

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2013 AT 2.00 PM AT COUNTY HALL, WEST BRIDGFORD, NOTTINGHAM

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

Chairman - Councillor John Clarke – Gedling Borough Council - **A**

Vice-Chairman - Executive Mayor Tony Egginton – Mansfield District Council

Councillor David Challinor – Bassetlaw District Council

Councillor Eunice Campbell – Nottingham City Council

Councillor Jon Collins – Nottingham City Council

Councillor Georgina Culley – Nottingham City Council - **A**

Councillor Eddie Fearon – Rushcliffe Borough Council

Christine Goldstraw – Independent Member

Suma Harding – Independent Member

Councillor Eric Kerry – Nottinghamshire County Council

Councillor John Knight – Ashfield District Council

Councillor Pat Lally – Broxtowe Borough Council

Councillor Keith Longdon – Nottinghamshire County Council - **A**

Councillor Alex Norris – Nottingham City Council

Councillor Tony Roberts MBE – Newark and Sherwood District Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

Jayne Francis-Ward – Monitoring Officer) Nottinghamshire

Keith Ford – Senior Democratic Services Officer) County Council
(Host Authority)

OTHERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping – Police and Crime Commissioner

Chris Cutland – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

Chris Eyre – Chief Constable

Kevin Dennis – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Councillor John Clarke, Executive Mayor Tony Egginton chaired the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETINGS

(i) Meeting held on 3 December 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2012, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

(ii) Confirmation Hearing held on 3 December 2012

The minutes of the Confirmation Hearing held on 3 December 2012, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Clarke, Georgina Culley and Keith Longdon.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

4. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

The Commissioner introduced his draft Police and Crime Plan for 2013-17 which had been developed following much consultation, including specific meetings held in the City and in Mansfield. The Commissioner gave further details about his six pledges made in the Plan:-

- 1) Campaign against Government funding cuts to Nottinghamshire's Police budget – the Commissioner had recently met with the Home Secretary and Policing Minister and felt he had made some progress although longer-term discussions would be needed to address the funding formula and damping mechanisms which caused a significant negative impact upon Nottinghamshire's funding. The Home Office planned to commence work on reviewing the funding formula soon. The Chief Constables in the East Midlands had met to help progress this campaign regionally;
- 2) Improve Community Policing across Nottinghamshire by taking on 150 extra Police Officers and 100 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) – the Commissioner planned to make an announcement on numbers of new officers within his proposed budget. This budget would build on the work of the former Police Authority, considering mid-term financial planning issues as appropriate. A base budget review would be undertaken in 2013/14 and he would work with the Police to define new and existing priorities;
- 3) Work in partnership to reduce anti-social behaviour by 50% - the Commissioner acknowledged that it would be a significant task to reach this target but he was encouraged by existing work across the County and was determined to roll out best practice across Nottinghamshire;

- 4) Give extra priority and resources to domestic violence and crimes against girls and women – the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner had begun to work closely with the Chief Constable and officers across the Force to improve these services;
- 5) Ensure that the victims of crime are treated as people, not cases, and will properly fund Victim Support – the Commissioner highlighted that funding for Victim Support would transfer to Commissioners in 2014/15 although he might choose to include some funding for the service in his 2013/14 budget;
- 6) Be fair, honest and will protect tax-payers money – the Commissioner was keen to ensure value for money. The annual cost of running the Police Authority was £1.2m whilst the proposed 2013/14 budget for the Commissioner's office would be £1.1m.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members welcomed the plans to address the funding inequalities caused by the damping mechanism but felt that the way that this was covered within the Plan could be more diplomatically worded. In response to a query about whether the appointment of additional police officers and PCSOs would be implemented in one go or over a period of time, the Commissioner clarified that he would make an announcement on 30 January 2013 with a view to all of these appointments being in place by the end of his four year term of office. He underlined that he had chosen these numbers as he felt that, having spoken to the Force, they were achievable and were needed. These appointments would be based within the neighbourhood policing teams;
- Members highlighted work around domestic violence being undertaken by Health and Wellbeing Boards within Councils and emphasised the need to prevent any duplication of effort. The Deputy Commissioner was arranging a meeting with various officers working on this issue within the County;
- Members underlined the need for further detailed information about targets and how the progress against the priorities would be monitored to enable the Panel to fulfil its role in scrutinising the Commissioner's performance. The Commissioner stated that overall crime was down by 12.5% on a year on year basis and that new targets would be included within the Plan. He agreed that there was a need for such targets to be broken down to a local neighbourhood level in recognition of the nature of crime itself. The Chief Constable added that the Commissioner had set specific challenges for the Force which needed to be achieved against a backdrop of financial reductions. A great deal of work had been undertaken with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and partners in agreeing the commitments to be achieved in partnership;
- Members felt that targets needed to be broken down on a Divisional basis (to reflect the different nature of crime within the City and the County) and to better highlight trends. The recent increase in the organised theft (by

various means) of mobile phones from nightclubs and bars in the City was highlighted as a good example of this. Members also underlined the need for any targets to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed), whereas many of the ones in this initial version of the Plan were felt to be somewhat impressionistic. Baseline figures were also needed to assist Members in measuring progress. The Plan also needed to be clearer in terms of which actions the Force, the Commissioner and partnerships were responsible for. Also it needed to be clearer as to which targets were stretch targets. The Commissioner acknowledged that the target setting within the Plan was one of its weaker aspects and that this required tightening up as part of the consultation process.

With regard to his proposed governance arrangements, the Commissioner was minded to establish two Stakeholder Boards to provide advice and information, one within the City and one within the County. He added that there were some areas of overlap between the City and the County (for example, some crime on the County was committed by City residents) and he underlined his commitment to seek views of people in more sparsely populated, remote areas of the County. The first performance report by the Commissioner was currently being prepared for the Panel meeting on 6 February 2013. The Commissioner agreed that some form of 'traffic light' performance monitoring could be taken forward as part of the monitoring arrangements for the Plan. The Commissioner offered to bring the Plan back for further consideration by the Scrutiny following further revisions to the targets;

- Members welcomed the fact that the Plan sought to translate the Commissioner's pre-election commitments into actions and felt that this would assist in increasing the credibility of this new role to the public;
- Members understood the need for the priorities within the Plan to be described at a relatively high level but underlined the need for the detailed plans behind these to be made available in some way to Members. For example, it was not clear from the Plan how and where the extra resources for Domestic Violence would be deployed or how the Forest Recreation Ground would be made safer. Further details of the success of initiatives such as Project Aurora, which involved the co-location, working and tasking of Police and other enforcement services (such as environmental health, parking enforcement), also needed to be shared. The Commissioner re-emphasised that further work would be undertaken on the targets within the Plan. The Deputy Commissioner added that detailed delivery business plans were being developed for most of the priorities included within the Plan. With regard to Project Aurora, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable highlighted that this was a ground-breaking project nationally, which built upon initial work undertaken by the City Council, in order to find better solutions to problems experienced by communities at a local level. Similar means of better delivering joint services were being considered in Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe whilst the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub established in the County also enabled better partnership working. The Force was hugely optimistic about

Project Aurora and its potential for improving joint working across the Force area;

- Members queried how issues highlighted as priorities within neighbourhood surveys such as burglary had not translated to priorities within the Plan. The Commissioner felt that there were contradictions within the findings of neighbourhood surveys, with different perceptions between different partners in different areas across the Force. Burglary was an issue which the Force would be seeking to address and which the Commissioner would expect progress on. The Chief Constable added that burglaries were down by 44% due to the Force targeting offenders at the earliest opportunity, with increased and targeted patrols as appropriate. This approach had been used to address a recent rise in burglaries in Ashfield;
- with regard to the targets to be achieved in partnership, Members queried whether the implications of the recently published Probation Service Command Paper, which could fundamentally alter the way in which probation services were delivered, had been considered. The Commissioner confirmed that he planned to respond to the Command Paper and highlighted that elements of that paper (such as the national commissioning of services) did not fit well with the Localism agenda;
- in response to a query from Members about the target to reduce sickness absence, the Chief Constable highlighted that the new Absence Management procedures helped performance to be managed in more strategic ways, for example, by looking at sickness levels based on roles and by differentiating between sickness resulting from injuries on duty. This monthly monitoring had resulted in significant improvements in sickness levels;
- Members underlined the need to measure performance against other Forces to give a wider context to improvements that were being achieved. In that respect it was queried whether keeping the existing 8% target for a reduction in 'All Crime' would result in a move up the league tables covering the Force's Most Similar Forces group. The Commissioner stated that crime levels in Nottinghamshire were reducing faster than elsewhere in the country. The Chief Constable added that the Force was in the Top 10 nationally and he was determined for it to be the best Force in the country. The Force was still on track to meet the 8% target this year. It had seen a 12% reduction up until September 2012 but this was likely to be affected by the usual seasonal increase in crime in November-December each year (it was hoped that this ongoing seasonality could be addressed in future years). In areas where performance had exceeded 8% reductions levels this year, it was still intended to seek a further 8% reduction next year as a means of continuing the momentum of progress and increasing aspirations.

The Chief Constable underlined the need to work in different ways to achieve ongoing improvements, rather than working harder within the existing systems. The Troubled Families initiative was one example in

which improved collective working offered significant opportunities to make meaningful differences to people's lives ;

- Members felt that by including figures on detection rates, this could prevent figures being skewed by offenders admitting to other crimes upon arrest. The Chief Constable accepted that detection rates were an important indicator but also underlined the need for creative ways of achieving positive outcomes for the community, including 'community resolution' where appropriate. He highlighted a recent example of this in Harworth, whereby local schoolchildren were involved in speaking to drivers who had been caught speeding outside of their school and these drivers were asked to speak to a school assembly about the dangers of such speeding (instead of being given three points on their driving licence);
- Members felt that the size and detail of the Plan could prevent it from achieving its aims of making the public aware of the Commissioner's priorities and planned activity and queried whether alternative means of engaging the public were planned. The Commissioner recognised this problem and felt that the Strategic Framework appendix better communicated the overall issues. He added that a leaflet would be sent to all households regarding the Commissioner's budget and this would include some of the detail of the Plan. He highlighted the neighbourhood meetings as other means of engaging the public, whilst underlining that practice amongst these was currently inconsistent and needed to improve overall;
- with regard to the Commissioner's aim of reviewing the custody arrangements in Worksop and the North of the County, Members raised ongoing concerns about the current arrangements in light of experiences over the recent festive period, in which some prisoners had been taken to Doncaster custody station due to Mansfield and Newark custody suites being full. The Commissioner felt that this issue needed to be considered as part of the wider estate strategy. He also felt that in the long-term, all public buildings in that area needed to be looked at with a view to possible co-location of services (currently he understood that there was a lot of free space within Worksop Police station and Bassetlaw District Council's building, whilst there were doubts about the future of Bassetlaw Magistrates Court). There was also a need to look at the level of demand for custody in the North of the County and alternative approaches to putting people into custody. The custody suite in Doncaster had been utilised by the Force over the festive period and although there had been some difficulties, it was worth noting that it had still been possible to access this facility. The Commissioner stated that the review was likely to be completed by the end of the 2013/14 financial year.

The Chief Constable underlined the decision to close the custody suite in Worksop had been based around a detailed analysis (which included average travelling times) and that the voluntary attendance approach had been very successful. He added that only 8 prisoners had been sent to Doncaster custody suite over the festive period and that further demand

would be needed to justify retaining a resource in Worksop. Since the custody suite had closed, crime had reduced and public confidence, satisfaction and detection rates had increased in the area;

- Members felt that the success of community policing (including the issue of voluntary attendance at police stations) was reliant upon the quality of the local policing teams. It was also felt that initiatives such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition, which had proven successful in helping to tackle travelling criminality, should be highlighted via the media in order to further deter criminals from targeting the County. In response, the Commissioner referred to good examples of community policing he had seen in his recent visit to Harworth and Manton which highlighted how addressing environmental issues could deter other forms of crime from being committed;
- Members underlined the need for the Panel to focus on strategy and the 'big picture' rather than getting into parochial discussions about local issues. They requested that the Commissioner's Office keep the amount of paperwork submitted to the Panel down to workable levels, focussing on issues and proposed actions and timescales. The Commissioner underlined his willingness to provide information in a format that Members would find helpful in undertaking their critical friend role. The Chairman of the meeting stated that issues such as the Panel's role in performance management would be discussed further at the forthcoming Panel Away Day;
- Members highlighted the reduction in cases coming through courts which was understood to be a result of more fixed penalties being issued. It was felt that it would be helpful to receive regular updates on the number of such notices and the types of crimes for which they were issued. With regard to the priority theme of improving the efficiency, accessibility and effectiveness of the criminal justice process, Members highlighted the problems of magistrates not receiving case files in time (and of files going missing) and problems of people from certain nationalities not understanding laws in Britain (for example, the laws around drink driving). In response, the Commissioner outlined his plan to meet with the Clerk to the Magistrates to hear concerns directly from magistrates but he did not intend to provide information such as that about fixed penalties within his regular reports to the Panel. The Deputy Commissioner was aware of the problems around the availability of case files.

The Commissioner recognised the need to do work with the wide range of nationalities whom were now resident within Nottinghamshire in light of the social issues which these people could be faced with. The Chief Constable highlighted that the magistrates courts were currently in the process of procuring a new IT system and underlined the need for this to be compatible with the Crown Prosecution Service's system to enable the safe and timely transfer of digital case files (as was the case in Scotland which operated a system of shared hard drives). The facilities for police officers to

give evidence via video links also needed to be expanded to fully utilise their potential benefits;

- Members highlighted the impact of alcohol on crime levels and the Commissioner explained that he would be taking a professional lead with his Chief Executive to develop an Alcohol Strategy. Further discussions would be needed around this issue, particularly around the impact on health services and the potential for introducing a Night Time Levy on private business to help counter-balance the policing costs resulting from licensed premises. The Chief Constable highlighted that the vast majority of murder cases had alcohol as a contributory factor and that the Force was taking a national lead in helping to develop an Alcohol Strategy;
- Members queried how the aim to increase the number of volunteers would be achieved. The Deputy Commissioner had met last week with the Force's officer in charge of volunteer recruitment. Targeted recruitment was planned, including focussing on sixth form colleges and Nottingham Trent University students;
- Members felt that there needed to be greater continuity of officers within neighbourhood policing teams. The Chief Constable recognised the benefits of such continuity which the Force had tried to encourage and incentivise. However, he also highlighted that the Force had lost 350 police officer posts and 345 staff officer posts since 2010, which impacted on the flexibility of officer deployment;
- Members underlined the importance of retaining, as well as recruiting, officers from Black and Minority Ethnic communities in order to break down the barriers with these communities. They also suggested making links with Nottingham Trent University and the University of Nottingham to help address this issue. The Commissioner stated that the planned recruitment would include external advertising and offered an opportunity to bring in more Black and Asian officers. The Force would utilise the existing close working relationship with Nottingham Trent University's Criminal Studies Department. The Force was seeking the views of existing black staff within the organisation to better understand concerns. Nationally, more black officers were lost than recruited and it was recognised that the police service had lost ground compared to other public services in recent years.

There were plans to relaunch the Nottingham Black Police Officers Association in the Spring and this group could offer valuable information and input. The Chief Constable highlighted that the Force continued to attend Black and Minority Ethnic community events, both as a means of improving links and promoting recruitment opportunities. Recruitment events had also been arranged through Dawn FM and other community radio stations, highlighting the range of careers available within the Force. Similar work was also ongoing with Polish and Eastern European communities. In light of the previous concerns expressed by the Police Authority about the lack of progress in such recruitment, Members

underlined the need for specific targets within the Plan and for different approaches to be tried.

The Chief Constable and the Commissioner underlined their commitment to trying new approaches and to addressing this issue. Members highlighted the lack of Black officers in particular, which impacted upon community policing in urban areas. There was also a wider point around police officers largely choosing to live in suburban and rural areas which affected the Force's ability to provide community policing in its truest sense. The Commissioner stated that he was reluctant to give an actual figure as a target on this issue and was mindful of the size of the challenge, having followed with interest the previous success of Nottingham City Council in doubling its number of Black and Minority Ethnic staff and the recent struggle by the Force to recruit Police and Community Support Officers from these same communities. The Commissioner also recognised that as well as recruitment, the Force needed to reconsider other aspects relating to retention, including support prior to interview and assessment.

RESOLVED 2012/014

That the issues raised by the Panel be fed into the consultation process and a revised draft of the Plan be submitted to the next meeting for consideration alongside the proposed precept.

5. MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

This item was deferred to a future meeting to enable further discussions about the Protocol's proposed contents.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

Keith Ford introduced the report on the work programme and underlined that at this stage the contents were centred largely around the Panel's statutory responsibilities but that other potential topics could be discussed at the planned Panel Away Day.

RESOLVED 2012/015

That the work programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.22 pm.

CHAIRMAN
M_15Jan2013