
PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL POLICE RESOURCES TO THE QUEEN ELIZABETH AND BENSHAM HOSPITALS, GATESHEAD

Joint Report of the Chief Constable, Clerk and Treasurer

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise members that agreement has been reached between Northumbria Police and Gateshead Health NHS Trust for the provision of a Community Beat Manager at the Queen Elizabeth and Bensham Hospitals, Gateshead.

2 BACKGROUND

At the Police Authority meeting held on 10th December 1996 (minute number 210 - 1996/97) members endorsed a policy giving authority to the Chief Constable to consider requests for additional resources.

The policy states that proposals should only be considered where the following criteria apply:

- The level of crime and disorder in an area is comparable or worse than the local crime rate.
- Where there is a strong concentration of vulnerable people e.g. Hospital, or an educational establishment etc.
- Where there is a particular short term policing problem.

Finally, in the event that one or more of these criteria are met, any agreed arrangement should not disturb the priorities of the Local Policing Plan.

One constable has been based at the Queen Elizabeth and Bensham Hospitals since January 2002, the initial deployment being jointly funded on an equal basis by Gateshead Health NHS Trust and the Community Against Drugs (CAD) Fund.

The funding provided under the auspices of the CAD project ceased on 31st March 2003. Since that time it has been confirmed that the NHS Trust will continue to provide 50% of the project cost.

It is confirmed by management and staff at both hospitals that the presence of the constable within the hospital estates has had a significant impact on the feeling of safety and security enjoyed by those attending the facilities. It is also confirmed that there has been a reduction in the levels of reported crime in the vicinity.

As there is clearly a strong concentration of vulnerable people within the hospital estates the agreed policy in respect of additional resources is applicable.

3 **PROPOSAL**

It is intended to continue to provide one constable to work as a Community Beat Manager at the Queen Elizabeth and Bensham Hospitals, Gateshead. Gateshead NHS Trust will provide funding of £18,500 until 31 March 2004, after which the arrangement will be evaluated. The Chief Constable has used his discretion under the policy to meet 50% of the employee costs.

4 **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

Nil.

5 **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

Although there are no direct human rights implications arising from this report itself, the provision of additional police officers does have human rights implications in that the Force has a duty to promote human rights. The work of this officers may be said to promote the right to life, the right to respect for private and family life and the peaceful enjoyment of property.

6 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Treasurer confirms the balance of the officer's salary can be met from within existing resources.

An exit strategy will be devised prior to the cessation of funding to ensure there continues to be no cost to the Authority.

7 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That members:

- i) Note the contents of the report.
- ii) Agree to receive a further report, should the funding be continued for a further period.