

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 1 JUNE 2020 AT 2.00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

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

Executive Mayor Andy Abrahams – Mansfield District Council - A
Councillor Leslie Ayoola – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Scott Carlton – Newark and Sherwood District Council - A
Lesley Dalby – Independent Member
Councillor Tony Eaton – Bassetlaw District Council
Suma Harding – Independent Member
Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council
Councillor Richard MacRae – Broxtowe Borough Council
Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan - Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Stuart Richardson (substitute for Mayor Abrahams) - Mansfield District Council
Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member
Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Jason Zadrozny – Ashfield District Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

Keith Ford - Team Manager, Democratic Services } Nottinghamshire County Council
Pete Barker - Democratic Services Officer } (Host Authority)

OTHERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Craig Guildford - Chief Constable, Notts Police
Kevin Dennis - Chief Executive, Office of PCC (OPCC)
Charlie Radford - Chief Finance Officer, OPCC

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED 2020/007

That Christine Goldstraw OBE be appointed Chairman of the Panel for the 2020/21 municipal year.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED 2020/008

That Councillor David Ellis be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the 2020/21 municipal year.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2020

Mr Ford confirmed to members that the minutes are public documents and can be shared.

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record, and were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4. NOTES ON TELECONFERENCE 20 MARCH 2020

Members appreciated the issue of domestic violence during lockdown being discussed and the Commissioner informed members that he would bring a report on the subject to the September meeting of the Panel.

The notes of the teleconference held on 20 March 2020, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record, and were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Executive Mayor Abrahams.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

7. REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP - BALANCED APPOINTMENT OBJECTIVE

Keith Ford introduced the report and informed members that the aim was for the Panel to be politically balanced and reflect the community that it served. Mr Ford stated that no Council elections had been held in the past year and no changes in membership had been notified, therefore no changes to the political membership were required. Mr Ford informed the Panel that the reappointment and recruitment process for Independent members was due to commence soon and that a report would be brought to the Panel meeting in September.

Councillor Woodings stated that the City Council felt that it was under-represented but recognised that a consensus was required for changes to be made.

RESOLVED 2020/012

That the membership of the Panel be noted.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

Mr Ford introduced the report and informed the Panel that the schedule attached to the report was open to change. Mr Ford referred to the delayed presentation on domestic violence was due to take place at the meeting of the Panel in September, though there was the possibility

that this could be delayed further. Mr Ford drew members' attention to paragraph 18 of the report which contained the dates of future meetings. Mr Ford spoke about the Annual Report which would cover the Panel's work from last year and informed the Panel that work on the report had been delayed because of other commitments but that it was hoped to bring a draft Annual Report to the meeting in September. Mr Ford also informed members that approval was being sought to renew the annual subscription to the Regional Police & Crime Panel Network organised by Frontline Consulting. Mr Ford stated that the subscription for the year had reduced from £500 to £400, though this no longer included a free place at the National Conference which is due to take place in November, though again this is subject to change.

Mr Ford informed the Panel that the National Conference is due to take place on the same day as the AGM of the new National Association of Police and Fire Panels and invited Mrs Harding as the panel's representative on the national association to feedback from recent virtual meetings. Mrs Harding informed the Panel that a survey had been sent to all 42 panels, with 31 responding, and that the information gathered would either be circulated by email or presented at the Panel's meeting in September.

RESOLVED 2020/013

- 1) That the subscription to the Regional Police and Crime Panel Network be renewed for the 2020-21 financial year at a reduced cost of £400.**
- 2) That any Panel members wishing to attend the national PCP Conference at Warwick Conference Centre contact Keith Ford / Peter Barker to confirm their place.**

9. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT TO MARCH 2020

The Commissioner introduced the report and stated that a lot had happened, much of it unpredictable, since the Panel had last met in February to approve the budget. The Commissioner informed the panel that the response to COVID was an operational matter but that the Chief Constable was on-line to answer any questions.

The Commissioner informed the Panel that for the year ending 31st March 2020, for the first time there had been a decrease in overall crime in Nottinghamshire of 1%.

The Commissioner informed members that Police numbers for the year to 31st March 2020 stood at 2123 and that the plan for the present year was to increase that figure by 150 to bring the total up to 2273. The Commissioner stated that this would be achieved by using the performance bonus that was available from the Government for Forces who had achieved their uplift target and that the Notts force was one of the few to reach their target a year early. The Commissioner stated that recruitment would begin once the figures from the Government were confirmed and which are expected by the summer. The Commissioner informed the Panel that all areas of the County will benefit and that from the autumn Neighbourhood Inspectors will have a 'Reacher' team in place.

The Commissioner spoke about the budget and informed members that the predicted overspend had reduced to £92k, mainly as a result of COVID preventing suppliers supplying goods on time. The Commissioner reminded the Panel that the overall budget was £206m meaning that in this context the overspend was not significant.

The Commissioner referred to COVID and stated that the pandemic had caused much worry, concern and focus. The Commissioner informed the Panel that overall crime had decreased both nationally and in Nottinghamshire: nationally crime had reduced by approximately 25% and in Nottinghamshire by approximately 30%. The Commissioner informed members that there was early concern that officers and staff would be absent through sickness and although some were, the majority are now back, though the current sickness rate of 8.3% is double the normal rate which is standard across the County generally. The Commissioner stated that the majority of those staying away from work were not ill but self-isolating, with many being able to work from home. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Force had learnt the importance of remote working and that some changes to work practices will not be reversed. The Commissioner spoke of the national shortage of PPE equipment and informed the Panel that the Force's stocks were adequate. The Commissioner stated that because local suppliers had been identified and that there was also access to the national supply line, the Force was in a good position. The Commissioner informed members that much effort had gone into maintaining social distancing but because of the nature of the job this had not always been possible. The Commissioner stated that in the main the public had been responsible and respectable and although there had been some problems they had been well handled. The Commissioner informed the Panel that nationally there had been 18,000 fixed penalty notices issued, with only 153 of those in Nottinghamshire. The Commissioner informed the Panel that this meant the Force was in the bottom quartile, by way of comparison Leicestershire and Derbyshire have both issued approximately 50% more notices than Nottinghamshire despite being of a similar size.

The Commissioner spoke about DV and referred to the confusing messages that had been issued on the topic. The Commissioner stated that though calls to the national helpline had increased by 100%, analysis had shown that many of the calls were to professionals from people seeking advice rather than from victims and that this had skewed the figures. The Commissioner informed the Panel that locally calls had increased slightly but not significantly. The Commissioner referred to Juno Women's Aid and informed the Panel that in the past their reliance on traditional technology meant that calls were being missed but that £18k of emergency funding and a move to the 'Cloud' based services meant that everything was now working well. The Commissioner informed the Panel that in the early days of lockdown calls to the Force about DV had gone down but that over the last 8-9 weeks the number of calls had begun to increase, though the Commissioner assured the Panel that plans were in hand and that the meeting in September would be a good opportunity for all those involved to have a discussion.

The Commissioner spoke about the courts and stated that they were still operating, albeit in a reduced way. The Commissioner informed the Panel that there were currently 40k outstanding cases which would take 4-5 years to deal with and which the Commissioner regarded as unacceptable. The Commissioner informed members that discussions were going on between the Home Office, Judges, the CPS, the Ministry of Justice and others to find a way forward but that there had been a disparity between the messages coming from the centre and what was happening locally.

The Commissioner told the Panel that the response of the Police and partners to the COVID situation had been good and the Commissioner thanked the Local Resilience Forum for their work. The Commissioner informed the Panel that much had been learnt about partnership working and that he was involved in work nationally looking at the lessons to be learned which would affect policing in the future.

The Chair invited the Chief Constable to comment on the COVID issue and he informed the Panel that a huge amount of testing of the workforce had taken place and that this had been good for morale. The Chief Constable stated that the fact that the Force was in the bottom quartile for fines issued was the result of the conscious strategy to explain first and use enforcement last, meaning that policing by consent was retained. The Chief Constable spoke of last year's investment in IT which enables work to be sent home and ensures work can still be completed despite the current circumstances. The Chief Constable referred to the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) informing the Panel that this was a strong partnership with the city and the county playing vital roles. The Chief Constable informed members that the early challenges around the supply of PPE was overcome through cooperation with people sharing admirably. The Chief Constable spoke of the importance of understanding the nature of the challenge posed both from a policing and a health point of view, especially in the event of a local outbreak, and assured the Panel that plans are in place. The Chief Constable stated that there were health benefits associated with returning to normality and although a Nightingale hospital and been scoped and planned for, infections seemed to have peaked and there is now no need for the hospital. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that an important strand of work was with the LRF in establishing a 'Recovery Cell' which would look forward at areas such as infrastructure and schools and universities going back so that everything could be done to stimulate the economy while keeping people safe. The Chief Constable spoke of the finance around the current crisis and informed the Panel that some savings had been made in the short term, including in transport from not having to travel to meetings, though extra expenditure had been incurred in purchasing PPE, drawing up contingency plans and increasing visibility through patrolling key areas.

Following the Commissioner's and the Chief Constable's statements the Panel raised the following issues:

- The Chief Constable explained that the Local Resilience Forum was a statutory body comprising all partners and voluntary groups in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire with a Strategic Coordination Group chaired by the Chief Constable and supported by various tactical groups. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that the work of the LRF was informed by all of the public sector and voluntary sector organisations in the City and the County.
- The Chief Constable confirmed that of the 496 staff that had been tested for COVID, 26 were found to be positive and all but 2 were now back at work.
- In terms of noise, the Commissioner informed the Panel that calls regarding Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had increased by 100% and were partly caused by complaints about noise and partly by those not socially distancing. The Commissioner stated that he had discussed with the Chief Constable how the force and the local councils handled the issue of noise and concluded that work needed to be done, with the City committed to working with the Police.
- The Commissioner replied to a question about the '555' facility, where if these 3 numbers were dialled after dialling '999' victims of DV would have their calls recorded, by stating that the option had hardly been used. The Commissioner spoke of Boots the chemist being a good civic player and informed the Panel that DV victims could report incidents confidentially to that company. The Commissioner informed members that as crime had fallen the Police had more time to contact vulnerable people proactively and that there had been a focus on perpetrators during lockdown and that this is detailed in the report which will be

brought to the Panel in September. The Commissioner stated that the Police were just one part in the jigsaw with much work being undertaken with partners and many discussions around refuge provision in lockdown taking place. The Commissioner stated that money had been found but that not all of the required facilities were up and running that would be required as lockdown is eased. The Commissioner informed members that the force was in a strong position but that it was not complacent.

- The Commissioner then responded to a question regarding fixed penalty notices and stop and searches of BAME people. The Commissioner informed the Panel that there had only been 153 fixed penalty notices issued in Nottinghamshire which was a small sample and there were many unknowns associated with this, though the Commissioner did state that although the majority of notices were issued to white males between the ages of 18-25, nationally there was a disproportionate number of those from the BAME community issued with such notices. In terms of stop and search, the Commissioner informed the Panel that the numbers had increased by nearly 100% over the last 12 months but that the Force's success rate was the highest in the country. The Chief Constable then informed members that once the advice had been received officers in various categories according to age, background and underlying health conditions had now all been assessed.
- The Commissioner then responded to a question about documenting the work that had gone well, and not so well, during the pandemic so that lessons could be learned if there was a similar occurrence in the future. The Commissioner stated that the National Police Chiefs' Association had commissioned some work on this and that the Deputy Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire, Rachel Barber, was going to be involved in this. The Commissioner informed the Panel that discussions were going on with the Home Office for a budget for such work, though that work was already under way and it was hoped that an initial report would be available soon.
- The Commissioner was asked about the case of the 14-year-old murdered in Waltham Forest, with the potential lost opportunity to engage with him after he was brought back from Bournemouth due to some confusion of which agency should deal with him and whether procedures were now in place in Nottinghamshire to avoid this in future. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the boy was well known to the force before he moved to London, that there was some slight implied criticism of the force in the safeguarding report, that the police are not always in place to intervene but that the relations between the police, the City and the County Councils are strong in Nottinghamshire. The Chief Constable also spoke of the implied criticism in the report and informed the Panel that he thought it related to the first contact with the police and the school which was not shared with the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and that this information would have helped YOS at the time of the second transgression. The Chief Constable stated that the force had changed its procedures during the serious case review. The Chief Constable then spoke of the work of the Missing from Home Team which works with the Locate Team and children's social care as well as the YOS team, and which shares information and is very effective.
- Responding to a question about sickness levels in the force, the Commissioner stated that that this subject was a regular source of discussion between himself

and the Chief Constable and that he was aware of the steps that were being taken to reduce the incidence. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that the figures had now reduced significantly but had been high due to stress and anxiety. The Chief Constable informed members that recruiting had helped in this respect along with the tighter approach that had been adopted towards ill health retirements. The Chief Constable also stated that the 'back up buddy' scheme and increased awareness of mental health issues had contributed along with changing the Force's cognitive behavioural therapy supplier. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that attendance during the COVID crisis was as high as it had been over the last 2-3 years.

- The Commissioner informed members that Operation Reacher would ultimately be rolled out to all neighbourhoods, hopefully during September/October/November, sergeants had been identified and teams would be put in place, though not full ones initially. The Commissioner stated that 2/3 of the new recruits would be frontline neighbourhood officers and that lockdown had meant the force had been able to put more uniformed officers onto the street.
- The Panel questioned the Commissioner about the response rates to '999' and '101' calls and also about on-line reporting and the Commissioner stated that the figures for '999' calls were one of the best in the country. In terms of '101' calls, the Commissioner stated that there had been difficulties in the past but that the abandonment rate had fallen significantly, and that the system would be moving onto a digital platform in the future. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he would draft a brief report/note for members with more detailed figures including how many callers selected which options when dialling '101'.

RESOLVED 2020/014

That the contents of the report be noted.

10. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – STRATEGIC PRIORITY THEME 3 – TACKLING CRIME AND ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Commissioner introduced the report, stating that it was a short, straightforward report and that given the time constraints he would keep the introduction brief.

There were no questions.

RESOLVED 2020/015

That the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 3.09pm

CHAIR