



ASCCO INSIGHT – November & December 2016

Life within ASCCO just seems to get busier and busier

Professional Committee

Professional Committee was held on 2nd, which started with an update from David Lamberti from the Home Office who advised that the Police & Crime Bill should receive Royal Assent in January 2017 and (among other matters) would further encourage Workforce Flexibility through provision of an “enabling framework”. David’s visit coincided with a parliamentary debate on police officer safety that was commented on by several PC members expressing concern. There was some further discussion on the PCC’s role in potentially combining the role with the Fire and Rescue Service.

Main agenda items of interest to the SC were Specials Capabilities, Workforce Futures, development of Roles Profiles including the new Competency and Values Framework.

Specialist Capabilities is a relatively new area of work that will design, amongst other things a surge capacity for times of urgent or on-going surge demand on police services between forces. This could take a regional approach initially but also has a national capacity through NPoCC. I asked that Specials were not forgotten in this and requested a meeting with the team developing this.

The Workforce Futures work-stream is considering many different developments to modernise the police service resource’s. What is important for the SC is that we are integral in this work and to that end we are to be included in the Professional Reference Group being led by CC Giles York and Claire Davis from the Met.

New Role Profiles are being developed for all police related roles including those relevant to the SC and will include the new Competency and Values Framework (replacing the Police Professional Framework).

Alex Marshall/Magistrates Association/ Home Office

On the 8th Ian Miller and I met sequentially with the above – a busy and productive day.

Alex Marshall CEO, College of Policing

This is now a bi monthly meeting on an informal basis but very useful to share information and express concerns etc. directly with the CEO. Issues we raised were the Degree Entry, which, as it is set out, has the real potential to disadvantage Specials due to the Higher Level Apprenticeships excluding volunteers, as the legislation requires a contract of employment. This is not just Specials but all “professional volunteers”. Alex recognised the problems and accepted the College has to resolve this. He also agreed that I should make representation to the Home Office to request they raise the matter with the Dept. of Education, as we believe it is an unintended consequence of the way the legislation is written.

NPCC Membership for senior Specials – this was discussed at the last NPCC Meeting in October and in simple terms they decided against allowing Senior Specials to be given membership. I do not at this point understand the “why”, in this, as senior members of police staff (exec level) are welcomed, and with many forces now being inclusive of senior Special colleagues in Exec Teams, does appear somewhat divisive.

We were able to advise Alex of the developments through CiP of the re write of the SC National Strategy which he welcomed.

Magistrates Association

The purpose of this visit was fact finding to seek information as to how the Assn. is structured and financed as part of the wider project of developing and expanding ASCCO. The MA membership fees are £50 per annum and for that it appears they receive little other than access to training seminars to support their CPD requirements and a regular newsletter. Membership is regionally branch based and is dependent on the work put in by regional reps., which heavily influences the levels of membership. Some echoes of our organisation there I think. They do have a well developed website that is heavily used by members.

Home Office

We met with our contact at the Home Office, Jonny Bugg and discussed several matters including our request for a meeting the Policing Minister, the Ministers current priorities and SC Representation.

Jonny did not know why we had not had a response from the Ministers Private Office on this and promised to chase it up. This following my written request in September and a discussion with him at the Ferrers Awards in the same month.

The Ministers current priorities are: wellbeing (including police dogs and horses), professionalisation of the service and vulnerability; clearly the SC are integral to all three priorities.

SC Representation – we raised concerns that the letter advising us of the outcomes of the consultation held during the summer months could be interpreted in such a way as they (the Home Office) had an intention to reform ASCCO i.e. “do it to us”. We were assured this was not the case and that they wanted all stakeholders to consider what is the right way to provide proper representation for Specials and to work with us to develop this. Another productive meeting.

Police Education and Qualifications Framework

This Board Meeting was held on 10th at the College. We were advised the College Board has agreed the 3 core entry routes to be in place by 2020 these are: Police Degree Entry, Police Conversion Degree and Higher Level Apprenticeships (HLA = Degree Level). This is a real concern as discussed with Alex Marshall 2 days earlier. The Board agreed this is an important issue for the SC and commissioned a Consultation Paper to be produced by College staff for consideration at the next Board meeting in January.

Further discussion took place on a new National Policing Curriculum including the HLA and a similar HLA for PCSO's. There is also a move towards individual development plans, which would be welcomed as a move away from the current “sheep dipping” approach to personal development.

CiP Strategy Board

On the 14th Ian and I attended our first meeting, since we had been granted membership, of this Board. We felt it was appropriate for both to attend to assess who of us is best positioned to attend in future. The main agenda item was a presentation by Iain Brittain from the Institute for Public Safety Crime and Justice on a major Benchmarking survey of all forces regarding Specials and volunteers. This was an early draft and needs further refinement however, it does reveal some really interesting facts especially the differentiation between forces on a significant number of key factors such as wastage rates, hours of duty and gender/bme representation. I will not go into the details here, as the Final Report will be circulated widely in the next couple of months or so.

We were updated on a new CiP bid being prepared to the Police Reform Transformation Fund to potentially include national and regional coordinators roles, further CiP website development and supporting further academic research.

Higher Level Apprenticeships Workshop

This workshop was held at Ryton and was an open invitation to all forces to attend. We received an update on developments including:

- Forces will need to be registered as an Apprenticeship Training Provider in conjunction with an approved HE partner.
- The respective force will still “own the recruited individual”.
- Various flexible delivery models will be agreed nationally which forces can then select from.
- Each recruit will need to achieve a “Statement of Operational Competence” from the force (independently assessed) before going on to be confirmed with their degree, although the actual timing and content of this has yet to be defined.
- Wales HLA’s are currently structured differently and will require a different model that is under development.
- How the funding model is being developed through a digital platform.

A really useful workshop.

Superintendents Association

On the 21st Ian and I met with the President and Vice President of the PSAEW in London to discuss several matters including representative organisations modelling, organising conferences and how they might support us as we develop. A really useful meeting that will develop into a supportive relationship.

Home Office/Cyber Crime

Later that day Ian and I attended a meeting with Tom Hays and the Cyber Crime Lead in the Home Office. This was really useful as we were updated on the developments Tom is leading on and discussed various ways ASCCO could support the ongoing work.

National Crime Agency

On 23rd I attended the NCA in Vauxhall with Duty Sheet representatives for them to provide a demonstration of the system. I have no personal interest in Duty Sheet however; they do provide support to ASCCO through sponsorship.

My main purpose in visiting the NCA was to discuss further developments they are considering and to this end met with senior members of staff in our role as critical friend and will take this to the CiP Strategy Board.

ASCCO Council Meeting

We held this meeting on 26th kindly hosted by Leicestershire at their HQ. There was a good level of attendance from either Council Members or their Deputies. Also in attendance was Rob Beckley one of our Vice Presidents.

I had changed the agenda for this meeting (removing some of the routine matters) to allow time for discussion on key topics i.e. Website, Conference, Representation and Membership. There was also a detailed update on Cybercrime.

David Pedrick-Friend updated progress on Membership scoping several initiatives he has commenced in the last 2 months aimed at promoting and recruiting more members from within those included in the constitution.

Rob Beckley led a detailed discussion on the outcomes of the Home Office consultation on SC Representation as he has been liaising with key Home Office staff on our behalf on this topic. Rob had prepared a draft new set of organisational Aims that he suggested an enlarged, inclusive organisation, would need to present to the HO. These were agreed in general with some extension/expansion required to cover proposals for including PSV's in a representative body.

In Dales absence Tom Hayes updated us on progress with the Website quotations that have now been shortlisted to 3 from the original 11 bids. Following some technical discussion Tom agreed to discuss further with the preferred bidders to explore details (to technical for most of us!!) and provide Council Members with a written update/recommendation.

ASCCO Conference 2017 – further to our earlier agreement to try to hold a first ASCCO Conference in the spring of next year I was pleased to confirm Capita had agreed to both host the event at the Fire Service College, Moreton in the Marsh, Gloucs. and to sponsor the event to an agreed upper limit. Further sponsorship has been agreed, in principle, with Duty Sheet and Police Mutual. That being the case we agreed to schedule the conference for the spring of next year – date depending on availability of the venue. We then discussed a possible theme and initially agreed a fairly wide subject area – “The changing role of the Special Constabulary”.

Tom Haye gave us an update on Cyber Crime developments that he is involved with in the Home Office and NPCC, the potential for SC further development and involvement; we then discussed the possibility of a bid to the Police Reform Transformation Fund for funding in support of SC's & PSV's in Cyber.

December

Police Professional Development Board

A long agenda and several points of interest to the Special Constabulary.

The Police Annual Data Return (ADR) includes some requirement for SC data, which we are seeking, through CiP, to extend with a view to making the VFM/ROI of the SC more visible. The Home Office have now agreed to consider our request and will provide an update from the ADR Board at the next meeting.

On another point I have felt it important to make forces fully aware of the changes in the pipeline concerning Specials on topics such as the Assessing and Recognising Competence (ARC) and PDR's. We considered a Draft Statement and agreed that with certain amendments this should be sent to all forces early in 2017.

Further discussion took place on the development and professionalisation of the SC and I took an action to explore how other organisations with "professional volunteers" provide, assess and recognise their CPD.

Westminster Briefing Conference

On the 7th I was invited to speak at a conference in London entitled '**Police Staff and Volunteers: Best Practice and Future Reform**' with my given topics being "Expanding the role of volunteers in policing" and "Potential tensions arising and maintaining a positive working environment".

In brief, I argued the case for a more flexible approach to the police workforce encompassing volunteers as part of a robust workforce plan encompassed in a proper business plan that does not start with a budget but with the "customer" in mind and the need to provide a service level not set by the force but as required by those in receipt of the service. Further, that this principle need should be understood and "bought into" by all elements of the workforce and from this understanding and commitment tensions sometimes created by the use of volunteers are far less likely to arise.

Update from Ian Miller

It's been a busy couple of months. In terms of meetings, I attended the following:

2nd November - NCA Staff Association Chairman and Deputy Chairman, in London and with Nigel.

ASCCO Exec Committee conference call to update Exec Committee members

7th November - Met with Scott Bateman, SCCO of Wiltshire, to discuss national developments and Scott committed to join ASCCO

8th November - Alex Marshall, CEO of the College of Policing, with Nigel. Then met with Magistrates' Association to understand how it manages membership and to hear about the value proposition for members.

10th November - Attended the International Conference on Policing, at the invitation of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research; met the ACC of Police Scotland responsible for the Special Constabulary and the Chairman of the Police Scotland Police Committee.

14th November - Participated in the Citizens in Policing Strategy Board meeting in York, with Nigel, and presented plan to develop the new National Strategy for the Special Constabulary.

15th November - College of Policing Local Policing Team management conference call.

17th November - Spoke at Fraud Advisory Panel debate in Edinburgh, on whether Police Scotland is doing enough to counter fraud. Raised the point that Specials can contribute significantly to fraud investigation but Scotland is not embracing specialist roles in the SC.

18th November - conference call with ACC Debicki of North Wales, and NPCC lead for the Special Constabulary. Agreed plan for the National Strategy Project and the way forward for the representation issue.

21st November - met with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Superintendents' Association, with Nigel, to discuss cooperation and to get advice on managing government relations.

26th November - ASCCO Council meeting in Leicester.

28th November - SC Workshop at Ryton, presented on the plan for the National Strategy and debated the representation issue.

5th December - in Dallas, met with Dallas Police Department senior managers to discuss various topics and transfer of information.

8th December - follow up meeting with Commander of Dallas PD Reserve Battalion, on

Duty Sheet and other areas of common interest.

11th December - conference call with Deputy Chief of Orange County, Florida's Sheriff's Office to exchange information and to discuss proposed multi-force exchange visit.

14th December - Ryton for the College of Policing Local Policing Management Team meeting. Presented on SC issues and updated team on discussion with ACC Debicki on representation issues.

15th December - met with College of Policing manager for the outplacement programme for senior police leaders, and introduced him to two business people. Discussed how ASCCO can help with placements.

20th December - conference call with Home Office on several areas where ASCCO is supporting strategic initiatives.

In addition to these meetings, the following work was completed or initiated during the period:

- Developed the plan to develop a new National Strategy for the Special Constabulary, and consultation on that plan with ASCCO Council members, the NPCC Lead on Citizens in Policing, the Home Office, College of Policing and the NPCC Lead on the SC. Secured agreement to the plan without amendment.
- Advised the NPCC Lead's Project Manager on the economic value calculation for the Special Constabulary and corrected an erroneous calculation that was being used in national papers.
- Updated the Business Case for ASCCO to represent all of the Special Constabulary.
- Wrote paper on the process used by Police Scotland in merging forces and the relative effectiveness of that process; subsequently passed copies to CEO of College of Policing and the Senior Management of the Home Office.
- Supported the PhD project on the Special Constabulary that's being managed by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research.

That's all for now other than to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy 2017.

Nigel Green MBE

Chair ASCCO