



St Georges Police Trust

2009 Business Plan

St Georges Police Trust Objective:

“To support children where one of the parents who is, or is now retired from being, a serving police officer has died or has been medically discharged and is so incapacitated that they are unable to earn remuneration through employment.

AND

Where the above applies, to support children who have “Special Needs” throughout adulthood.

Overview

The St Georges Police Trust (SGPT) was formed in 2006 by the merging of the St Georges Fund and the Northern Police Orphans Trust this merger consolidated the similar aims of each charity and harmonised benefits across potential beneficiaries in the charity's constituent forces in England, Scotland and Wales. The new charity's mission statement is:

"To support children where one of the parents who is, or is now retired from being, a serving police officer has died or has been medically discharged and is so incapacitated that they are unable to earn remuneration through employment.

AND

Where the above applies, to support children who have "Special Needs" throughout adulthood".

Trustees meet quarterly to consider applications for the support of children, or young persons, where;

- a. a parent who is, or is now retired from being, a serving police officer has died;
- b. a parent who is, or is now retired from being, a serving police officer is so incapacitated that they cannot earn remuneration from employment;
- c. a child whose parent is, or is now retired from being, a serving police officer has 'special needs' either during childhood and/or continuing into adulthood.

Note:

To be eligible for the charity's benefits the parent who is, or is now retired from being, a serving police officer must have contributed the weekly donation to the charity whilst a serving officer. In unique and significant circumstances the Trustees may exercise discretion in respect of this requirement e.g. in the case of murder of a police officer.

Financial & Administration context

The SGPT has previously enjoyed a healthy financial position due to the original charitable endowment being wisely invested over preceding years. Since September 2008 the value of those investments, and therefore investment income deriving therefrom, has significantly reduced due to the prevailing worldwide economic situation.

A long term financial forecast that takes into account the charity's objectives, which may mean supporting some present young beneficiaries through Higher Education, or, in the case of Special Needs children for the whole of their lives (the charity's longest living beneficiary was born in 1947), was undertaken during 2008 and forecasts that around £4.5 million requires to be kept in reserve to discharge commitment to current beneficiaries.

Benefits consist of maintenance grants to the children and, if the child continues into Higher Education, educational grants to support the achievement qualifications up to a first degree. If approved those benefits are disbursed on a quarterly basis. Annual Reviews of the financial status of beneficiaries, and where appropriate incapacitated parents, are conducted to ensure that benefits are targeted toward those most in need.

In the case of Higher Education Grants applicants are asked prior to Term commencement in September to complete a 'continuation' form each year validated and endorsed by the Course or Learning provider attended (usually a University or College). This identifies individuals who are eligible as beneficiaries because of their continuing engagement in Higher Education and grants are then disbursed three times a year to coincide with the commencement of Terms.

The charity currently operates with two part-time posts of a Secretary and Administrator both of whom also occupy posts at The Police Treatment Centres (PTC). Additional support to the charity is provided by appropriate professional staff from the PTC e.g. Finance and PR. Office accommodation for the charity is also provided by the PTC at St Andrews, Harrogate, North Yorkshire. A management charge is levied in relation to these posts, accommodation and support by the PTC.

The operation and administration of the charity is largely paper based with applications for the charity's benefits processed via force arrangements and then forwarded to the charity for consideration. The Secretary and Administrator meet frequently to review applications and prepare reports for Trustees upon which they make decisions at their quarterly meetings.

Although the SGPT was formed in 2006 by the merging of the St Georges Fund and the Northern Police Orphans Trust that process of merger did not then proceed to review the underpinning financial and administrative systems; processes and procedures by which the newly merged charity would operate.

It is some years since the system and process of operation of The St Georges Police Trust, (and its precursor charities), was reviewed albeit the scale of benefits has been reviewed on a tri-annual or bi-annual frequency.

There is a need to ensure probity and integrity in the process of application for benefits and their distribution. It is also timely to review the scale of benefits to ensure that the charity targets benefits toward those most in need. The charity's financial systems and controls will be reviewed during 2009 and an annual budget process and forecast will be developed as a result of that work.

Consequently the 2009 Business Plan objectives set out a process to undertake and complete a thorough review of:

Objectives

1. Review Income and expenditure issues and produce a Medium Term Financial Strategy and Risk Management Strategy.
2. Review the eligibility, scale and scope of benefits distributed to ensure that the charity's benefits are directed appropriately and proportionately to those potential beneficiaries most in need and suffering from hardship.
3. Review the administration of the application process:
 - 3.1. To ensure, without unnecessary bureaucracy, that there is probity and integrity in the collection and consideration of information, and validation, of potential beneficiaries.
 - 3.2. To ensure that potential 'duplication' in payment of allowances is identified and prevented e.g. Police Dependents Trust grants.
 - 3.3. To ensure that optimum efficiency and effectiveness is achieved.
4. Implement approved outcomes of the review to ensure that new arrangements are in place not later than the start of the new academic year (September 2009).
5. Develop and implement a 'standardised promotional package' for use by appropriate 'force champions' to assist in the recruitment and retention of donors.

Performance management & monitoring framework

The objectives and activity in the 2009 Annual Business Plan contribute towards the achievement of the charity's strategic aim and mission. The focus of performance management and monitoring during the year will be to ensure that activity and progress towards achieving objectives is sustained, that obstacles and difficulties are considered and resolved, that where full achievement of an objective or activity may not be possible options are reviewed and considered, or the objective is achieved.

The performance management & monitoring framework of the PTC is a significant benefit in organising and scheduling systems and processes to suit the availability and flow of financial and other management information. Time can be properly allocated and scheduled to consider monthly data and preparing for discussion and review. Issues can be dealt with effectively, activity & decisions are less fragmented, and matters can be appropriately considered within a structured management framework.

Consequently the PTC management and governance framework will be employed during 2009 and will conclude with a report on the Annual Business Plan to the first Trustees Meeting of the following year.

NOTE: The performance management & monitoring framework is shown in table form in the PTC 2009 Business Plan at pages 9 &10.