

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 2.00PM AT COUNTY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

Executive Mayor Andy Abrahams – Mansfield District Council
Councillor Scott Carlton – Nottinghamshire County Council – Apologies
Councillor Teresa Cullen – Broxtowe Borough Council
Lesley Dalby – Independent Member
Suma Harding – Independent Member
Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council – Apologies
Councillor Mike Introna – Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Sajid Mohammed – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Madelaine Richardson – Bassetlaw District Council
Councillor Helen-Ann Smith – Ashfield District Council – Apologies
Councillor Paul Taylor – Newark & Sherwood District Council
Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member
Councillor John Wilmott – Ashfield District Council (substitute for Councillor Helen-Ann Smith)
Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Caroline Henry
Gillian Holder – Chief Financial Officer (OPCC)
Dan Howitt – Head of Strategy and Performance (OPCC)
Nicola Wade – Head of Commissioning and Partnerships (OPCC)
Steve Cooper – Deputy Chief Constable (Nottinghamshire Police Force)

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2023

The minutes of the last meeting held on 25 September 2023, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from Councillor Helen-Ann Smith (Ashfield District Council). She was replaced by Councillor John Wilmott for this meeting only.

Apologies were also received from:

- Christine Goldstraw OBE (Independent Member)
- Councillor Rob Inglis (Rushcliffe Borough Council)
- Councillor Scott Carlton (Nottinghamshire County Council)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Teresa Cullen declared a potential pecuniary interest because she was employed at Transform Training, which had received funding from the Commissioner, to which there was reference in the Commissioner's Update report.

The independent members of the panel declared a pecuniary interest in the item 'Independent co-opted members' and stated that they would leave the meeting during the item's discussion.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel's support officer introduced the work programme and invited members to propose additional items. It was also noted that a confirmation hearing would need to be organised following a recruitment process for a Chief Executive for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Panel was informed that the Annual Police (Fire) and Crime Panel Conference had taken place recently and that Suma Harding attended as its representative. Suma Harding provided positive feedback about the conference and particularly found the question-and-answer session with three Police and Crime Commissioners useful.

One suggestion arising from the conference feedback was about whether panel members might be able to attend public meetings with the Commissioner. The Commissioner agreed to send the Panel's support officer dates of future public meetings to circulate to the Panel. A further suggestion was highlighted about opportunities used by other panels, like piggy-backing on existing newsletters, to explain what the panel was and how it worked.

A member raised a query about an event in their local area to which the Commissioner was invited, its purpose and attendees. This was picked up outside the meeting.

It was suggested that consideration be given for the Panel to receive a report regarding the statistics for repeat sexual and domestic violence.

Action points

- The Police and Crime Commissioner to send meeting dates to the Panel support officer.
- That an item be added to the work programme on repeat sexual and domestic violence

RESOLVED 2023/22

That the work programme be noted.

5. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

The Chair presented the Police and Crime Panel Annual Report which summarised the Panel's activities over the previous municipal year (from the annual meeting in June 2022 to May 2023). The annual report also highlighted forthcoming planned areas of focus. The Chairman thanked everyone who was involved in putting the report together. It was noted that the Annual Report would be used as a communications tool targeted at the public and other elected members to promote the Panel's role and raise awareness of its activities. One member highlighted that Ashfield District Council's logo needed updating. It was confirmed that this could be done in advance of the document being published.

RESOLVED 2023/23

That the Police and Crime Panel Annual Report be approved and published on the Nottinghamshire County Council website subject to the Ashfield District Council logo being updated.

6. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS UPDATE REPORT

The Police and Crime Commissioner delivered an update to the Panel, offering an overview of the activities she had undertaken since September 2023. The report informed the Police and Crime Panel about how she was fulfilling her statutory responsibilities and progress made to achieving the objectives outlined in the 2021 to 2025 Police and Crime Plan. The work that had taken place since the Panel was last updated included:

- The detached youth programme which to date had worked with 4586 in Nottingham and aimed to steer them away from drugs, alcohol and crime.
- The Nottingham Knife Crime in Schools guidance was launched on 17 October 2023. The launch covered improving partnership work and strategic planning, promoting good practice, co-ordinating early intervention and improving information sharing.
- Two new officers had joined the Office of the Police and Crime Panel to assist with delivering the preventing violence against women and girls action plan.
- Cyber Monday would see the first in-person fraud partnership meeting. A fraud partnership charter had been introduced which included private-sector partners to help prevent people from becoming victims of cybercrime.

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Taskforce had been working together to identify anti-social behaviour hotspot locations and it was expected that some funding would be available in the next financial year to continue this project.
- The Immediate Justice Programme would launch in January 2024.
- Police was tackling rural crime at the Commissioner's next accountability board meeting with the Chief Constable.
- The new Nottinghamshire Victim CARE service commenced on 1 October 2023 with a bespoke service for children and young people called 'got your back'.
- The Commissioner thanked her members of staff for their hard work in deputising following the departure of their Chief Executive and informed the Panel that her priority was commencing the recruitment process to appoint a new Interim Chief Executive.
- Going forward, the Police and Crime Commissioner stated that she would be consulting with residents on their feelings about the police precept.

Panel members posed questions regarding community tension and how Nottinghamshire Police was addressing islamophobia and antisemitism. In response, the Commissioner stated that there was a national requirement for all police forces to provide daily reporting of community tensions and demonstrations. It was noted that 16 hate crimes had been reported which had been linked to the conflict in Gaza. Nottinghamshire Police had also been helping the Metropolitan Police support large protests in London. The Deputy Chief Constable informed the Panel that police officers were deployed if the force was made aware of protests and provided assurance that hate-related incidents were being investigated thoroughly. The Commissioner highlighted her ongoing work engaging with Jewish and Muslim communities in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Following a question, the Commissioner agreed that early intervention was essential for preventing crime. The Commissioner informed the Panel that Divert Plus aimed to prevent young people in Nottinghamshire from re-offending and that she was proud of the programmes delivered in schools to educate young people about toxic relationships.

The Commissioner informed the Panel that she had spoken with the new Home Secretary and that their priorities were protecting the public, pursuing criminals and prosecuting.

Following questions about the increase of retail crime in Nottinghamshire, the Commissioner stated that she was worried that due to the cost-of-living crisis, residents would become more tempted to buy stolen goods. She also stated new measures were being introduced to prevent shoplifters selling on their stolen goods to licensed premises and their customers.

Concerns were raised that some retailers were not getting responses from Nottinghamshire Police after reporting a crime. The Deputy Chief Constable stated that once a crime was reported it was assessed based on threat, harm and risk which meant some cases might be dealt with by telephone.

The Commissioner spoke about Operation Pegasus when the Panel raised concerns about organised gang crime and shop lifting. It was explained that the

plan included a police commitment to prioritise urgently attending the scene of shoplifting instances involving violence against a shop worker, where security guards had detained an offender or where attendance was needed to secure evidence.

Members of the Panel raised concerns that only 10% domestic abuse cases resulted in a charge. The Deputy Chief Constable assured the Panel that every victim received support from an officer and that safeguarding was put in place. It was also noted that there had been a 3.3% increase in the last year of evidence-led prosecutions.

The Panel asked for further information about women's and men specific cautions as detailed in the Commissioners forward plan.

Councillor Teresa Cullen left the meeting whilst the following question was discussed as it related to her pecuniary interest.

The Panel raised concerns about the £64k spend for district councils to carry out a range of community engagement initiatives to support the compliance with the serious violence duty and support the 2024 needs assessment. Members wanted assurance that work was underway in all areas and that the needs assessment that was being shaped by the information, would be ready to be shared in advance of the deadline of 31st January 2023.

The Commissioner agreed to provide a written response to further questions about the production of the Strategic Needs Assessment in support of the implementation of the serious violence duty.

The Commissioner was confident that the immediate justice programme would be ready to launch by 2nd January 2024. The Panel was informed that Red Snapper had been commissioned to manage the programme. The Commissioner was confident that up to 32 people a week would take part in the immediate justice programme.

The Commissioner agreed to share the anti-social behaviour priority hotspot locations identified by the anti-social behaviour taskforce with members of the panel. It was hoped that the identification of anti-social behaviour hotspots would inform the focus of new Home Office funding in 2024 and would enable 25,000-30,000 hours of hotspot patrolling.

The Commissioner stated that she was prioritising the recruitment of a new Interim Chief Executive and aimed to complete interviews in January 2024.

The Panel were informed that the Commissioner was considering appointing a deputy so that a representative could attend all meetings when required. The Commissioner stated that the scope of her role had increased since she was first elected in 2021 and therefore, she believed that she could deliver more for residents if a deputy was appointed.

In response to questions regarding the new Nottinghamshire Victim CARE service, the Commissioner stated that the posters advertising the bespoke support for

children and young people called 'Got Your Back' was representative of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in Nottingham.

Action points:

- The Police and Crime Commissioner to provide a written response regarding the £64k spend on community engagement activities for Community Safety Partnerships and the following questions:
 - What does the Commissioner know about engagement that has happened to date and plans for future engagement?
 - Does the Commissioner have any areas that cause concern and is there any support that could be provided by Panel members to help move work forwards?
 - What confidence does the Commissioner have that the Strategic Needs Assessment will be ready to be submitted by the deadline?
 - What can the Commissioner do to ensure that partners have the opportunity to review the Strategic Needs Assessment in a meaningful way before its submission?

- The Police and Crime Commissioner to share the anti-social behaviour hotspot areas identified by the anti-social behaviour taskforce.

RESOLVED 2023/24

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

7. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Head of Strategy and Performance presented the performance update to the Panel, offering an overview of performance against key indicators that reflected priorities within the Make Notts Safe Plan.

The positive exceptions highlighted were:

- Levels of violence with injury were standing 10% below the previous year and 12.5% below the pre-Covid baseline.
- The recorded possession of weapons offences continued to increase as a reflection of proactive work being carried out across the force to respond to reports of knife crime and use of stop and search powers where necessary.
- At local authority level, public confidence rates had begun to stabilise at levels comparable to the pre-covid average.
- Police recorded anti-social behaviour had reduced by 10%.

The negative exceptions highlighted included:

- Nottingham City remained the highest rate of first-time entrants into the youth justice system per 100,000 children.

- The number of individuals killed or seriously injured on Nottinghamshire's roads stood 12% higher than in the previous years.
- There was a downward trend in stop and searches resulting in a positive outcome.

Members of the Panel raised concerns about the deterioration in public confidence indicators. The Commissioner agreed with their concerns and believed that the Chief Constable was passionate about improving confidence in Nottinghamshire Police and increasing neighbourhood policing. The Panel was informed that the statistics in the report were from the police and crime survey in which 4,500 residents take part. Despite the low levels of confidence in the Police, the Deputy Chief Constable was pleased to note that satisfaction levels with those who had direct dealings with the police were high. The Deputy Chief Constable also stated that Nottinghamshire Police survey its own police officers and staff to understand how confident they were in the police.

Some members of the Panel believed that low confidence levels in the police, particularly in Bassetlaw, made some residents feel reluctant to report crime. Concerns were also raised about the number of police officers being taken off the beat when they took a detainee to a custody suite in Mansfield or Nottingham City. Additionally, some Panel members believed that there had been a decrease in arrest rates in Newark since the closure of the custody suite.

In response to the Panel's concerns about there not being a custody suite in Bassetlaw or Newark the Commissioner suggested that information she had recently provided to Bassetlaw District Council be distributed to Panel members. The Commissioner explained that the response talked about the cost benefit analysis of custody suites. She also stated that there was enough capacity at the current custody suites in Mansfield and Nottinghamshire for the number of detainees.

Responding to the Panel's opinions about the number of arrests made, the Deputy Chief Constable noted that arrest rates had dropped in Newark before the custody suite had closed due to the introduction of voluntary attendance. It was agreed that other queries about custody suites could be discussed at the Panel's budget workshops in January 2024.

The Deputy Chief Constable was confident that there had been no deterioration in reasonable grounds for stop and search to take place. The Commissioner also stated that the Panel would receive a report providing them with an overview of the outcomes of the Independent Community Scrutiny Panel.

The Panel was informed that the Violence Reduction Partnership was progressing an exploratory research study by Nottingham Trent University to better understand the factors driving higher than average rates of first-time entrants into the youth justice system.

The levels of anti-social behaviour were a concern for a panel, with reference made to a specific area in Worksop. The Commissioner indicated that she would be happy to visit with the neighbourhood inspector.

In response to the substantial increase in the number of disclosures and stalking protection orders granted, the Deputy Chief Constable stated that there were now a number of orders that could be granted. It was also noted that the use of 'outcome 16' when the victim did not support police action going forward was decreasing. The Commissioner believed that this was due to the introduction of digivans which enabled a victim to receive back their mobile phone within 48 hours of the police taking it away to retrieve evidence.

Action points:

- That information produced for Bassetlaw District Council which covered custody suites and resource allocation be shared with Panel members.
- That further discussion around custody suite provision be captured within one of the budget workshop sessions in January 2024.

RESOLVED 2023/25

That the Performance Update report be noted.

8. INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The independent co-opted members of the Panel left the meeting at this point.

Councillor David Ellis introduced the report and reminded members of the options that were contained in the report.

Councillor David Ellis praised the high contribution of the current independent co-opted members and proposed that their terms of office be extended should they wish. It was noted that if there were vacancies a recruitment process would take place.

RESOLVED 2023/26

1. That the terms of the independent co-opted members be extended for a further two years following the expiry of their current terms to the end of May 2026 should they wish.
2. Recruitment should take place to fill any vacancy created by any independent co-opted member not choosing to extend their terms of office.

The meeting was closed at 4.19pm.