

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 JUNE 2015 AT 2.00PM AT COUNTY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

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

Executive Mayor Kate Allsopp – Mansfield District Council
Rizwan Araf – Independent Member
Councillor Cheryl Butler – Ashfield District Council
Councillor Eunice Campbell – Nottingham City Council
Councillor David Challinor – Bassetlaw District Council - **A**
Councillor Jon Collins – Nottingham City 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 Neghat Khan – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Keith Longdon – Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Maddy Richardson – Bassetlaw District Council
Councillor Tony Roberts – Newark and Sherwood District Council
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)
Chief Constable Chris Eyre – Nottinghamshire Police
Chris Cutland – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)
Kevin Dennis – Chief Executive, Office of PCC (OPCC)
Charlotte Radford – Chief Finance Officer, OPCC
Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Simon Torr – Nottinghamshire Police
Detective Superintendent Mark Pollock – Nottinghamshire Police

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED 2015/019

That Christine Goldstraw OBE be appointed Chairman of the Panel for the 2015/16 municipal year.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED 2015/20

That Councillor Debbie Mason be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the 2015/16 municipal year.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2015, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record and were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman and Councillor David Challinor and Jon Collins.

The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Chief Constable had been delayed but would be attending.

In the absence of the Chairman, the meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Debbie Mason.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Rizwan Araf, Suma Harding and Bob Vaughan-Newton all declared a private and pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 – Review of Membership, Balanced Appointment Objective as they are independent members of the Panel and the appointment of such members was covered in the report. They left the meeting for the duration of that agenda item.

6. RULES OF PROCEDURE

Keith Ford explained that these rules were agreed at the very first meeting of the Panel and that they were being shared again particularly for new Panel members. The new members were identified for the Commissioner who welcomed them and hoped that they would find their membership useful and beneficial.

Members raised concerns about 11.2 and 11.4 of the Rules of Procedure and queried whether the Chief Constable should be attending every Panel meeting. Mr Ford explained that the Commissioner had requested that he be allowed to bring the Chief Constable to Panel meetings as he felt appropriate and that this had been agreed at an early meeting of the Panel. Members queried whether this agreement could now be reviewed. The Commissioner was clear that the Chief Constable wanted to attend the meetings and did so as his invitee. He felt that it was a system that worked and should continue. There

were varying opinions amongst Members about the Chief Constable's continued attendance at Panel meetings

The Vice-Chair thought that the wording of paragraphs 11.2 and 11.4 could be clearer and that she would consult the Chair and report back to the next meeting about this issue.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

Keith Ford introduced the report and asked Panel Members to identify which themes they would like to consider at future meetings. Keith also confirmed that there were still places available for the national Police and Crime Panel conference which was due to be hosted by Nottinghamshire County Council and held at County Hall on 3rd July.

The Vice-Chairman suggested that one theme per meeting was sufficient in order to give sufficient time for discussion. Members suggested focussing on Priority Theme 4 – Reduce the Impact of Drugs and Alcohol on Levels of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour as the theme for the meeting on 7th September. Members also suggested discussing Priority Theme 7 – Spending Your Money Wisely at the December meeting taking into account that the local government and police settlement was due at the end of November / beginning of December.

Members expressed concerns at the increasing incidence of domestic violence and the time cases were taking to get to court and requested an update or perhaps consideration via a working group. The Vice Chairman undertook to discuss the Panel's priorities with the Chairman and report back. The Commissioner informed the Panel that domestic violence services were currently being recommissioned with the County Council and discussions were ongoing with the City Council. He said that he would welcome the opportunity of discussing the matter with the Panel and it was agreed that Priority Theme 1 - Protect, support and respond to victims, witnesses and vulnerable people should be considered at the November Panel meeting (with a particular focus on Domestic Violence incidents and the, conviction rates and delays in the criminal justice system).

The Vice-Chairman spoke of the value of attending the national Police and Crime Panel Conference, especially for new members of the Panel. It was an opportunity to meet other Panel Members from around the country and discuss how the different panels operated.

Members agreed that it would be beneficial to hold a Members' Workshop in October to consider national Policing Governance and funding issues.

RESOLVED 2015/21

- 1) That the work programme be noted and updated in line with Members' suggestions as appropriate.**
- 2) That Members contact Keith Ford to confirm their interest in attending the national Police and Crime Panel Conference to be held at County Hall on Friday 3rd July 2015.**
- 3) That a Members' Workshop be arranged in early October to consider national Policing Governance and funding issues.**

8. REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP - BALANCED APPOINTMENT OBJECTION

Rizwan Araf, Suma Harding and Bob Vaughan-Newton all left the meeting for the duration of this agenda item.

Keith Ford introduced the report and reminded the panel that its membership had to be reviewed annually and be politically balanced, both in terms of each Council's appointments and ideally across the overall area of the Panel. The recent local elections had resulted in some changes to the Panel's membership and, subject to the Secretary of State's approval, the co-option of a Conservative elected member could be sought to maintain the overall political balance. The Panel would also need to decide from which Authority this Member would be selected. Finally, Mr Ford informed the Panel that the terms of office of all four Independent co-optees were coming to end at various times in the near future and clarified that there was no limit on the total number of years an Independent member could be asked to serve.

During discussions Members expressed support for the further co-option of a Conservative elected member and reappointing the four existing Independent members.

RESOLVED 2015/22

- 1) That the Panel seek Secretary of State approval for a further co-option of a Conservative elected member to enable continued political balance across the overall area of the Panel;**
- 2) That subject to Secretary of State approval, the Panel subsequently decide which Authority should be approached to provide the additional Conservative co-optee;**
- 3) That the Panel agree to re-appoint the four existing Independent members until June 2017.**

9. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 12 MONTH MONITORING REPORT AND COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

Rizwan Araf, Suma Harding and Bob Vaughan-Newton all returned to the meeting at the start of this item. The Vice-Chair thanked them all for their valuable contributions to the work of the Panel.

The Commissioner welcomed the new Panel members and confirmed he was happy for any Panel member to contact him between meetings.

The Commissioner explained it had been a very challenging year, especially in terms of the reduced budget, and spoke about some of the headlines contained in the report:

- The Force's alcohol and drug strategy would continue to be a major theme in the coming 12 months. The Home Office had been appreciative of the partnership working that had been carried out in Nottinghamshire and regarded it as an example of best practice.
- In the area of mental health, the use of the two triage cars and the input of the community mental health nurses had been a notable success. The Panel had been informed that from March 2015 no young person with mental health problems would be held in a police cell for non-crime related matters and that

from October 2015 no adult with similar problems would be held in a cell. This had not been easy to achieve and the Commissioner praised the work of health colleagues in this area.

- The responsibility for the commissioning of victims' services had been transferred to the Commissioner during this year. This had therefore been a transitional year but funding decisions would be made in this coming year to enable new and different approaches to be developed.
- The Commissioner spoke of the Priority Plus areas, with five of these areas in the City and the County contributing to 25% of all crime. The Commissioner believed that through working with partners a real difference could be made. The actions arising from the recent Review led by the Chief Executive of the Commissioner's Office were around managing demand. The Commissioner informed the Panel that a National Audit Office report on Home Office funding had been published the previous week. The report concluded that while forces generally had been able to cope with the budget cuts, some forces had been affected disproportionately ie those such as Nottinghamshire who rely more heavily on grant funding. The report recommended that the Home Office undertakes work on a new funding formula.
- The Commissioner emphasised the need to concentrate on reducing back office costs in the face of continued budget reductions. The Force was in discussion with other Forces about the way forward but the Commissioner felt that more work was still needed. Work was also continuing on moving towards a shared IT platform.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- The Panel expressed its disappointment at the proposed reductions in the number of PCSOs though recognised it was driven by a need to reduce expenditure dramatically. The Commissioner pointed out that after the reduction in numbers there would still be more PCSOs employed in Nottinghamshire than before he was elected and would still have a high number of PCSOs compared to many other Forces. Nottinghamshire had the highest number of PCSOs in the East Midlands, other than perhaps Leicestershire, and employed twice as many PCSOs as Derbyshire. He underlined that Nottinghamshire would also continue to provide Neighbourhood Policing services.
- In answer to a question about why couldn't the precept be increased to allow the current numbers of PCSOs to be maintained, the Commissioner explained that the precept could only be increased following a referendum and that until now all similar referenda had failed, including one in Bedfordshire where 70% of those voting voted against an increase. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he had asked for some analysis of the potential outcome of a referendum in Nottinghamshire and he felt that a similar result to the Bedfordshire referendum would be likely. Furthermore, the cost of running a referendum and undertaking a re-billing exercise was likely to cost in the region of £1m.
- The Panel was aware of media reports about the potential for cost savings through the combining of Forces and reducing the numbers of Chief Constables and Commissioners. Although the Panel was not necessarily in agreement as a way forward, the Commissioner was asked whether he thought there was any potential for major savings by adopting such an approach. The Commissioner

replied that he spoke frequently to the Home Secretary and at the moment the merging of Forces was not on the agenda. The law was not clear either on whether two forces could share a Chief Constable and the Home Secretary was not of a mind to introduce legislation any time soon that would clarify the situation. The Chief Constable, who had now joined the meeting, confirmed that the Force had reduced the numbers of senior staff. Nottinghamshire now had only one Assistant Chief Constable when formerly there were 4 and there are now only 4 Chief Superintendents employed compared to 11 in the past. The Chief Constable also said that the sharing of senior officers between Forces made sense as the amount of partnership working increased.

- The importance of managing public expectations was raised by the Panel. In the case of the relatively recent appointment of the PCSOs, Members asked if the reduction in numbers could not have been predicted and queried whether so many PCSOs should originally have been appointed. The Commissioner replied that the Government had committed to reducing the deficit and it was now predicted that the Force would be facing a 5% annual reduction in its budget. Many letters of support had been received supporting the use of PCSOs and the Chief Constable was working hard to mitigate the effect of the reduction in their numbers.
- Members recognised that the introduction of the PCSOs seemed universally to be accepted as a good thing, but queried whether there was any evidence that justified expenditure on PCSOs rather than on PCs and the extent of the cost savings achieved through the expenditure on PCSOs. The Commissioner replied that he guided the relevant legislation through the Commons and was a supporter of the PCSO concept as it provided neighbourhood policing which is what the public wants. In terms of cost, two PCSOs can be provided for the cost of one PC, they also provide more flexibility and also, unlike PCs, they could be made redundant if required. The Chief Constable added that the PCSOs have been a success despite some initial reservations, but that the Force did need to scale down to guarantee its survival in the future.
- The Panel queried whether there was more scope for collaboration. The Commissioner replied that he was certainly in favour and thought more could be achieved, though the concept was not universally popular. The Chief Constable emphasised that in Nottinghamshire collaboration was very much a part of how the Force worked and confirmed that there was already cooperation between 5 forces which meant funds could go further as a result.
- The Panel queried whether there was a contradiction in the fact that although the number of Confiscation and Forfeiture Orders had increased, the overall value of the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) orders had decreased. The Commissioner agreed that this was an area where the Force could improve but pointed out that the Police only receive 25% of the proceeds from POCA Orders with the remainder going to other elements of the criminal justice system. The Chief Constable pointed out that one multi million pound case could heavily skew the figures. In the last 3 or 4 years the Force had concentrated on the low and mid ranking criminals as these were the people most visible as living off a criminal lifestyle, though 'Mr Bigs' were also targeted. The Chief Constable agreed with the Commissioner that there was room for improvement and said that the Force could learn from the Leicestershire and Derbyshire forces who were among the best performers in the Country.

- The Panel expressed concern at the increase in the Ineffective Trial Rate in the Crown Court. The Commissioner replied that much analysis had taken place but that it was difficult putting theory into practice. There were 43 forces across the country, all with their own systems, the Crown Prosecution Service was organised on a regional basis and the court system was denuded of finance with the situation likely to get worse. The Commissioner felt that ultimately results would only improve when the management across all three elements was improved but that this would mean the agencies involved giving up some of their responsibilities and this was unlikely to happen. The Chief Constable highlighted problems with duplicated requests from the courts for the same information and the Force now logged the number of times it had shared the same information. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that performance was much better in Crown Courts than in Magistrates' Courts and agreed that further work did need to be done. The Chief Constable added that the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner provided an outstanding lead on this issue, working with the Ministry of Justice on the Criminal Justice review programme.
- The Commissioner was congratulated for remaining optimistic in the face of onerous demands and challenges and was asked whether overall the rates of violent crime were increasing. The Commissioner replied that it may seem peculiar but the Force actually wanted the incidence of some crimes to increase and was actively encouraging an increase in the reporting of such crimes involving domestic violence, serious sexual assault and hate crimes. The Chief Constable said that the changes in reporting were impacting upon the levels of crime, with relatively minor issues having to be now recorded as crimes (e.g. a washing machine left for collection being taken for scrap metal). The Chief Constable felt that further conversations were needed with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary to clarify expectations.
- Members asked about sickness absence and whether there were any patterns, for example was it mainly physical or mental illness, and what the Force was doing to minimise absences. The Commissioner replied that the sickness figures were rigorously monitored and levels were reducing. The Chief Constable confirmed that the type and length of absences were all recorded and that support was available, for example to those who work undercover. The Force's sickness figures were the best in the East Midlands but there was a financial cost involved in achieving them.
- The retention figures for those employed in the Force with a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background was queried by the Panel. In one part of the report the figure given for BME representation in the Force was given as 4.3% but in another part of the report the figure was given as 15.62%. Also, the report mentioned a course and Councillor Khan asked about the outcomes of the course. The Commissioner replied that the percentage of officers employed from a BME background stood at approximately 4% compared to the BME population in Nottinghamshire of approximately 12%. The Commissioner said he was keen to make progress in this area but that the budget situation dictated that there would be no recruitment taking place this year and probably none the following year either. 12 to 18 months ago an outside consultant met all those in the Force from a BME background and found some good areas and some areas were highlighted for improvement. The Force was still working through the consultant's findings. The Chief Constable confirmed that the Force carried out work designed to foster the retention and development of those from BME

communities. The Force undertook exit interviews for all leavers, including those from BME backgrounds.

- The Panel referred to the HMIC report entitled 'Responding to Austerity' and noted the concern expressed within the report regarding staff retention. The Commissioner confirmed that 110 officers had left in the current year and that 75 PCSOs would also be leaving. Of the 110 that had left the majority of them, approximately three-quarters, had completed 30 years of service and wanted to leave. There were now far fewer officers joining the Force whose intention it is to spend their entire career with the service. Detective Superintendent Pollock confirmed that many of the younger officers join with the intention of only serving for between 5 and 7 years. Being able to move one's pension around when changing jobs had contributed to the increased mobility of the workforce.
- The Panel was concerned at the effects of the projected 45% real terms cut in spending by the year 2020 and asked whether the scale of the cuts would put the existence of the Force in jeopardy. The Commissioner replied that the situation in Notts was not as serious as in some other Forces and gave the example of the Lincolnshire force which needed to reduce the numbers of officers but was not in a position to be able to do so. The debate about how much should be spent on public services took place during the General Election and the Government now had a mandate to reduce spending in the area and that the public sector as a whole now needed to be restructured, not just the Police. The Commissioner argued that there was a need to increase local discretion and flexibility around funding. The Chief Constable reassured the Panel that the Force would still be in existence in 2020 and it would use all of its powers to keep communities and individuals safe. He felt that the Force was better when it worked with its partners, focussing on the vulnerable, operating local, integrated teams and it trusting those teams to deliver. Mistakes would be made but there would be fewer of them if the Force was allowed to get on with the job rather than being dictated to from central government.
- The Panel noted that 30% of youth offenders had reoffended in the previous 12 months and asked what the Force was doing to address the problem. The Commissioner stated that the youth offending teams in the City and the County were 'unsung heroes' and were amongst the best in the country. Their early intervention was crucial and they sometimes worked with those who were at risk but who had committed no crimes. Kevin Dennis, Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), agreed that the figure of 30% was too high but both of the teams were performing well. A recent inspection of the County team had only just been published but was particularly positive about the reoffending rate compared to national figures. There was always a hard core of offenders and there was now a focus on those coming out of custody, with the evidence suggesting that the work in this area was having an impact. First time offending figures had reduced. Members felt that the lack of information currently available within some court proceedings would be improved by the new body-worn cameras. The Chief Constable stated that the body-worn cameras were being rolled out across the Force, with training provided about its use to ensure consistency with other types of evidence. He also underlined the current challenges in transferring files electronically.

That the views of Panel Members on the Commissioner's Annual Report and performance in 2014/15 be fed back formally to the Commissioner's Office for publication.

10. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN STRATEGIC PRIORITY THEME 5 – REDUCE THE THREAT FROM ORGANISED CRIME

Detective Superintendent (DS) Mark Pollock introduced the report and provided some context. Nationwide, there were estimated to be 5,500 groups involved in organised crime comprising 37,000 people engaged in criminal activities with a 'guestimated' value of £24bn per annum. The Home Office's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy required the Force to tackle the problems according to the '4 Ps' (Prepare, Prevent, Protect, Pursue).

The Force was more experienced than some other Forces in this area of work and DS Pollock reminded the Panel of the situation in Bestwood ten years previously and stated that the days of Nottingham being the 'gun crime capital' of the UK were over. There had been a huge debate about what constitutes an organised crime group, although the Force were aware of how to recognise such activity. DS Pollock informed the Panel that it was believed that 35 such groups were active in the City and the County, 60% of which operate in the City. These groups engage in a range of criminal activities including drugs, firearms, child sexual abuse, burglary and illicit tobacco.

DS Pollock explained that the Force had trained officers able to identify organised crime and who undertake an initial assessment of any potential case. Then, in a further example of collaboration, the details are passed on to the East Midlands Unit who carry out a further assessment to determine whether the case can be defined as involving organised crime and if so what are the risks involved and what is the impact on the community. If the case is defined as an organised crime one then the Unit supplies tactical advice to the Force and the case is allocated to a detective who is responsible for investigating according to the '4 Ps' mentioned earlier. There had been some considerable success in disrupting the activities of those involved in organised crime. Operation Vanguard had long been running in the City, targeting urban street gangs which were sophisticated groups that linked into regional and national structures. This Operation had recovered drugs with a street value of nearly £3m, £85k in cash and firearms and ammunition. Operation Jongleur was a more recent operation which focussed on urban street gangs in the City and had so far recovered drugs with a street value of £15K and almost £45K in cash. Operation Vanguard Plus involved working in partnership with other agencies on 'Prevent' and 'Protect' initiatives, focussing on people who were vulnerable to becoming involved in street gangs, as well as on individuals who were involved but wanted to get out (with such individuals given support in getting jobs and places on courses).

East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU) had undertaken work in Ashfield, tackling groups with links nationally and individually into very serious criminality. A number of individuals had been arrested and were awaiting trial. The Home Secretary was monitoring this as a model example of how to work with the National Crime Agency. Central government had asked the Force to organise a conference in the Autumn, particularly focussing on partnership working.

DS Pollock concluded by saying that much progress had been made in the last 5 years in terms of structure and set ups. The Force had performed well in the 'Pursue' element of the '4Ps' but could improve on the other three elements and while there was already

much partnership working and collaboration taking place there was still a need to expand this way of working.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Members queried whether it was clear as to how many individuals were involved in organised crime activity at any given time. DS Pollock said that some of the boundaries between the various groups were somewhat arbitrary with many members having links to more than one group (as highlighted by relationship charts that had been drawn up by the Force).
- The Panel asked about the accuracy of the figures contained within the report and Detective Superintendent Pollock replied that the Panel was correct to treat some of those figures with caution but the evidence did suggest that the Force was being successful in disrupting activity in this area (although the overall numbers had not fluctuated greatly).

RESOLVED 2015/024

- 1) That the Police and Crime Panel note the report.**
- 2) That the Panel support the development of Organised Crime Group (OCG) Partnership Boards.**

The meeting closed at 4.30pm

CHAIRMAN

Miins 15 June 2015