

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY 2016 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 Allsop – Mansfield District Council - **A**
Rizwan Araf – Independent Member
Deputy Mayor Mick Barton – Mansfield District Council
Councillor Andrew Brown – Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Cheryl Butler – Ashfield District Council
Councillor Eunice Campbell – Nottingham City Council
Councillor David Challinor – Bassetlaw District Council - **A**
Councillor David Ellis – Gedling Borough Council
Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle – Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor John Handley – Nottinghamshire County Council
Suma Harding – Independent Member
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 Maddy Richardson – Bassetlaw District Council
Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

Keith Ford – Team Manager, Democratic Services) Nottinghamshire
Pete Barker – Democratic Services Officer) County Council
Nigel Stevenson – Service Director) (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
Charlotte Radford – Chief Finance Officer (OPCC)

The Chair opened the meeting and apologised for the problems experienced with the public address system during the previous meeting which affected the ability of those in the public gallery to hear proceedings clearly.

ORDER OF AGENDA

The Committee agreed to take the item on the Work Programme as the last item on the agenda to allow members sufficient time to ask questions about the budget directly of the The Commissioner.

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 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 Councillor Allsop, Councillor Challinor, Councillor Heaton and Councillor Roberts.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

4. THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PRIORITIES AND BUDGET CONSULTATION 2015-16

The Commissioner introduced the report, which he confirmed summarised the consultation process which had seen 3,500 people spoken to directly. The Force was facing the same problem as most public bodies in that it was asking to provide more services with a reduced budget. The Commissioner confirmed that priorities would need to result from engagement with the public, who demanded value for money and it was important that the Force was able to demonstrate this. In terms of engagement the Commissioner explained that there had been difficulties in reaching younger people, as a result he had commissioned a youth convention. The Commissioner had spoken to 450 young people and aimed to increase this number to 1,000. An event had been organised for the 21st March and the Commissioner invited any Panel members who wished to attend.

During discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Commissioner was asked whether the process had engaged hard to reach groups. The Commissioner replied that he was confident that it had. He attended a monthly steering group and there was a forthcoming event on the subject arranged for the 19th March which members of the panel were welcome to attend. The Commissioner was asked whether there were figures available that detailed the make-up of the groups involved. The Commissioner replied that there would be a breakdown available but he did not have it to hand. The Commissioner confirmed those from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community, women and those with disabilities had all been consulted. The Commissioner informed the panel that the Force was in the top 100 of employers according to Stonewall which was testament to the quality of the work undertaken by the Deputy Police Constable, Sue Fish.

- The Commissioner was questioned further about the nature of the groups consulted and was asked if those from emerging communities had been involved, for example those from Poland and Romania. The Commissioner replied that he had met twice with representatives of the Polish community in Bassetlaw since Christmas and that two officers from Romania were on secondment to the Force. He was aware of the Sudanese community, which was relatively small, and regularly saw Muslims from East Africa through meetings with imams at Mosques. The Commissioner felt that both the City and County Forces had a long history of engaging with people positively but welcomed suggestions as to how this could be improved further.
- The report stated that City residents were less likely to vote for a rise in the precept as they felt they were already paying enough for policing. The report also stated that those City residents who were willing to pay for an increase requested more transparency as to how the money was spent and proof that value for money was being obtained. The Panel asked the Commissioner what would happen if those City residents could not afford the increase in the precept and also what was being done to increase the transparency of expenditure and demonstrate value for money. The Commissioner replied that the population base in the City was not as affluent as other areas of the County but that the problem of collection was one for the City Council. In terms of transparency the Commissioner had published a leaflet for the first time which explained the expenditure and informed the Panel that some Forces had ceased to issue such leaflets which in his opinion was not the right thing to do. The Commissioner also pointed to the number of reports submitted to the Panel which showed how many meetings he and the Chief Constable attended and highlighted the work undertaken and expenditure incurred. HMIC have completed a series of reports on value for money and the Commissioner sits on the board. The Commissioner informed the Panel that internal auditors have been asked to produce comparisons with other Forces and also that the Alliance does help to compare costs and procedures across three Forces with lessons learnt to be implemented in the 2016/17 budget.

RESOLVED 2016/01

That the contents of the report be noted.

5. REFRESHED POLICE AND CRIME PLAN (2016-18)

The Commissioner introduced the report, the Foreword of which contained a snapshot of the current important issues, these included work on the Strategic Alliance, the fact that overall crime levels in the County continued to decrease significantly, that crime in the City was also going down whereas it was increasing in all of the other core cities. The Commissioner informed the Panel that figures for Hate Crime continued to increase but this was viewed as a success as the reporting of such crimes was being encouraged by the Force. In terms of mental health the Commissioner informed the Panel that since 1st April 2015 no youngster with such problems had been held in a cell and that only one adult had been, but that was because of violent behaviour. The Commissioner explained that a psychiatric mental health nurse was now working in the control room alongside the Force's staff and also that the Street Triage project was to be extended beyond its original two year period. The Commissioner stated that the devolution proposals included the provision of an elected Mayor who would have responsibility for policing in the area. The

Chief Constable and the Commissioner were supportive and had been involved in discussions but progress had been slow. The Commissioner told the Panel that the election for the Mayor was due to take place in 2017 but he felt this would be difficult to achieve unless the process speeded up. The Commissioner confirmed that elections for the Derbyshire PCC and the Nottinghamshire PCC would still go ahead in May 2016 with the Home Office expecting both PCCs to serve full terms. The Commissioners would need to discuss with the new Mayor how to proceed.

During discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Panel expressed its concern at the 72% increase in sexual offences and the 131% increase in child sexual abuse (CSE), invited the Commissioner to comment on the figures and asked him how these problems were being addressed. The Commissioner emphasised that he was keen to drive crime levels down but in certain areas wanted the incidence of reporting to increase, for example, hate crime. The reporting of sexual offences had also gone up and this was viewed positively as it indicated that victims were becoming more confident in reporting such crimes. The Commissioner felt that the setting up of the Goddard inquiry would increase publicity in this area and regarded this as a positive development with these problems not being unique to Nottinghamshire. The Commissioner spoke about the problem of exploitation that took place on-line and that this was a growing concern at a national level. In the short to medium term the Commissioner hoped that resources in this area would be increased and stated that a child was now more likely to be abused on-line in their own bedroom than in the street and that work was being undertaken in schools to educate children of this threat.
- The Panel were concerned that the public perception would be that the police were dealing with the problem of sexual offences and that as a result would expect the levels to reduce. The Commissioner replied that data from the HMIC was being used in this area to examine the performance of the Force and it had been found that the ratio of complaints to prosecutions was low. The publicity around historical sexual abuse had increased the number of complaints but the Commissioner said that though all complaints were taken seriously it was very difficult in such cases to secure convictions.
- The Panel questioned the Commissioner about domestic abuse and the recent HMIC report which examined the Force's performance in dealing with vulnerable victims and queried the number of high risk domestic abuse cases that were being referred to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS). The Commissioner confirmed he had read the report and discussed the findings with the Chief Constable who informed him that he did not accept a number of the recommendations in the report. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the publication of a follow up report from the HMIC had been delayed, in part because of the Force's contention that the original report contained inaccuracies. The Commissioner informed the Panel that an action plan would be released once the report had been published. The Deputy Commissioner confirmed the panel's understanding that there was a difference in the criteria by which the City and County decided which cases were referred to MARACs but stated that the current workloads of the MARACs meant that they would be unable to cope with any increase in cases referred. The Deputy Commissioner explained to the Panel that all high risk survivors were referred to Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) immediately with the result that sometimes when cases did reach a

MARAC the survivor was no longer classed as high risk. The Deputy Commissioner said that partners had informed her of how complicated they find it sending representatives to the various meetings. The HMIC and the Force favoured the use of one system but the Deputy Commissioner said unfortunately this was not the view of the local authorities involved.

- The Panel asked the Commissioner about the number of targets in the report which were assessed as 'red' and asked whether these were receiving any special attention. The Commissioner confirmed that such targets were monitored closely and that he met the Chief Constable weekly to discuss. The Commissioner thought it would be prudent to wait until the end of the year before assessing performance and reassured the Panel that in the City crime was falling and was below last year's level. In terms of targets generally, although the Home Secretary questioned the need for them, the Commissioner told the Panel that he was in favour of targets being set and agreed locally and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with the Panel.
- The Panel questioned the Commissioner about the proposed reduction in the Force's financial contribution to the City Council's Youth Offending Team. The contribution was set to reduce to zero by the year 2016/17 and the Panel asked the Commissioner whether he thought this was a false economy given the success of the team's work in this area. The Commissioner replied that the majority of the funding was provided by central government and in his opinion the respective teams in the City and the County were the unsung heroes of the youth justice system. The Commissioner informed the panel that funding in this area was being reduced nationally and that the Force's contribution to the City's Youth Offending Team was in terms of staffing rather than a direct financial one. Councillor Khan understood that the Force did make a financial contribution, in addition to providing staffing support, and agreed to arrange the e-mailing of the details to the Commissioner following the meeting.
- The Panel highlighted the difficulty in making comparisons from year to year. Some measures were omitted and some new measures were introduced, those involving rural crime for example. The Panel stated that this did not allow it to gauge whether performance in certain areas was improving or worsening. The Commissioner welcomed the reference to Rural Crime and was keen to reassure those in that community that their problems were being taken seriously by the Force and informed the Panel that it was hoped to recruit 80 more Rural Specials to add to the 288 already employed, the automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) system was about to be installed in Bassetlaw and the texting system, which would provide real time information was due to go live in February. In terms of the ability to make comparisons year by year, the Commissioner explained that plans and priorities do change over time and undertook to task his office with providing a short report that would detail those measures which had been dropped and those which had been introduced.
- The Panel questioned the Commissioner over the low representation in the Force of those from the BME community. He replied that this was a national issue. The Chief Constable had specifically engaged with community groups 18 months ago and as a result the situation had improved significantly but the Commissioner accepted there was room for improvement. The Commissioner explained that it was difficult to improve during a period where no recruitment was taking place but

reassured the Panel that where possible the problem was being addressed, the cadet force for example, comprised 20% of those from the BME community, the representation in the numbers of specials employed had increased and some existing employees had attended advanced courses designed to aid career progression. The Commissioner hoped that in 12 months' time it would be possible to recruit officers again and increase the scope for improving the situation.

RESOLVED 2016/002

That the contents of the draft Police and Crime Plan (2016-18) be noted and the views of the Panel be formally reported to the Commissioner.

6. PRECEPT AND BUDGET REPORTS 2016-17

The Commissioner introduced the report and responded to the questions from the Panel that had been shared in advance, he reminded the Panel that 70% of the funding for the Notts Force was derived from government grant with only 30% of the total raised locally. The Commissioner informed the Panel that nationally this was one of the most extreme examples and it meant that any reduction in the grant affected Nottinghamshire disproportionately. The Commissioner had been involved in the discussions regarding the changes to the funding formula and much work had been undertaken in the last 12 months but the Commissioner informed the Panel that some difficulties had been encountered around the consultation process which meant that the implementation of any changes would be delayed. The Commissioner estimated that under the current system Nottinghamshire was receiving £10m less than was fair and he had pressed the Home Secretary on the matter. The Commissioner's view was that unless progress was accelerated it was unlikely that the revised formula would be in place by April 2017.

The Commissioner confirmed that the November settlement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) had been better than anticipated, though the Home Secretary had written confirming that the grant had been cut to all Forces for this year and for following years and advised that the precept could be increased annually by 1.99% and the Council Tax base by 0.5% annually over the CSR period as a way of compensating for this shortfall. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he was minded to take the Home Secretary's advice and that for those residents living in a Band A or B house, which was the majority of residents in Nottinghamshire, these increases equated to less than 1p per day.

The Commissioner explained that a £4m deficit would be carried over to the next financial year along with other pressures which amounted to £7m. These pressures included an increase in National Insurance contributions, £3.5m that was needed for a slight pay increase and also an increase to take account of inflation. There was still a need to make savings and £1m of these could be achieved by changing the way the capital programme was funded. The Commissioner felt that the capital programme had been ambitious in the past and that this was true for the coming financial year also. In addition, for the next two financial years, a significant element of the programme would be expenditure on IT, initially collaborating with two Forces with the ultimate aim ideally of all five East Midlands Forces operating the same IT system. The Commissioner spoke of other difficulties encountered in implementing the capital programme including the delay in the building of the new kennels, which would serve the whole of the East Midlands area and the delay in moving into Byron House. The

Commissioner confirmed he was confident that ultimately the capital programme would deliver cost savings.

The Commissioner shared with the Panel his concerns regarding problems with the previous year's budget, firstly the delays to achieving savings owing to the late involvement by the Leicestershire force to co-operate in the project to join up back office functions and secondly the fact that for a lengthy period during the financial year the post of Head of Finance had been vacant. The Commissioner informed the Panel that a permanent appointment was imminent and that with the new systems that were in place he was confident that the budget monitoring process would be improved, though as each year passed the ability to achieve on-going savings became increasingly difficult. The Commissioner explained that next year the bulk of the proposed savings could be achieved by the implementation of the capital programme as previously explained and also by the redesign of the Force, including a recruitment freeze. Finally the Commissioner addressed the subject of the Force's reserves which had been used in the past to reduce the impact of budget reductions and while the level of reserves held is the third lowest in England and Wales more work was needed to reduce them further.

The Commissioner spoke of the challenges that the Force faced in the coming year. The number of officers would continue to decrease as those retiring would not be replaced and this was happening at a time where the nature of crime was changing rapidly. Burglary and theft were reducing but threats were coming from other areas, terrorism for example, which demanded an increased armed response, and the Commissioner informed the Panel that discussions had been taking place with other Forces as to how this could be funded. The Commissioner also identified Child Sexual Abuse (CSE) and on-line cyber-crime as other areas that demanded resources. The Commissioner emphasised that resources would have to be used differently as a result and that the Chief Constable would have to decide from which areas resources could be diverted, there were no extra monies available to allocate to these areas of work.

During discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Panel expressed concern at the accuracy of the budget forecasting in the past and asked the Commissioner what lessons had been learned. The Commissioner replied that both he and the Chief Constable had been involved in robust discussions on the subject and that in the past they had both made decisions based on inaccurate information. The Commissioner again reiterated the problems caused by the vacancy of the Head of Finance which had meant no-one sufficiently senior had been in post who was able to drive change forward and reminded the panel of the delay in achieving identified savings owing to the late involvement of the Leicestershire Force, but that he was now confident the situation would improve in the next financial year.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner that if, as a result of the better than expected CSR settlement, could the precept be reduced or more of the planned savings be realised. The Commissioner replied that the budget had been drawn up with the assumption that there would be an increase of 0.5% and also spoke of the difficulty in having to set a budget in advance of all required information being available.

- The Panel asked the Commissioner about the progress being made on arriving at a new funding formula. The Commissioner replied that he had been taking the lead nationally on this subject and thought that the government had understood the importance of getting this in place to allow Forces to plan ahead, but unfortunately the work had been delayed and the Commissioner stated that now he did not think the new formula would be in place before April 2017 at the earliest.
- The Panel queried the Force's ability to achieve the proposed savings and in particular were concerned that a possible consequence of the recruitment freeze, at a time when the workload had not reduced, would be an increase in overtime payments. The Commissioner replied that the overtime budget had been reduced for three years in a row, he had spoken to the Chief Constable and part of the problem was a management issue. Also, the officers saw themselves as crime fighters rather than budget monitors. The Chief Constable replied that much improved systems were now in place and that the proposed savings would result in fewer officers and a reduced overtime budget.

RESOLVED 2016/003

- 1. That the contents of both reports be noted.**
- 2. That the proposed increase of the precept by 1.99% be supported.**

7. WORK PROGRAMME

Keith Ford introduced the report and explained that the intention was to follow the current cycle of meetings of approximately every two months. The Panel expressed its wish for 'Strategic Priority Theme 2: Improve the Efficiency, Accessibility and Effectiveness of the Criminal Justice Process' to be considered at the meeting of the Panel in September. Keith requested that any further requests for amendments to the Work Programme be submitted to him directly. Keith explained that the covering report contained a recommendation for the Panel to approve the subscription to the regional PCP network which, for the sum of £500, was felt to provide value for money. The Panel agreed that the recent training session, provided partly as a result of membership of the network, had proved extremely useful.

RESOLVED 2016/004

- 1. That the contents of the report and attached appendix be noted.**
- 2. That the subscription to the regional PCP network for 2016/17 at a cost of £500 be approved.**
- 3. That the proposed dates for the Panel meetings and budget workshops, as detailed in the report, be approved.**

The meeting closed at 3.40pm

CHAIRMAN