

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2017 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
Rizwan Araf – Independent Member
Councillor Cheryl Butler – Ashfield District Council
Councillor Dave Challinor – Bassetlaw District Council
Councillor Azad Choudhry – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Michael Edwards – Nottingham City Council
Councillor David Ellis – Gedling Borough Council
Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle, Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Keith Girling – Newark and Sherwood District 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
Councillor Keith Longdon – Nottinghamshire County Council -A
Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan – Nottinghamshire County 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
Nigel Stevenson - Service Director, Finance, Procurement & Improvement)	(Host Authority)
)	

OTHERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Craig Guildford - Chief Constable, Nottinghamshire
Sallie Blair - Office of PCC (OPCC)
Kevin Dennis - Chief Executive, OPCC
Mark Kimberley - Head of Finance, Notts Police
Charlotte Radford - Chief Finance Officer (OPCC)

The Chairman welcomed the new Chief Constable to his first meeting of the Panel since starting in post.

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the confirmation hearing for the appointment of the Chief Constable held on the 9 December 2016, and the minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2016, 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 Suma Harding, Councillor Keith Girling and Councillor Keith Longdon.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman thanked the Commissioner, Keith Ford and colleagues for their support and contributions to the two recent finance workshops.

Keith Ford introduced the report and confirmed a workshop had been organised for the 24 April where the new Chief Constable would be able to share his strategic thinking with the Panel.

Keith confirmed that at the next meeting of the Panel on 24 April there would be an item on the agenda regarding the retention or otherwise of the independent members of the Panel. Keith informed the Panel that he would write to all elected members before the meeting seeking their views and that the independent members would be required to leave the meeting when the decision was made.

RESOLVED 2017/001

That the contents of the report be noted.

5. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PRIORITIES AND CONSULTATION

The Commissioner introduced the report and informed the Panel that he felt the public's priorities were around having a visible police presence and tackling the problem of anti-social behaviour. The Commissioner informed the Panel that crime continued to fall in Nottinghamshire but that the nature of that crime was changing. The Commissioner explained that the threats were now from terrorism, cyber-crime, where he felt the Force was behind the curve; and sexual offences, both contemporary and historical. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he thought a wider debate was required with the

public to decide what the priorities should be and spoke of his intention to begin a priority based budget exercise. The Commissioner felt that the debate was not just about money but needed to focus on the Police's future priorities nationally and whether the Notts Force could continue doing everything it did in the past when its grant had been cut by 20%.

During discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Panel asked the Commissioner about the conduct of consultation, asking how it compared to that undertaken by local authorities who also asked questions regarding the Police, with the Panel expressing its concern that duplication was taking place resulting in unnecessary costs. The Commissioner replied that he contributed to the cost of the surveys conducted by the City and County councils which paid for the inclusion of questions regarding the police and therefore avoided duplication.
- The Panel noted that in the Plan the Commissioner reiterated his support for neighbourhood policing and asked the Commissioner how he would deliver on this commitment given that officer numbers were reducing. The Commissioner confirmed that neighbourhood policing was a priority, though this is against a background where nationally there are 20,000 fewer officers than 5 years ago and the Commissioner told the Panel that in the past he had asked the Chief Constable to focus resources on the five Nottingham wards which were responsible for 25% of all crime.
- The Panel referred to the recent budget workshop attended by the Commissioner at which he asked for the Panel's support, with this in mind the Panel asked the Commissioner how they could provide that help. The Commissioner replied that all of the Panel members were influential figures and that he would be happy to attend any meeting in order to start a debate around the relevant issues.
- The Panel referred to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index where the Notts Force had been ranked 35th out of 439 employers and congratulated all those who had contributed to the change in culture. The Commissioner replied that there had been an emphasis on hate crime over the last 3 to 4 years with a 14% increase in reporting and though race hate and religious crimes had increased the number of LGBT incidents had not increased significantly and the Commissioner paid tribute to Sue Fish who in her time with the Force had taken this work forward.
- The Panel thanked the Commissioner for his presentation and asked if it would be possible for the report to be more substantive in future.

RESOLVED 2017/002

That the contents of the report be noted.

6. UPDATE TO POLICE AND CRIME DELIVERY PLAN 2016-18

The Commissioner introduced the report and spoke to the Panel about how he had seen fellow Commissioners anxious about obtaining approval for their Plans. The Commissioner informed the Panel that his Plan effectively had two authors, himself and the Chief Constable, and that this year the Plan did not differ significantly from the previous year's and informed the Panel that he would spend the next 6 months working up new proposals in liaison with the Chief Constable.

During discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Panel questioned the Commissioner about the reference to the Nottinghamshire Force closing more sexual offences as 'prosecution not in the public interest' than other forces in the region. The Commissioner replied that he was engaged in an ongoing debate with the Force on this topic as his view differed to that of the Force. The Commissioner informed the Panel that at present the Force takes forward cases it thinks will succeed whereas the Commissioner felt that more cases should be taken forward and informed the Panel that the situation may change under the new management. The Chief Constable pointed out the high conviction rate in such cases and informed the Panel that individual historical abuse cases should now begin reaching the courts.
- The Panel referred to some of the new activities contained in the Plan and asked the Commissioner when these were brought forward and when could outcomes be expected. The Commissioner replied that the new Plan would commence on 1st April 2017 and that it was important to back up the words with actions. The Commissioner spoke of the challenge of aligning his own plan with the Force's corporate plan.
- The Panel referred to 'Theme 7 – Spending Money Wisely' and asked the Commissioner how this would be achieved. The Commissioner replied that this was already happening and gave the Panel the example of co-location. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Chief Constable had met all of the District Councils' Chief Executives and other partners and was confident of progress moving forward.
- The Panel spoke of the problem of synchronising prospective meetings and the effect on the timeliness of information submitted and also mentioned the proliferation of key performance indicators and asked the Commissioner whether this information could be presented differently to allow the Panel to track progress more easily. The Commissioner replied that he had been involved in discussions earlier in the day that had looked at these challenges and the Panel responded with the offer of help and advice as required.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner whether he could look at the RAG ratings as there was a feeling that the system was confusing and at times not directly relevant. The Commissioner acknowledged the point and spoke about the problem when working with multiple partners about how performance could be rated. The Commissioner informed the Panel that in the past the possibility of

joint inspections had been discussed and felt that the lack of progress in this area was an indication of the extent of the difficulties faced.

RESOLVED 2017/003

That the contents of the report be noted.

7. PRECEPT AND BUDGET REPORTS 2017-18

The Chairman thanked the Commissioner and his colleagues for providing the answers to the questions submitted in writing prior to the meeting and the Commissioner thanked Charlie Radford and Mark Kimberley for turning round the information so quickly.

(The written questions and answers are appended to these minutes)

The Commissioner introduced the report and informed the Panel that in broad terms the financial background had not changed significantly since the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) of 2015 where, although the budget has been unchanged, in order to account for inflationary and budget pressures a rise in the precept of approximately 2% is required to maintain the budget in real terms. The Commissioner informed the Panel that in the current financial year the Force was on track to achieve the projected target of £12m savings and that he was confident that the target for the 2017/18 financial year of £5.5m savings would be achieved. The Commissioner told the Panel that the means of achieving these savings were detailed in the report but that the largest block of expenditure is pay for both staff and officers. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Force expected to lose 100 officers through retirement in the current financial year and that it was looking to recruit 64, with 660 applicants having been received with a good proportion from different communities. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the savings on staffing costs amounted to £4m and that the remainder of the proposed savings would be made through collaboration and the re-phasing of the capital programme. The Commissioner spoke of the funding formula review and reminded the Panel that the Force relied on the grant for 70% of its funding which resulted in the Force being underfunded by approximately £10.5m per year. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he continued to be involved in the review and though the aspiration of the government was to implement the changes from April 2018 he doubted this would be achieved. The Commissioner stated that the proposal in the report was for an increase in the precept of 1.95% to raise £1.4m and if this request was turned down then savings to the budget would have to be made. The Commissioner informed the Panel that there were 2 or 3 new initiatives covered by the proposed budget including an increased focus on the problem of knife crime, the introduction of an integrated offender management system regarding the use of tags and a sum of £100k to cover any fresh initiatives that the new Chief Constable might want to implement.

During discussions the Panel raised the following points:

- The Panel spoke about the fact that Nottingham was a metropolitan area with the seventh highest GDP in the country where, though many incidents occurred, it suffered from an unfair reputation. The Panel expressed its

concern that crime and the behaviour of young people was becoming a problem again and spoke of the times in the past, dating back to 2003, where the City Council increased the Poll Tax by 10% as it wanted the Police to tackle the problems. The Commissioner expressed his appreciation for the City Council spending on neighbourhood policing at a level that was one of the highest in the country and spoke of the partnership working that happened in the City giving the example of the Arora initiative and the new station in the City which illustrated the integrated service being provided.

- The Panel raised the subject of the numbers of PCSOs and civilian investigators employed and informed the Commissioner that although there was some initial reluctance to the concept of PCSOs, people in the communities had taken to them and it had proved to be a good idea and asked the Commissioner whether the PCSO role could be strengthened, especially in rural areas. The Commissioner replied that adverts for more PCSOs had been placed with the intention of increasing their number to 200. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he was aware of the concerns regarding rural crime, especially in the Bassetlaw area where two teams of specialists were deployed in addition to the use of automatic number plate recognition cameras (ANPR). The Commissioner spoke about the use of civilian investigators and informed the Panel of the intention to employ 100 more over the next two years to be used mainly in the field of online/cyber-crime.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner about the increased expenditure on 'Agency and contract services' to £16.9m and asked if a breakdown between the two was available. The Commissioner replied that he felt expenditure in this area was too high and that it was an area of constant discussion. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he was committed to sharing back office functions and that a meeting with Northants and Leicestershire was planned for the following week. The Commissioner informed the Panel that it was thought agreement had been reached last May but then two Commissioners did not stand again for re-election meaning that the proposals needed to be revisited and the Commissioner stated that he hoped these more detailed proposals would be available soon.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner about the Drug Fund reserve and questioned why there did not appear to be any use of this particular reserve in the past three years. The Commissioner explained that it was useful to have money in reserve for ad hoc joint project requests from County Council as well as being able to contribute to one off initiatives such as the fly-grazing problems in Newark which the Commissioner explained involved the grazing of horses without permission. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he would look at this reserve again but explained that there were strict criteria governing the expenditure, that he felt it was useful to have monies for new initiatives and that he welcomed any ideas for the City and County Councils.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner about the Capital Programme, in particular the planned expenditure on the Bridewell and asked the Commissioner that if it was being upgraded because of a change to the Home Office standards would the Home Office be funding the works? The Commissioner replied that part of the problem with the capital programme was

based around IT costs with 43 forces using 43 different systems there was potential for consistency and though the lack of a timetable for the work has affected the delivery of the capital programme the aim was for continual improvement going forward. In terms of accommodation the Commissioner informed the Panel that the strategy was for a smaller, but higher quality, estate and with the exception of Bassetlaw all neighbourhood teams were now co-located resulting in a better service. The Commissioner informed the Panel that although the Bridewell building was relatively new it was now not up to standard with the design over many floors not conducive to either prisoner behaviour or staff morale, some of whom refer to the building as 'Bride Hell.' The Commissioner informed the Panel that no decision had been made but that the revenue costs were likely to be relatively high, that the plans would be studied to see if savings could be achieved while still safeguarding prisoners' rights and that the magistrates would be involved in discussions about the complex as a whole. The Panel asked the Commissioner if there was a timetable in place regarding accommodation and the Commissioner replied that he had secured a degree of commitment from court colleagues and that a task group would be set up and that he hoped to submit a report to the Panel in autumn detailing progress. The Panel asked if the problem could be looked at in its totality pointing out that there were no custody facilities in the north of the county and referring to the issues in Mansfield and Newark. The Panel asked the Commissioner whether more cost effective solutions might be available. The Commissioner replied that there were no plan to re-visit issue of the custody suite in Worksop and there was no prospect of it re-opening in its present location and referred to the shared facilities in Retford and informed the Panel that he felt there was a strong argument for having a similar facilities in Worksop. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that the problem would not be looked at in isolation and that he was aware that there was low usage of the custody suites in Newark and Grantham and that potential savings existed. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the aim of the Ministry of Justice was to have one magistrates' court in each shire county which would have significant implications for the estate in Mansfield.

- Executive Mayor, Kate Allsop, congratulated the Commissioner on the £12m of savings achieved but informed him that she would not be supporting the 1.95% increase in the precept and urged the Commissioner to follow the example of Mansfield District Council who, despite suffering cuts in grant, had made efficiency savings which meant the council tax had not been increased at a time of austerity where families' budgets were under pressure. The Commissioner replied that he understood the arguments but that in Nottinghamshire the 1.95% increase equated to less than 1p per day for households in Band D but because the majority of households in Mansfield were in Band A or B their increased contribution would be even less. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the results of the consultation undertaken showed that opinion was divided but that the majority of people were prepared to pay more if they received value for money. The Commissioner spoke of the Home Office stating that that police budgets were protected in cash terms if the precept were increased by 1.95% but that this did not take into account the fact that the scale of the crime problem in cities is bigger and that the precept needs to increase in the era of austerity.

- The Panel welcomed the Commissioner's earlier appreciation for the increased expenditure by the City Council, expressed regret at losing the City division of the police force and told the Commissioner that the delivery of the community safety service had suffered as a result, especially at inspector level. The Commissioner replied that the Notts force has a high number of officers relative to other forces but that difficult choices still needed to be made and it was unlikely the numbers could be increased significantly in the short term. The Commissioner stated that the Chief Constable will look at territorial policing and that a debate was needed regarding the geographic location of officers, which in the city and districts were co-located but that the demands of community policing and partnership working required a different approach. The Chairman stated that once the Chief Constable had had time to study the Force the Panel would appreciate a report detailing the proposed changes to the new operating model. The Commissioner replied that the issue could be discussed at the Panel meeting on 24 April and the aim was to have a firmer view on the way forward by summer.

RESOLVED 2017/004

- 1. That the contents of both reports be noted.**
- 2. That the proposed increase of the precept by 1.95% be supported.**

Executive Mayor, Kate Allsop, requested that her vote dissenting against the above decisions be recorded.

The meeting closed at 3.18pm

CHAIRMAN