

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR  
WEST MERCIA**



**RECORD OF DECISION**

**TITLE: Mobile Phones for Special Constables**

Ref: PCC/D/2019/19

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Currently all Police Officers and Senior Special Constables have mobile phones. This has led to an increase in capacity, visibility, speed and efficiency. This proposal recommends expanding this to include active Special Constables.

**PROPOSAL**

That all operation Special Constables who meet the criteria set by the Force should be issued a mobile phone.

That additional funding of £46,400 within 2019/20 is approved to purchase the handsets with the cost being financed from reserves.

Rental costs of £5,760 per annum are approved for 3 years with the cost being met from underspends in 2019/20 (or reserves if underspends do not occur) and budget savings in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

**APPROVAL OF  
West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner**

I hereby approve the above proposal.

Signed

## **PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL/EXEMPT FACTS AND FIGURES**

### **SUPPORTING REPORT**

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1. Since the introduction of mobile technology, all officers have been issued mobile phones, together with senior members of the Special Constabulary. Special Constables have not yet received mobile phones.
- 1.2. The operational benefit gained would be akin to that of a regular officer.
- 1.3. Special Constables work as regular officers - they wear the same uniform, have the same warranted powers, and are expected to attend the same incidents as regular officers.

#### **2. Benefits**

- 2.1. The benefits of mobile telephony is already well appreciated
- 2.2. Provision would give Special Constables access to Citrix applications both on and off duty, enabling access to emails, and to pre-brief prior to the start of a shift.
- 2.3. It would enable access to the volunteer management system "Duty Sheet". This has been designed to work with smart phones, and has a push messaging facility enabling a more efficient, free, method of communication with Special Constables. Provision will negate the current requirement for Specials Constables to link their personal phone to the system.
- 2.4. Special Constables will have greater access to police systems while on mobile patrol, greater ability to update victims, satellite navigation, access to messaging platforms, a camera for the taking of evidential photographs, the ability to share photographs/video footage, and greater access to social media for evidence gathering purposes, to name but a few.
- 2.5. The proposal will improve morale: issuing mobile phones will demonstrate a commitment from West Mercia Police, and the PCC, to the Special Constabulary.
- 2.6. Issuing a mobile phone will likely negate any future requirement to consider issuing more expensive laptops to the Special Constabulary.

#### **3. Proposal**

- 3.1. All operation Special Constables who are out of their probationary period / able to patrol independently and working their minimum hours (16 hours per month), should be issued a mobile phone.

3.2. The allocation of these phones will be robustly monitored so that should a Special Constable reduce hours to a lower level it is initially monitored, and if continued the phone would be recalled and reissued.

3.3. The current 56 Special Constables meeting the criteria should be issued mobile phones with immediate effect. The (current) additional 72 Special Constables who are in their probationary period should be issued phones at the point they can operate independently.

### **FINANCIAL COMMENTS**

There is no specific budget to meet these costs. The additional funding requirement of £46,400 within 2019/20 to purchase the handsets can be financed from borrowing. The rental cost of £5,760 per annum for 3 years can be met from underspends in 2019/20 (or reserves if underspends do not occur) and budget savings in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

By virtue of schedule 11, paragraph 14 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Police and Crime Commissioner may do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of commissioner. That includes: entering into contracts and other agreements (whether legally binding or not) and acquiring and disposing of property (including land).

### **PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner's website. Any facts and advice that should not be made automatically available on request are not included in Part 1 but instead in the separate Part 2 report.

### **OFFICER APPROVAL**

**Chief Executive Officer**

Signature ... *Andy Chapman* ..... Date ... 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019

