

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 27 MARCH 2023 AT 2.00PM AT COUNTY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Christine Goldstraw OBE – Independent Member (Chair)
Councillor David Ellis – Gedling Borough Council (Vice Chair)

Executive Mayor Andy Abrahams – Mansfield District Council – **Apologies**
Councillor Scott Carlton – Nottinghamshire County Council
Lesley Dalby – Independent Member
Councillor Michael Edwards – Nottingham City Council (substitute for Councillor Linda Woodings)
Councillor Kevin Greaves – Bassetlaw District Council - **Absent**
Suma Harding – Independent Member – **Apologies**
Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council
Councillor Mike Introna – Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Neghat Khan – Nottingham City Council
Councillor John Lee – Newark and Sherwood District Council – **Apologies**
Councillor Richard MacRae – Broxtowe Borough Council
Councillor Helen-Ann Smith – Ashfield District Council – **Apologies**
Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member
Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council – **Apologies**

OFFICERS PRESENT

Jo Toomey - Advanced Democratic Services	}	Nottinghamshire County Council
Officer	}	(Host Authority)
Laura Webb – Assistant Democratic Services	}	
Officer	}	

OTHERS PRESENT

Caroline Henry - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Sharon Caddell – Chief Executive of the Office of the PCC (OPCC)
Gillian Holder – Chief Financial Officer (OPCC)
Dan Howitt – Head of Strategy and Performance (OPCC)
Deputy Chief Constable Steve Cooper (Nottinghamshire Police)
Mark Kimberley – Chief Financial Officer (Nottinghamshire Police)

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023 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

- Executive Mayor Andy Abrahams (Mansfield District Council)
- Suma Harding (Independent Member)
- Councillor John Lee (Newark and Sherwood District Council)
- Councillor Helen-Ann Smith (Ashfield District Council)
- Councillor Linda Woodings (Nottingham City Council)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Richard MacRae declared a non-pecuniary interest because he was an ambassador for the Violence Reduction Partnership.

Councillor Scott Carlton declared a non-pecuniary interest because he was the Chairman and the Senior Responsible Owner of the Nottinghamshire Combatting Substance Misuse Partnership.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Ms Toomey presented the work programme to the Panel. Ms Toomey explained that the annual subscription for the Regional Police and Crime Panel Network was due for renewal. The Panel was informed that the renewal cost had not yet been confirmed and so they would be asked to approve the sum of up to £450 to cover the costs. If the actual renewal cost exceeded the agreed level, a further report would be brought back to the Panel.

The report also recommended the establishment of a sub-group to assist in producing the Panel's annual report which would highlight the activities that it had undertaken during the year. Bob Vaughan-Newton informed the Panel that he would like to be a member of the sub-group.

The Panel was also informed that a visit to Nottinghamshire Police Headquarters would be arranged following the upcoming local elections and would form part of the induction for new panel members.

RESOLVED 2023/006

1. The contents of the work programme be noted
2. The sum of up to £450 be committed to renew the Panel's membership of the Regional Police and Crime Panel Network
3. A sub-group be established by the panel to produce the annual report 2022/23

5. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

The Police and Crime Commissioner summarised her update report which covered her activities since January 2023 and highlighted the following:

- The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) had been working closely with key partners across the statutory and voluntary sector to develop a strategy for tackling Violence Against Women and Girls, based on the five key pillars of preventing, responding, supporting, including, and strengthening local service provision.
- The Commissioner had launched a consultation on the partnership strategy which was open until 31 March 2023.
- The Commissioner stated one issue regularly highlighted to her as a matter of public concern was anti-social behaviour (ASB), so a second taskforce had been convened. This brought a wide range of partners to improve the strategic response to ASB across the area.
- The PCC had also launched a Youth Independent Advisory Group in collaboration with the Nottinghamshire Youth Commission which would work with young people and the police across a range of settings to drive improvements in levels of trust and confidence in the police.
- The PCC had attended numerous engagement events and was informed that some residents were unaware of the Independent Office for Police Conduct and complaints framework and agreed to increase communications around the process of making a complaint about a police officer.

Members of the Panel requested further detail about the consultation on the strategy for tackling violence against women and girls. The Panel was informed that to date researchers had visited approximately 300 households and 200 people had completed the online consultation. The Commissioner encouraged the Panel to promote the consultation to residents. The Panel was informed that it would be a multi-sector strategy with partners including Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, health services and probation services.

The Commissioner highlighted that Nottinghamshire Police was one of the first forces in Europe to make use of facial recognition enabled breathalysers as part of the supervision of offenders. The Panel was also informed that the investment of two unmarked mobile digital forensic units (DigiVans) had reduced the time it took to secure evidence from the mobile phones of victims from 413 hours in April 2022 to around 21 hours. This reduced the impact that this process had on victims and it was hoped that this would increase the chances of them remaining in the Criminal Justice System.

Members asked whether the Commissioner was undertaking lobbying about the length of time taken when investigating officer conduct, referring to the impact long investigations had on staff morale and welfare.

The Commissioner clarified that Bassetlaw, and Newark and Sherwood now had a dedicated rural crime prevention officer. A decision was pending about how this service would be provided in Rushcliffe in the future.

Following a question, the Commissioner stated that members of the Youth Independent Advisory Group contained members with a broad range of protected characteristics, including members from the LGBT and traveller communities. Group members would speak to their communities which would lead to the production of an impact report. It was also suggested that members of the youth advisory board visit youth clubs across Nottinghamshire to understand their views.

Members of the Panel noted the Commissioner had responded to the Home Office consultation on anti-social behaviour tools and powers and the replacement of the Vagrancy Act and asked whether she felt she had been listened to. The Commissioner stated that the Home Office had visited Nottinghamshire and that she provided them with practical examples of how anti-social behaviour was being tackled.

The Commissioner noted that whilst there were some areas of good practice in tackling anti-social behaviour, this was not consistent across the county. The aim of the task force was to provide better co-ordination. Work was being undertaken to tackle anti-social behaviour caused by younger people and included the use of anti-social behaviour contracts with police staff working with them and their parents.

Members of the Panel also asked about the use of the community trigger as a tool to deal with anti-social behaviour. The Commissioner indicated that more work was needed to make people aware of the mechanism as a tool to deal with recurring issues.

The Panel raised concerns that a recent inspection of the East Midlands Specialist Operations Unit (EMSOU) found it to be inadequate at tackling serious and organised crime. The Commissioner responded by stating that one of the reasons for the opinion had been around a long-term financial plan. Members were assured that since the inspection had been completed, the forces that were part of EMSOU had now reached agreement on its funding. The Commissioner added that she was putting pressure on the unit to develop an efficiency strategy. She added that she was happy to continue to invest in the unit if it was going to make a difference in Nottinghamshire, and there were areas of work undertaken by EMSOU that she believed were better undertaken at a regional level. Members also noted that the constituent forces had refreshed their commitment to collaboration.

The Commissioner assured the Panel that concerns raised in Baroness Casey's report which detailed an investigation into standards at the Metropolitan Police were not reflective Nottinghamshire Police. She did recognise, though, that it would have an impact on public confidence and trust in the police nationally. The Commissioner believed that Nottinghamshire's Professional Standards Department were proficient in conducting vetting when required. This included

when a member of staff changed roles within the organisation, or someone transferred from outside the force. Members asked about potential impact of the report's findings on rates of recruitment and attrition. The Commissioner stated that Nottinghamshire was seen as a good force of which people wanted to be part.

Panel members referred to media reports on the Metropolitan Police strip-searching children under stop and search powers. The Commissioner said that whilst it was sometimes necessary to strip-search a child to keep them safe, she assured members that there was a strict policy that was adhered to in Nottinghamshire. This included ensuring that an appropriate adult was in attendance if ever a child had to be strip searched.

The Commissioner gave an overview of Nottinghamshire Police's Military Service Leavers' Pathway into policing. Panel members referred to other entry routes into policing and noted a news story regarding the decision of Hampshire and Isle of Police to drop the requirement for new officers to obtain a degree. The Commissioner said that currently she was happy with the qualifications required for officers at Nottinghamshire Police as it was essential that all police officers had knowledge of the law. She added that the degree qualification was formal recognition of the skills and knowledge that police officers have.

A question was raised about whether there would be public consultation and engagement with residents in Bassetlaw regarding a new police station in the area. The Commissioner responded to the question. Outstanding matters were to be raised with the Commissioner by the member who asked the question outside the meeting.

The session concluded with members asking about the number of the Commissioner's task and finish groups, forums, boards, and consultations. Members were concerned about the risk of raising expectations that could not be delivered either because a lack of funding, capacity, or tools. The Commissioner responded by stating that all the meetings that had taken place had actions and deliverables that needed different agencies to work together. Focus groups were also important to understand the views of residents in Nottinghamshire.

RESOLVED 2023/007

1. That the Police and Crime Commissioner's update report be noted.

6. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PERFORMANCE UPDATE TO DECEMBER 2022

Members' attention turned to the performance report, which provided information to the end of December 2022.

The Head of Strategy and Performance summarised the positive exceptions in the report, highlighting:

- Self-reported experience of neighbourhood crime (5.8%) remained significantly lower than the pre-Covid baseline year (7.5%)
- Indications that feelings of safety (57.8%) had increased across Nottinghamshire after falling to the lowest level on record during 2022 (56.3%)
- The number of first-time entrants (FTE) into the Youth Justice System across Nottinghamshire (excluding the city) (252) had fallen to levels lower than the pre-pandemic baseline (263) and were now on track to meet the target 10% reduction ambition of 237 by March 2024.

The following negative exceptions were also highlighted:

- Public confidence in the police had been in decline since March 2021 which followed a national trend.
- Levels of reported online fraud had continued to increase since March 2020, with an 18% (+659) increase recorded by police in the last year. Additionally, the proportion of respondents to the Police and Crime Survey that reported having experienced fraud or attempted fraud (18.6%) had stabilised since December 2021 but remained significantly higher than the pre-Covid baseline (13.0%).

Panel members reiterated concerns that had been raised at previous meetings about ongoing use of a baseline which covers a period prior to the pandemic. The Panel was informed that the year to 30 September 2022 represented the first period 12-month period unaffected by the Coronavirus pandemic. A direct 12-month comparison with the 'new normal' would not therefore, be available until 30 September 2023.

A query was raised about how the Commissioner was tackling the increase of violence with injury, violent knife crime and possession of weapon offences. Members were advised that there were dedicated knife crime teams throughout Nottinghamshire and that preventative work was taking place in primary and secondary schools. The Panel was also informed that patrols were conducted earlier on in the evening as early interventions helped policing later in the day.

In response to a question, the Commissioner agreed to provide an update to the local Councillor about the introduction of the mini police in Stapleford outside of the meeting.

Action

An update on mini police in Stapleford to be provided to the local representative outside the meeting

The Panel was informed that there was a difference of approximately 10% when comparing how safe women felt compared to men. A breakdown of this statistic by gender and age could be shared with members outside the meeting.

Members noted that research had been commissioned as part of the Violence Reduction Partnership to understand why there had been an increase of first-time entrants into the Criminal Justice System in the City of Nottingham.

The Panel raised concerns that the number of special constables had decreased. In response, the Commissioner stated that some special constables had recently been recruited as police officers and that a new recruitment plan was in place. It was expected that the number of special constables would increase between October and December 2023. Members noted the length of the recruitment process, part of that was attributed to the time needed for vetting.

A question was raised about emerging trends in crimes like shoplifting. Members were given an overview of work being undertaken to support businesses and tackle root causes of acquisitive crime, for example investment in drug treatment.

Members asked for clarification about why the total number of sexual offences including rape did not match the separate figures for the same offences.

Action

Clarification to be provided about the discrepancy between figures in the report for serious sexual offences and rape.

RESOLVED 2023/008

1. That the Police and Crime Commissioner's performance update report be noted.

7. CRIME DATA AND INTEGRITY

The Chief Executive of the OPCC presented the report which detailed the activity undertaken or underway to address areas for improvement in respect of crime data integrity as highlighted via Nottinghamshire's PEEL inspection undertaken by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) in 2022. The Chief Executive of the OPCC assured the Panel that the Police and Crime Commissioner regularly scrutinised crime data and provided with regular update reports. It was noted that following the PEEL inspection, a new division had been created in the force for checking records and databases. Members were assured that no victims had been missed and the main issue had been the recording of secondary offences. Following a question, the Deputy Chief Constable estimated that approximately 10-12 crimes per day had not been recorded which were primarily secondary offences.

The Panel questioned the decision for Nottinghamshire Police to only record a victim's protected characteristics if they were perceived to be a motivating factor in the crime or incident being reported, despite the PEEL report recommending that the force needed to improve its recording of equality data. The Commissioner stated that there was no policing purpose to routinely collect and retain the extra data. The Commissioner also stated that she was working with the Association of

Police and Crime Commissioners to challenge the requirements of this recommendation.

RESOLVED 2023/009

That the report be noted.

The meeting was closed at 4.04pm.