

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 29 MARCH 2021 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
Councillor Scott Carlton – Newark and Sherwood District Council - **A**
Lesley Dalby – Independent Member
Councillor Tony Eaton – Bassetlaw District Council
Councillor Michael Edwards (substitute for Councillor Khan) – Nottingham City Council
Suma Harding – Independent Member
Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council
Councillor Neghat Khan – Nottingham City Council - **A**
Councillor Richard MacRae – Broxtowe Borough Council
Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan - Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Helen-Ann Smith – Ashfield District Council
Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member
Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Craig Guildford - Chief Constable, Notts Police
Rachel Barber - Deputy Chief Constable, Notts Police
Kevin Dennis - Chief Executive, Office of PCC (OPCC)
Emma Foody – Deputy PCC

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2021

The minutes of the last meeting held on 4 February 2021, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed by those Members who had attended the meeting, and were signed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Carlton.

Councillor Edwards replaced Councillor Khan for this meeting only.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ellis declared a private interest as the Commissioner had asked him to act as his agent in the forthcoming elections, which did not preclude him from speaking or voting on any item on the agenda.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Ms Toomey introduced the Work Programme report and drew members' attention to the section concerning the Panel's Annual Report and the recommendation that a sub-group be established to produce the report for the municipal year 2020/21. The Chair spoke of the positive comments received regarding the Panel's first report produced last year and asked members who would like to join the sub-group to email Ms Toomey to confirm.

Ms Toomey stated that the report also contained details of the proposed dates for future meetings for the municipal year 2021/22 which members were asked to approve.

RESOLVED 2021/006

- 1) That a sub-group be established by the Panel to produce the Annual Report 2020/21.**
- 2) That the following dates be agreed for the Panel meetings in the 2021/22 municipal year:**

Monday 7 June 2021 (Annual Meeting)	2pm
Monday 6 September 2021	2pm
Monday 15 November 2021	2pm
Monday 24 January 2022 (Budget workshop)	10.30am
Thursday 3 February 2022 (Budget workshop)	10.30am
Tuesday 8 February 2022 (Budget meeting)	10.30am
Monday 28 March 2022	2pm
Monday 6 June 2022 (Annual Meeting)	2pm

5. UPDATE ON DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE AND PCC POSITION PAPER

The Commissioner delivered the initial introduction to the report, stating that the figures in Nottinghamshire mirrored those nationally. The Commissioner informed members that he hoped to announce further support soon for those working in the support services emphasising that he would prefer it if resources could be made available on a longer-term basis rather than as a result of an annual bidding process as at present.

The Commissioner then handed over to the Deputy Commissioner who stated that the position paper detailed in the report aimed to give a comprehensive overview of the whole-system approach that had been adopted. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that the present position was a strong one, with the support available sophisticated, and that this had been confirmed in meetings with partners, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the Home Office.

The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that although there was a solid base from which to work, the need to do better had led to the development of an Action Plan and the Deputy Commissioner gave the following examples of how things were being taken forward:

- The use of a domestic abuse car had been launched with a specialist worker accompanying the police in order to provide early support. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that this followed a successful pilot in West Yorkshire.
- The Force wanted to build on the high rates of satisfaction with the police expressed by victims by providing early wrap-around support.
- Funding had been provided to the Juno project for a year to allow them to support children who had seen abuse involving knives.
- A bid had been successful to fund a perpetrator programme with the first cohort due to be admitted in the week following the meeting.

The Deputy Commissioner stated that there were still significant pressures in the area, some as a result of the pandemic, and that the announcement on further funding from the Ministry of Justice was imminent. The Deputy Commissioner echoed the Commissioner's earlier comments about the preference for funds to be provided on a longer-term basis.

The Deputy Commissioner spoke of the work being undertaken to analyse exactly who is contacting the City/County supported Helpline and informed members that practitioners as well as victims were using the Helpline. The Deputy Commissioner stated that demand during lockdown had decreased then increased when restrictions were lifted, mirroring the movements in recorded crime. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that she expected this pattern to be repeated when the current lockdown restrictions were lifted. The Deputy Commissioner stated that those receiving the calls were based at home and therefore were having to deal with the consequences of that at the same time as providing the service and that there was a determination to support those professionals during this challenging time.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Responding to a question about sexual abuse in schools, the Commissioner informed the Panel that he was meeting the Chief Constable tomorrow to discuss the issue and stated that he was aware of the controversy surrounding the presence of police officers in schools with Norfolk leading in this area and providing a helpline in addition to that of the third sector's. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he would be bringing forward proposals soon.
- The Panel praised the Force for its early identification of misogyny as a hate crime and its swift action when incidents were reported. The Commissioner informed the

Panel that he was proud of the work being undertaken in Nottinghamshire, some of which involved the former Chief Constable, Sue Fish. He spoke of the positive comments made by the Women's Centre, Nottinghamshire Citizens and Nottingham Trent University and spoke of the need to change culture and attitudes. The Commissioner stated that in the same way as the Stephen Lawrence murder and the McPherson report was a seminal moment in the history of race, the murder of Sarah Everard was a similar moment regarding the treatment of women. The Panel praised the Force's handling of the 2 Minutes' silence in Nottingham.

- Replying to a question regarding the refreshing of the Force's policy, the Deputy Commissioner stated that the monitoring of the figures was crucial and that victims would continue to be supported to encourage the reporting of incidents. The Deputy Commissioner also spoke of the importance of prevention and the work being done in schools with the support of both the City and County Councils and informed the Panel that the high-level Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy would be launched at the weekend with an Action Plan to follow. The Panel referred to Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders (DVPNs and DVPOs) and the Chief Constable informed members that the Force was very careful when going through this process, which involved applying to the Magistrates' court, as it did not want to create the scenario where the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) could avoid making a decision. The Chief Constable stated that he thought the number of DVPOs would increase over time.
- The Panel highlighted some historical data from the south of the county with the Deputy Commissioner responding to a question about rates of DV in the city and county, and the link between deprivation and the incidence of DV, by informing the Panel that figures showed in the last quarter of 2019/20 that the gap in the number of cases in the city and county was widening. The Deputy Commissioner stated that although there did appear to be a link between the incidence of DV and deprivation, some have contested this link and it was acknowledged that anyone can be affected by DV regardless of their background. The Deputy Commissioner stated that while some local authorities employed DV Co-Ordinators, not all authorities in the county had the same funding and a county-wide conversation was needed. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that it was still too early to be able to assess fully the effects of lockdown / Covid on the DV figures.
- The Deputy Commissioner was asked why the repeat rates of offending had remained stable for the last few years and informed the Panel that victims suffered 80 incidents on average before involving the police so as a consequence work had been undertaken to provide victims with additional support and alternative options to ringing the police. The Deputy Commissioner agreed to provide Panel members with the figures relating to the number of restraining orders issued to repeat offenders. The Chief Constable informed members that repeat cases did receive closer inspection than others and that the Force abided by a strict definition of repeat offences not adopted universally, but even given this the figures for Nottinghamshire compared favourably to other Forces.
- The Panel asked if there was any stigma around males reporting DV and the Deputy Commissioner replied that there was and that Equation was doing some work with this under-represented group. A bid had also been submitted to the Ministry of Justice for funds including a sum for working with men and boys. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that the strategy contained a separate addendum relating to male

victims of DV as men and boys did not identify with the strategy adopted for women and girls.

- The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that she had met health agencies and representatives from the third sector earlier in the year to discuss the topic of DV and that some general commitments had been made, for example around consultation, but that Covid pressures had limited the ability for partners to engage more fully at present, though further contact would be made in the future. The Commissioner confirmed that work with GPs had ceased because of the pandemic but that work would recommence once the NHS had returned to normal.
- The Commissioner replied to a query about the 'DA Partnership Car' and informed members that the officer involved in triage had been there from the start, was outstanding and that it was his role to link the enforcement and mental health support aspects together. The Chief Constable confirmed that the sergeant involved was well aware of his responsibilities, that the presence of a mental health nurse in the car did help and that the aim of the scheme was to safeguard victims and ensure that need was directed to the right agencies.

RESOLVED 2021/007

That the Panel notes the demand on Nottinghamshire's Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse (DSVA) Helpline and the progress made on the Action Plan.

6. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

The Commissioner introduced the report and referred to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which was not included in his update report. The Commissioner informed the Panel that among a range of proposed measures, the Bill addressed the topics of Travellers, including the illegal occupation of land, and knife crime, including the issue of stop and search. The Commissioner explained that there was still time to respond to the proposed measures in the Bill as Royal Assent was not due for another year.

The Commissioner spoke of the vigil for Sarah Everard that had recently taken place, and which the Police had not wished to go ahead. He informed the Panel that this had gone smoothly as those attending behaved responsibly and dispersed when asked. The Commissioner informed members that a female police officer had lit a candle at the vigil and stated that the sensitive handling of the situation in Nottingham contrasted with scenes elsewhere in the country and that the Chief Constable had been asked to give evidence on operational policing matters as a result.

The Commissioner drew members' attention to the section of the report dealing with the first part of the government's review of the role of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and informed the Panel that the recommendations contained nothing that was unanticipated. The Commissioner informed the Panel that one of the recommendations concerned promoting best practice in terms of the work of Police and Crime Panels and the Commissioner informed members that he was keen to get involved in this. The Commissioner stated that another aspect of the report concerned Fire Governance and informed members that this could have consequences regarding the Panel's future responsibilities. The Commissioner also spoke of the second part of the government's

review and informed members that this included consideration of a greater involvement for PCCs in the criminal justice system.

The Commissioner then spoke of the budget, acknowledging that it was nearly the end of the financial year, and informed members that in terms of the revenue budget an overspend of £1m on the £217m budget was anticipated, but that in the next 3 to 5 years significant savings were expected from having brought the vehicle maintenance contract back in-house. The Commissioner then referred to the large capital programme and informed the Panel that the new custody suite was due to open on time in July, and hopefully on budget, and that it should make a substantial difference to staff and those held there. The Commissioner stated that the Bridewell had been sold to the Courts Services, which was the preferred option, and informed members that he was pleased with the price achieved and the terms of the contract. The Commissioner spoke of the plans for the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), on a site close to the existing one, and informed members that the project was at the design stage and that although there was an issue with costs at the moment everyone involved was working hard on finding a solution.

The Commissioner stated that crime in Nottinghamshire continued to fall while police numbers increased, informing the Panel that 100 more officers would be recruited this year with the majority of those being deployed on the frontline therefore increasing the visibility of police on the streets. The Commissioner spoke of the success of Operation Reacher and the importance of working with local communities.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Responding to a question about the likely effects of the easing of lockdown on the incidence of crime, the Commissioner stated that there was some indication given in July/August when lockdown was eased and violent crime increased to think that this would happen again and informed the Panel that all Forces had been asked to put plans in place. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that briefings had already taken place with Neighbourhood Inspectors and that all partners were working together closely to gather intelligence and identify potential problems.
- The Commissioner was asked about the £7m overspend on the contract for the supply and maintenance of vehicles and informed the Panel that this contract was between the Police and Venson's and that at the time of signing there were very few alternatives to the PFI contract. The Commissioner stated that negotiations had been taking place over the last 2 years, and that while the cost of buying out the contract had been slightly higher than anticipated, so were the savings, and the exit costs were largely covered by a Home Office grant. The Commissioner informed members that another PFI contract was coming to an end concerning the building at Riverside and that negotiations were ongoing with the Force, the Home Office and the Treasury and that further savings were expected.
- The Panel praised the Force's handling of the recent vigil and 'Kill the Bill' demonstration and the Chief Constable informed the Panel that the public order commanders on duty were very experienced and community links were good. The Chief Constable stated that a contingency plan had been in place but emphasised the importance of engaging all the way through the process and acting sensibly, respectfully and proportionately. The Chief Constable informed members that there had been a problem the previous week with a small group of football supporters but

that the problem had been contained and those involved had been quickly dispatched from the area.

- The Panel expressed its approval at the use of body worn video and the Commissioner confirmed that all frontline staff had been issued with it. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that the new equipment had been acquired as part of the contract with Lancashire Police and allowed officers to download information to the Cloud. The Chief Constable stated that he believed the use of the equipment was beneficial for both the public and the police as it helped build trust when conduct was being recorded. The Chief Constable stated that the courts also benefited from the use of this equipment.
- The Panel praised the success of Operation Reacher and especially its positive impact in the Meadows and the Commissioner informed members that the new Neighbourhood Inspector had been born locally and had risen through the ranks.
- Responding to a query about why £500k had been taken from the IT budget and allocated to staff car parking at HQ, the Commissioner informed the Panel that there is a Travel Plan in place but that because of shift patterns it was difficult to implement car sharing at that site and informed members that at Byron House there was no designated parking, with staff using public transport including the tram. The Commissioner informed members that IT expenditure was moving from capital to revenue as the turnover in equipment was now so high.
- The Panel raised the issue of the level of enforcement in areas that were subject to 20mph speed limits and stated that all side roads in Nottingham have a 20mph limit with consideration being given to extending this into the city centre to encourage cycling and walking. The Commissioner informed members that most schools also had a parking problem which the Police could not resolve alone and praised the good relationship that existed with the City. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that income from enforcement action went in cycles and at the moment the decrease in traffic had resulted in a consequent reduction in offences and therefore income, but that this did not affect the resources the Police devoted to the problem. The Commissioner agreed to look into the matter of enforcement in the 20mph areas and provide a response to the Panel outside of the meeting.
- The Panel brought up the subject of dog theft and the Deputy Commissioner stated that this was a good opportunity to demonstrate how to listen to the community's concerns and shape the police response as a result.
- The Deputy Commissioner responded to a question on the effect of the opening of the Nightingale court on the backlog of cases by informing the Panel that initially the court would only be open for 3 months , though a longer period would probably be required, and that there was no target as to the number of cases it was expected to hear. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that Crown Court cases were expected to be listed in Mansfield once Covid-compliant measures had been put in place and that a venue in Loughborough was due to open which should benefit the wider region. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that discussions with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service were ongoing and an update on the situation would be brought to the next meeting of the Panel.

- The Commissioner responded to a question about the increasing rate of abandoned '101' calls by stating that initially the system had been intended to cover all public services but that this had proved too difficult to implement. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Yorkshire Force had been forced to cease its '101' service because of the effect of Covid on staff availability and that Nottinghamshire had faced not only the problems posed by Covid but also the challenge of running a new system at the same time. The Commissioner stated that the new headquarters would provide a new facility for call handling. The Chief Constable spoke of how Covid had affected the number of staff available to take calls but that it was now possible to handle calls outside of headquarters which should help the situation. The Chief Constable reassured the Panel that recruitment to the relevant posts was 105%, that this area had been prioritised and informed members that there was a time lag for the figures to come through and that the latest figures showed that very few '101' calls are now being abandoned.

RESOLVED 2021/008

That the contents of the report be noted.

The Chair stated that this was the last meeting before the local and PCC elections and thanked the Commissioner and his team for the support and information that had been provided in this term and wished all members well.

The meeting closed at 3.49pm

CHAIR