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**Originator:**  
Rod Hansen, Chief Constable

**Decision number:** D29-2017

**Submitted to:** Martin Surl, Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire

**Subject:** Gloucestershire Constabulary Mounted Policing Unit

**Executive summary:**

In March 2016 the Constabulary launched a mounted capability trial for a 12 month period. In February 2017 a business case was submitted to the Constabulary's Monthly Executive Board (MEB), however, the value for money the horses could bring in service delivery to the people of Gloucestershire was not covered fully in the business case, so the trial was extended for a further 6 – 9 months in order to rework the business case and demonstrate cost, value, output and outcomes.

On 8 August 2017, a business case was presented to MEB in the form of a priority based budgeting workbook and presentation. The decision was made at MEB that the Constabulary wished to establish a permanent Mounted Unit. The preferred option was that of maintaining four horses, three riders and a trainer with the necessary stabling and ancillary supplies and services.

It is estimated that the additional cost of such a unit would be £144,438 per annum.

**Recommendation:**

To approve the Constabulary's preferred option that it should establish a permanent Mounted Unit.

**Outcome/approval by:**

Signature:

Date: 22 Aug 2017

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<p><b>Public access to information</b></p> <p><i>Information in this form and associated reports is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011. Where it has been indicated that this is a decision of significant public interest, all of this form except Part Two will be made available on the website of the OPCC.</i></p> <p><i>Any information that should not be automatically available on request should not be included in Part One but instead on a separate Part Two form.</i></p>	
<p><b>Is this a decision of significant public interest?</b></p> <p><i>This includes a decision with any impact on the community, expenditure in excess of £50,000, or any decision that would be of obvious interest to the media or the general public</i></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Is there a Part Two form?</b>  <i>This section should only include information that, if published:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) would, in the view of the chief officer of the police, be against the interests of national security;</i></li> <li><i>b) might, in the view of the chief officer of police, jeopardise the safety of any person;</i></li> <li><i>c) might, in the view of the chief officer of police, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime, the apprehension or prosecution of offenders, or the administration of justice; or</i></li> <li><i>d) is prohibited by any enactment.</i></li> <li><i>e) breaches commercial sensitivity</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>No</b></p>

<b>Originator checklist (must be completed)</b>	<b>Comments including who has approved the report if applicable</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission if required?	N/A
Has the Chief Finance Officer been consulted, if required?	<b>Yes</b>
Have equality, diversity and human rights	<b>Yes</b>

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implications been considered, as appropriate?	
How is the recommendation consistent with the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan?	<b>Yes – please refer to Appendix 1 - extract from PBB workbook</b>
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	<b>Yes</b>
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media, community, staff or partner interest and how they might be managed?	<b>Yes</b>
Have all relevant implications and risks been considered?	<b>Yes</b>

**Part One – For publication**

**1. Purpose of the report**

The purpose of this report is to consider whether the Constabulary should establish a permanent Mounted Unit as part its neighbourhood policing offer.

**2. Background**

On 24 March 2016, with the support of the OPCC, and in order to directly contribute to the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan, Gloucestershire Constabulary launched a 12 twelve month mounted capability trial. The aim of the trial was to deliver a small mounted capability in Gloucestershire that would enable it to improve public confidence and enhance the Constabulary’s operational capabilities and capacity. The setting up of the trial involved the creation of a specialist team, which consisted of two police constables (1.75 fe), drawn from current police establishment and an Equine Manager currently seconded from Greater Manchester Police, four horses, two on loan from the Metropolitan Police and two horses procured and owned by Gloucestershire Constabulary. The horses were (and still are) stabled locally with Highnam Court Equine who provide livery services. The project is managed by a project manager and supported by project officer resource.

On 24 Feb 2017, a business case, containing an evaluation of the mounted trial was presented to MEB. Consultation took place with a number of key stakeholders before presentation to that board, including, The Police Federation, Unison and The Superintendents' Association.

Feedback on the business case was that, more needed to be demonstrated in relation to the Unit's support of the neighbourhood policing offer and how it demonstrated the value for money the horses could bring in service delivery to the people of Gloucestershire.

Due to the time taken to establish the trial (locating stabling, acquiring horses, recruiting and training staff), the decision was made at that time to extend the trial for a further 6-9 months. The unit did not grow in size but the way in which the Constabulary deployed the horses was reviewed. The team worked closely with

Mounted Unit

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Chief Superintendent Jo Smallwood to establish what the Mounted Unit could and should contribute to the neighbourhood policing approach going forward. The Mounted Unit continued to deploy via the daily force tasking process to ceremonial duties, community and operational events and in support of the night time economy, but their focus was on neighbourhood policing delivery. The aim was for them to become embedded in communities, to build relationships with local people and work with them to address concerns, therefore preventing future demand from entering the organisation.

Additionally, consideration was given to the findings of previous research by the University of Oxford and RAND Corporation that demonstrated that in neighbourhood settings, mounted police patrols are associated with higher levels of visibility, trust and confidence in the police; and that the mounted police were observed to generate over six times as many instances of casual public engagements – such as greetings and brief exchanges – than officers on foot over equivalent time periods in neighbourhood patrols. This independent national research, along with the results of local surveys and the priority based budgeting workbook were fed into the paper that went to MEB via the project board on 8 August 2017.

A fundamental point raised by the chair of the project board during the discussion at MEB and worthy of noting in this paper is that feedback from potential sponsors indicated their willingness to support the capability going forward but also their reluctance due to its current temporary status. Whilst some sponsorship has been secured, there was general optimism that more could be obtained should the capability be placed on a permanent footing.

It is proposed that the unit will consist of a part-time sergeant (non-riding), 3 police constables, an equine manager, a groom and 4 horses (this may vary according to the health of the horses, their retirements and opportunities to source a suitable and affordable replacement which can be difficult, so it may entail the complement falling below four horses at times or indeed going over the established four in order to keep a suitable number of horses 'patrol ready').

Based on the cost, outputs, outcome and value presented in the papers to MEB on 8 August 2017, the recommendation was made that Gloucestershire Constabulary should retain the mounted capability on a permanent basis, as set out in this paper.

### **3. Recommendation**

That the PCC's Governance Board support the establishment of the Gloucestershire Constabulary Mounted Policing Unit on the basis set out in this paper.

### **4. Financial and resource implications**

MEB decided that the Improved 1 option from the priority based budgeting workbook was the most appropriate for the unit going forward. The total annual cost of such a unit is estimated to be £282,966. With the potential for income generation from the growing interest in Equine Assisted Therapy and from sponsorship, the aim is that in time the unit could be maintained on a close to 'cost-neutral' basis.

A permanent Mounted Unit does therefore represent annual budget growth of £144,438, recognising that the police officers will be and have been recruited from existing resources. The anticipated costs can be broken down as follows:

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OFFICER COSTS	£138,528
STAFF COSTS	£52,067
Non-staff cost	£79,633
Vehicle cost	£12,738
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>£282,966</b>

Please see Appendix 2 for baseline costs. Please note that the distribution of effort (and therefore the allocation of costs) could be changed according to organisational and operational demands.

### **5. Risk assessment**

There are no identified significant risks associated with this recommendation.

### **6. Equality & Diversity impact assessment**

All equality decisions have been considered in relation to the implementation of a permanent Mounted Unit, specifically in relation to the recruitment of officers and staff. All recruitment processes have been and will continue to be managed in line with HR policy and procedures and appropriate employment legislation.

### **7. Environmental impact assessment**

No significant issues have been identified. Whilst some members of the public have raised concern about horse droppings, with an explanation by unit members reassuring them that the droppings are not hazardous compared to say those of meat eating animals (cats and dogs), the risk is considered low.

### **8. Consultation**

Consultation has taken place with, Unison, Federation, Supt Association, Monthly Executive Board (COG), Legal, OPCC representatives, Communications and Engagement, Continuous Improvement Team, police staff and officers through two staff surveys and with the public via the local policing survey.

### **9. Discussed with Communications & Engagement**

Yes. A full communications plan will be prepared supporting the activities of the unit going forward.

### **10. Conclusion**

On ratification by the OPCC of the recommendation made at MEB on 8 August 2017, the plan to make the Mounted Unit permanent will be implemented.

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**Originator approval**

**Name: Rod Hansen**

**Job title: Chief Constable**

**Signature: Rod Hansen**

**Date: 15 August 2017**

**Chief Executive approval**

I am satisfied that relevant advice has been taken into account in the preparation of the report and that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the PCC.

**Signature:**



**Date: 16 August 2017**