

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2015 AT 2.00 PM AT COUNTY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

Chairman - Christine Goldstraw OBE – Independent Member
Vice-Chairman Councillor Debbie Mason – Rushcliffe Borough Council

Executive Mayor Kate Allsopp – Mansfield District Council
Rizwan Araf – Independent Member - **A**
Councillor Andrew Brown – Nottinghamshire County Council - **A**
Councillor Cheryl Butler – Ashfield District Council - **A**
Councillor Eunice Campbell – Nottingham City Council
Councillor David Challinor – Bassetlaw District Council
Councillor David Ellis – Gedling Borough Council
Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle – Nottinghamshire County Council - **A**
Councillor John Handley – Nottinghamshire County Council
Suma Harding – Independent Member - **A**
Councillor Tony Harper – Broxtowe Borough Council
Councillor Nicola Heaton – Nottingham City Council - **A**
Councillor Neghat Khan – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Keith Longdon – Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Tony Roberts – Newark and Sherwood District Council - **A**
Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member
Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

Keith Ford – Team Manager, Democratic Services) Nottinghamshire
Pete Barker – Democratic Services Officer) County Council
(Host Authority)

OTHERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping – Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Chris Cutland – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)
Kevin Dennis – Chief Executive, Office of PCC (OPCC)
Chris Eyre – Chief Constable, Nottinghamshire Police
Andy Goodall – Temporary Chief Inspector, Nottinghamshire Police
Charlotte Radford – Chief Finance Officer (OPCC)

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2015, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record and were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Rizwan Araf, Councillor Andrew Brown, Councillor Cheryl Butler, Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle, Suma Harding, Councillor Nicola Heaton and Councillor Tony Roberts.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Ellis declared a private and non-pecuniary interest as his daughter now works for the Nottinghamshire Police Force. This did not preclude him from speaking or voting on any of the agenda items.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Keith Ford introduced the report and informed Panel Members that the Work Programme had been updated following both the last panel meeting and the pre agenda meeting and also in discussion with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Kevin Dennis.

Keith informed the Panel that there would be a presentation at the December meeting on the strategic alliance and that the presentation from the Community Rehabilitation Company had been put on hold for the time being.

RESOLVED 2015/32

That the work programme be noted and updated in line with Members' suggestions as appropriate.

5. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

The Commissioner introduced the report and confirmed that overall total crime was higher this year than last. However, he felt that this was true of most areas nationwide and the view was that this increase had been caused by the changes in recording practices as discussed at previous meetings of the Panel. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the budget had been a major preoccupation this financial year but that it was likely that not all of the savings targets were going to be met. The Commissioner had been heavily involved with discussions with the Home Office concerning changes to the funding formula and an announcement was expected mid-December. The indications were that the Notts. Force would be one of the gainers under the new system. The Commissioner had also spoken to the Home Secretary regarding the precept level and there appeared to be some flexibility available where the level could be increased without the need for a referendum.

The Commissioner was confident that the strategic alliance would allow savings to be realised and felt that if all Forces could operate the same systems then money could be saved. In terms of the proposed devolution deal for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, the

Commissioner told the Panel that the details were unclear at present. The Commissioner also informed the Panel that the publication of the IPCC's report on the unauthorised discharge of a firearm on 30th October 2014 was imminent and that the accusations of a 'cover up' had been dismissed. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that all systems had been reviewed before the IPCC had become involved and that the report would be concerned with issues of professional capability rather than misconduct.

During discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Panel asked if a 10% increase to the precept would mean an increase of £1 per week in the Council tax for all of Nottinghamshire households or would the charge vary. The Commissioner replied that because the majority of households in Nottinghamshire fall into either Band A or B the majority of residents would actually pay less than £1 per week extra in those circumstances.
- The Panel welcomed the reduction in the numbers killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents and asked whether the introduction of 20mph speed limits had played a part. The Commissioner stated that the responsibility for road safety was a shared one with the City and County highway authorities and that it was possible this lower limit had had an effect.
- The Panel asked whether the figures for hate crime included the incident in Bulwell Cemetery in June and asked how the incident had been recorded. The Commissioner stated that although initially the incident was treated as a hate crime, community leaders had come to the conclusion that it was a case of mindless vandalism. The Chief Constable was aware that the incident resonated throughout the community and confirmed that each damaged grave was recorded individually.
- The Panel welcomed the inclusion of the case study of shop theft but noted that the problem persisted and asked the Commissioner what more the Force could be doing in this area. The Commissioner replied that Sue Fish, the Deputy Chief Constable, was a national lead in this area and also that Inspector Richard Stones was recognised nationally as an expert on business crime and that discussions were planned with the Home Secretary. In Nottinghamshire a member of staff from the Co-Op had been seconded to talk about these issues and the Commissioner felt that a joint approach was needed at a time when workforces were being reduced, unfortunately the non-confrontation policy of some retailers continued to be a problem.
- The Panel raised the issue of repeat victims/offences regarding domestic violence and asked the Commissioner for his concerns. The Deputy Commissioner answered that it was assumed that if the recording of repeat victims/offences was prioritised it would help the Force tackle the problem. Legislation had changed which had affected what was recorded. Also, there had been an increase in the trust and confidence victims felt towards the Police and this had increased the level of reporting. The Commissioner added that there were actually some crimes, for example, hate crimes, domestic violence and sexual assault, where he would like to see an increase in reporting.
- There was a discussion about which crimes the Force would now come out to and the example of shed break-ins was given. Also it was stated that there had been

an increase in the number of bike thefts at a time when people were being encouraged to use their bikes to get into the City. The Commissioner was asked what was being done to tackle this particular problem. He replied that he regularly met representatives from the cycling pressure group 'PEDALS' and that the Crime Prevention Unit also met them and others to see what could be done. One initiative had been the bike marking scheme. There was always a lot of security advice in the PEDALS magazine but the Commissioner questioned how much, with limited resources, the Force could invest in preventative measures and/or post-crime investigations.

- The Panel questioned the Commissioner about the high level of rural crime and the poor response rates and asked for his reassurance that the issue was being taken seriously. The Panel expressed its pleasure at the revised definition of rural crime, it was certainly wider than just farmers having their tractors stolen. The Panel wanted to know what work was being undertaken to bring the levels of rural crime down. The Commissioner replied that he had had repeated discussions regarding this issue. Units had been established in Ollerton and West Bridgford to work on the problems; the use of automatic number plate recognition was due to be expanded in the North of the County; response times did need to be looked at but the response vehicles had been reorganised at Riverside in Rushcliffe and now the nearest vehicle attends any incident; a rural crime website is being set up; the texting scheme will now go ahead; a leaflet is in draft form and will be widely advertised when available. The Commissioner confirmed he had written to all Parish Councils about rural crime and he hoped he had reassured the Panel that he was taking the matter seriously.
- In response to questions regarding the lack of information on staff from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background and also a lack of information regarding sickness levels, the Commissioner replied that the population in Nottinghamshire from a BME background was 11% and that the percentage from the BME community employed in the Force was 4%. The Commissioner informed the Panel that in a recent speech by the Home Secretary, the Nottinghamshire Force was spoken of positively in this respect. In terms of sickness levels they had improved markedly but at the moment teething problems with the new computer system meant it was extremely difficult obtaining accurate information at present.
- The Panel was concerned at the decrease in the detection rate for victim-based crime and asked what could be done to address the problem. The Deputy Commissioner replied that in the area of domestic violence, for example, victims often do not support any prosecution for a variety of reasons, they may want to stay in a relationship or there are children involved. In such cases the best outcome would be to have a victimless prosecution.
- The subject of overtime was raised by the Panel who were concerned at the high levels being paid and asked why there was still 4,000 hours of overtime waiting to be authorised. Also, the Panel asked whether it would be cheaper to employ staff on short term contracts rather than employ large numbers of agency staff as at present. The Commissioner replied that the amount of overtime had decreased dramatically in the last few years and that much of the overtime was as a result of responding to other Forces' requirements for which those Forces would pay, therefore, this was not a cost to the Nottinghamshire Force and there was the possibility that a profit would be made from such activities. The Commissioner told

the Panel that there would always be a need for some overtime to be worked in order to cope with unforeseen incidents.

RESOLVED 2015/033

That the Panel note the contents of the update report.

6. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN (2015/18) – 6 MONTH MONITORING REPORT

The Commissioner introduced the report and during discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Panel queried why the 'RAG' status for the BME policing experience was shown as green when, as a work in progress, should the status not be shown as amber? Kevin Dennis referred members to the status definitions contained in the report and explained that green denoted adequate progress was being made whereas amber meant that a target was at risk or was not going to be achieved. In this context therefore he felt that the designated use of the green status was appropriate.
- The Panel pointed out some inconsistencies in the figures contained in the report and the Commissioner replied that some of the measures were value judgements but that it was important to continue to use the same system so that comparisons could be made over time.
- The Panel asked about the work being undertaken to address Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and asked whether performance was improving in this area. The Deputy Commissioner replied that there was a joint City/County Board working on policy and that there was new legislation coming. It was an under-reported crime but the Force was providing advice to victims. The Commissioner added that there were two relevant articles in the latest edition of his newsletter, 'The Beat', and agreed that more work was needed in this area.
- The subject of cyber crime was brought up and the Commissioner was asked what could be done in this area, especially to help vulnerable people. The Commissioner again referred Panel members to a relevant article in 'The Beat', this time on the Youth Commission who had been asked to look into the matter. He felt that the problem was that people would tweet something that they would never say in person and the police were virtually powerless to do anything about it. Panel members confirmed that they did read 'The Beat' but pointed out that the 'Horizon Scanning' section on the website had not been updated recently. Kevin Dennis explained that the staff member responsible for producing this section had left but that their replacement would be in post soon and the section would be updated.

RESOLVED 2015/034

That the Panel note the contents of the monitoring report.

7. UPDATE ON STRATEGIC THEME 1 – PROTECT, SUPPORT AND RESPOND TO VICTIMS, WITNESSES AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

The Deputy Commissioner introduced the report and informed the Panel that the contract to provide a specially designed service for victims of crime had been awarded to Victim Support and the work was now underway. Baker Tilly had been commissioned to examine the work in this area and they were due to deliver their findings on 16th November. In respect of services for Domestic Services, contracts had been awarded for the north and south of the county until 2018. The situation with Sexual Violence services in the County was not as clear as the Care Commissioning Groups had the responsibility for commissioning services in this area. As far as the City was concerned the process of going out to tender for Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence services had begun and it was anticipated that these services would be in place in the new financial year.

The Deputy Commissioner then spoke about the Victims Code of Practice which had recently been dip tested to determine whether the various agencies were delivering on the Code. The conclusion was that they were delivering effectively though forthcoming legislation may well alter the demands on those agencies. The Code had helped to categorise crime and as a result serious crimes now received a quicker response. Temporary Chief Inspector (TCI) Andy Goodall then provided the Panel with some more information regarding the Victims Code:

- TCI Goodall explained that the Code focussed on what the victims were entitled to. The victim was now assessed at the point of the first physical contact and a victim statement was taken to determine whether they should be treated on a priority basis. Some amendments were due at the end of the month, for example victims would be able to have their case reviewed if the decision has been taken not to prosecute. Other major changes due included the expansion of the definition of a victim. This was still to be finalised but would now include someone involved in a road traffic accident for example. The other major change due was the written acknowledgment that someone had been a victim which would include details of the crime and the officer involved. A recent review of the Code concluded that its introduction had been positive as gains had been made though it was clear what needs to be changed.
- The Panel supported the review and asked if the Code extended to where charges were for less serious offences, for example, threatening behaviour, disorderly conduct, and non-physical domestic abuse where the potential exists for the seriousness of the offences to escalate. Andy confirmed that a wider range of crimes were now being recorded compared to the past.
- The Panel noted that a victim's details were registered at the point of first physical contact but queried whether in the future, when there were likely to be fewer officers, other channels of communication would be available. Andy replied that in instances where incidents could be dealt with over the phone, an assessment would still take place and the results of that assessment would govern the Force's response.
- The Commissioner stated that in an era where budgets continued to be reduced it was not possible to visit 100% of crime scenes as in the past. Also, as the nature of crimes changed officers had told the Commissioner that greater priority should

be given to the areas of e-mail/Facebook/Twitter. The Commissioner would need to have a conversation with the Panel about which areas the Force would need to focus on in the future.

RESOLVED 2015/035

That the Panel note the report.

The meeting closed at 3.25pm

CHAIRMAN

Mins 2 November 2015