

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2014 AT 2.00 PM AT NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

Chairman - Councillor John Clarke – Gedling Borough Council

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

Rizwan Araf – Independent Member

Councillor Chris Baron – Ashfield District Council

Councillor David Challinor – Bassetlaw District Council

Councillor Eunice Campbell – Nottingham City Council

Councillor Jon Collins – Nottingham City Council- **A**

Councillor Georgina Culley – Nottingham City Council

Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle – Nottinghamshire County Council

Christine Goldstraw OBE – Independent Member - **A**

Councillor John Handley – Nottinghamshire County Council

Suma Harding – Independent Member

Councillor Pat Lally – Broxtowe Borough Council

Councillor Bruce Laughton – Newark and Sherwood District Council

Councillor Keith Longdon – Nottinghamshire County Council

Councillor Debbie Mason – Rushcliffe Borough Council - **A**

Councillor Carole McCulloch – Nottingham City Council - **A**

Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member

Councillor Eddie Fearon – Rushcliffe Borough Council (Substitute for Councillor Debbie Mason)

OFFICERS PRESENT

Jayne Francis-Ward – Corporate Director) Nottinghamshire

Keith Ford – Senior Democratic Services Officer) County Council

Nigel Stevenson – Chief Accountant) (Host Authority)

OTHERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping – Police and Crime Commissioner

Chris Cutland – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

Kevin Dennis – Chief Executive, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

Chief Constable Chris Eyre – Nottinghamshire Police

James Molloy – Temporary Chief Finance Officer, OPCC

Margaret Monckton – Assistant Chief Officer, Resources, Nottinghamshire Police

Charlotte Radford – Chief Finance Officer, OPCC

Chief Superintendent Ian Waterfield – Nottinghamshire Police

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2013, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record and were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Christine Goldstraw OBE and Councillors Collins, McCulloch and Mason.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Laughton declared a private interest in relation to his wife's employment with Nottinghamshire Police.

4. INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Mr Molloy who would be covering for Charlotte Radford as Temporary Chief Finance Officer whilst Ms Radford was undergoing medical treatment. The Chair thanked Ms Radford for her work and wished her a speedy recovery.

5. DRAFT PREVENTING DEMAND STRATEGY 2014-17

Chief Superintendent (CS) Ian Waterfield introduced the report and highlighted the background and aims of this strategy which sought to reduce demand for Police services by working more closely with partner agencies at an earlier stage, thereby preventing duplication of effort. This work had received a £500,000 grant from the Home Office's Innovation Fund and more funding was likely to be available in future for such preventative initiatives.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members welcomed the approach which they felt was long overdue. In terms of partnership working, the need for the Police to input into the planning application process (for example, through the submission of crime impact safety statements) was emphasised. Members felt that such submissions could prevent further work and additional expenditure down the line;
- in response to Members' questions, CS Waterfield clarified that the flexibility within the strategy would enable a bespoke approach to be taken in different areas with different needs. He felt that the reluctance of some agency officers to work outside of their specialisms and fully engage in partnership working was one of the greatest obstacles to implementing this preventative approach, which had inter-agency problem solving as a key outcome. Members highlighted the joint working between Rushcliffe Borough Council and the Police as an example of such successful partnership working;
- the Police did not want to lead this work as it was recognised that partnership working was needed to drive innovation and integration. The Commissioner

underlined the importance of strengthening relationships with the Fire and Rescue Service and health agencies;

- CS Waterfield clarified that the two pilot schemes (one in the County and one in Aspley in the City) would commence in February/March 2014 and would last for no more than six months;
- in response to Members' concerns that the Strategy was potentially duplicating similar initiatives already occurring, CS Waterfield stated that individual approaches had been developed previously but best practice arising from these had not been shared across the City and the County.

RESOLVED 2014/001

That the draft Preventing Demand Strategy proposals be noted.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

Keith Ford introduced the report which outlined the agenda items scheduled for future Panel meetings. During discussions, the Commissioner agreed a request to bring an update report on the Victim's Strategy and Regional Collaboration to a future meeting. In response to a Member request for further details of Force sickness absence levels, the Commissioner underlined that there were targets about both Police Officer and staff sickness absence levels within the Police and Crime Plan.

RESOLVED 2014/002

That the work programme be noted and updated as discussed.

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER 2014-15

The Commissioner introduced the report and stated it was a challenging budget but one which was balanced and sustainable. He highlighted the following key issues:-

- savings of approximately £40 million had already been achieved. There was a savings target of £12.6m for 2014-15 and a similar figure for the following year, with a further £20m of savings required thereafter;
- the budget proposals had been developed in consultation with the Force and had the full support of the Chief Constable;
- key areas of development and funding included rural area policing (with a text messaging service being developed to warn people of suspicious occurrences); increased numbers of GPS tags for offenders; mental health; the development of the Alcohol Strategy; increased focus on regional collaboration; an improved workforce mix which better reflects the communities served and would enable appropriate tasks to be undertaken by

civilian staff; and increased numbers of Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers. With regard to the latter point and recent reports in the media that further recruitment could potentially bankrupt the Force, the Commissioner underlined that recruitment would not be pursued if it was not possible to make the necessary savings required to finance it;

- the Commissioner underlined the need for caution around the use of reserves and stated that £2m from reserves would be used this year in order to make the required investments to make savings in further years;
- the Commissioner stated that the recommended precept increase was 'up to 1.96%' because, at this stage, the Secretary of State had yet to announce the precept capping level. If necessary, the increase level would be reduced to below whatever the capping level was set at. He underlined that an increase of 1.96% would result in an additional cost of 4-5p per day for the majority of residents and public consultation had revealed support for such an increase in return for the additional officers and services proposed;
- the Chief Constable underlined his support for the jointly developed budget proposals and emphasised the ongoing efforts to redress the disadvantage which Nottinghamshire faced through the Government's existing funding formula. The Commissioner highlighted his involvement in this review and stated that any changes would not be introduced until 2016/17 at the earliest. Members welcomed these ongoing efforts and suggested a presentation to a future Panel meeting on this issue.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members queried how the recruitment of further Police Officers would be balanced against the proposals to 'civilianize' tasks currently undertaken by Officers. In response, the Commissioner emphasised how the closures of police stations would enable savings to help fund recruitment and was in line with the public's desire for 'bobbies not buildings'. He recognised that this was a year of transition in terms of the workforce mix and contrasted the Nottinghamshire proposals with likely reduction in Police Officer numbers in Leicestershire and Derbyshire. The Chief Constable added that the proposals to 'civilianize' tasks would aim to enhance and make more cost-efficient those services currently being delivered and further enhance the role of PCSOs in neighbourhoods. In illustrating this point, the Commissioner highlighted the benefits of using suitable specialists, rather than Police Officers, to investigate commercial fraud;
- in comparison to last year's budget reports, Members welcomed the increased detail within the reports about level of reserves and queried whether the proposed remaining level (following £2m of expenditure this coming year) was in line with CIPFA advice about prudent levels. In response the Commissioner stated that, in comparison to most other Forces, the levels were relatively low but underlined the need to invest to save and to better manage existing contracts (such as fleet management) in order to optimise savings. The Chief Constable added that the Force was leading nationally on

the proposed investment into improved technology which would enable Officers to record and capture information directly from incidents;

- Members felt that further means of income generation needed to be fully explored, for example seeking increased contributions from those organisations whose activities required policing such as local professional football and cricket clubs and pubs and clubs. In response, the Commissioner stated that charges to sporting clubs were currently being reviewed but stressed that these charges needed to be set at a fair level. He highlighted that the City Council was currently consulting on a Night Time Levy for business although other local authorities had chosen not to pursue this. He also highlighted the issue of potential sponsorship, whilst recognising the sensitivities around this;
- with regard to buildings being closed and numbers of Officers increasing, Members stressed the importance of ensuring Officers had a place to go in order to rest, eat and access washroom facilities when on duty. In response, the Commissioner stated that local, low-cost bases which Officers could 'drop in' at were being explored;
- some Members did not support an increase and felt that it would be better to take the 1% freeze grant on offer from the Government. In response, the Commissioner stated that 74% of the Force's funding currently came from central Government and he was keen to see a relative increase in the local tax base level over time. He added that there was no guarantee that the freeze grant would continue or be built into the base budget and therefore a potential 'cliff edge' scenario could be faced in future years if that funding was withdrawn. He added that he respected the difference of views around the increase;
- the majority of Members supported the proposed 1.96% increase in light of the levels of savings required this year and the potential 'cliff-edge' scenario in future years; the current level of reserves; the potential impact of the A19 appeal judgement; and the positive views expressed in the public consultation about the proposed increase.

RESOLVED 2014/003

1) That the following reports be noted:-

- **Revenue Budget Report 2014-15**
- **Medium Term Financial Plan Report**
- **Reserves Strategy**
- **4 Year Capital Programme**
- **Treasury Management Strategy.**

2) That the Commissioner's decision to increase the precept by up to 1.96% in 2014-15 be supported.

8. DRAFT REFRESHED POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2014-18

The Commissioner introduced the report and his refreshed Police and Crime Plan.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members welcomed the use of clear and ambitious targets as a means of enabling the public to clearly assess performance. They raised concerns that the Anti-Social Behaviour target of 8% may not be met this year. In response, the Commissioner felt that some calls about ASB were now coming directly to the Police rather than to local councils and, although this was affecting Police performance figures, he was relatively relaxed about this if it meant that the public overall were receiving a better service and response. The Chief Constable echoed this sentiment and underlined that although there had been significant reductions in ASB, the public still perceived it to be an issue;
- Members raised concerns about the rise in reported Domestic Violence incidents. In response the Chief Constable warned against the dangers of 'hitting a target but missing the point'. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner underlined that an increase of this kind was also illustrative of the public's growing confidence in reporting such issues to the Police. The Commissioner added that in analysing performance he was keen to focus on trends rather than simply the latest figures.

RESOLVED 2014/004

- 1) That the refreshed Police and Crime Plan for 2014-18 be noted.**
- 2) That the Panel's views be reflected in the finalisation of the Plan.**

9. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the update report and highlighted the following key points:-

- the way in which victim support services were commissioned would be changing in 2014/15, with national funding being allocated via Police and Crime Commissioners rather than Victim Support as currently. Some specialist domestic violence work, such as work around homicide victims, would continue to be led at a national level. Nottinghamshire had agreed to be one of the first to take on these new responsibilities, with some funding transferring to the Commissioner from October 2014. A tender process would be undertaken ahead of that date in line with legal requirements. Possibilities for regional working on this issue would be explored, as would the services provided by national victim support services. An organisation had been commissioned to undertake local research and consultation with victims and professional bodies in order to develop the most appropriate and effective services. A new Victim's Code came into force in December 2013 and the Force's development of the 'Track my Crime' facility was addressing victims' current lack of information to clarify the latest situation with their case within the criminal justice system. The

Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner agreed to update the Panel on victims issue in April 2014;

- the Commissioner was putting further funding into developing victim-led restorative justice services in 2014/15. A conference had been held in January 2014 to share best practice and the Home Office had commissioned the national organisation 'Remedi' to map out existing services and best practice in this field.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members thanked the Commissioner for his efforts to increase the powers of PCSOs, which could be particularly useful in rural areas in addressing issues such as speeding traffic. The Chief Constable highlighted that funding was available for speed awareness education in schools. Members highlighted a former HGV driver who specialised in training in this area. The Commissioner also commended the approach taken in Harworth whereby speeding drivers were held to account by parents and were offered the opportunity to attend a school assembly on the issue rather than receive a speeding ticket. It was felt that this approach had been very effective in achieving a sustained change in driving behaviour. In the City, a Speed Watch project in Bulwell East ward had been funded by the local City Council area committee and was beginning to reduce speeding in the area. Members also highlighted the Gedling Borough Council funded scheme whereby radar type speeding cameras, uniforms and signage had been purchased and local volunteers had been trained to use these cameras;
- the Commissioner was not confident that cautions and fixed penalty notices were always being utilised appropriately and he was seeking input from magistrates to consider this issue further, by scrutinising and reviewing every out of court disposal. The Chief Constable added that this issue was also being reviewed nationally due to concerns about the lack of transparency and public confidence in the current system;
- Members highlighted the recent spate of fatal and serious road traffic accidents and asked for any lessons arising from this to be shared with the Panel. A further update on the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda was also requested. In response, the Commissioner highlighted that the Force had held discussions with local authorities about road safety issues and felt that changes in the management of offenders serving less than 12 months were required but that further funding was needed to achieve success in this area. He felt that the national view was that the Commissioner's Office in Nottinghamshire had done more than other areas to help assist the transition to the new system.

RESOLVED 2014/005

That the contents of the update report be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.05 pm

CHAIRMAN

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