represented. A report was submitted to the Police Authority meeting of 23 October 2002 outlining the issues discussed (Minute no: 136 - 2002/03).

There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the proposal for a regional drugs initiative with the emphasis on developing a regional intelligence capability, in order that multi agency activity can be co-ordinated to ensure every agency is aware of where its actions fit into an overall strategy.

A multi-agency Steering Group has been formed (on which the Force is represented at Assistant Chief Constable level) to oversee the whole initiative. It is supported by three sub-groups which will deal with enforcement, information and intelligence, and treatment/prevention.

Government funding of £205,000 per annum for the years 2003/04 and 2004/05 was secured, via Government Office for the North East, for the North East Regional Drugs Intelligence Project, employing three analysts and a researcher to be located and managed in a Unit at Durham Police Headquarters.

3 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

4 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

The Force has a duty to promote human rights and tackling drug misuse may be said to promote the right to life and the right to respect for private and family life.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- (i) note the contents of this report;
- (ii) agree to receive a further report prior to the cessation of the funding.